
Transportation Committee

HB 1700

Brief Description: Modifying the requirements related to designing various transportation projects.

Sponsors: Representatives Fitzgibbon, Angel, Appleton, Armstrong, Rolfes, Johnson, Clibborn, Rivers, Reykdal, Ormsby, Upthegrove, Liias, Billig and Moeller.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Expands bicycle facility standards for city and counties to meet or exceed by including the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) bicycle guide and geometric design of highways and streets.
- Allows cities and counties to use funds for street or road projects for pedestrian right-of-way and pedestrian improvement projects and requires the pedestrian project to meet or exceed the state standards and the AASHTO standards in the AASHTO pedestrian guide and geometric design of highways and streets.
- Requires the Department of Transportation (DOT) to consult with local jurisdictions when constructing or reconstructing streets or other portions of the transportation network.
- Requires the DOT to apply design solutions to street projects consistent with the *Context Sensitive Solutions in Designing Major Thoroughfares for Walkable Communities* from the Institute of Transportation Engineers.

Hearing Date: 2/15/11

Staff: Debbie Driver (786-7143).

Background:

Cities, towns, and counties are allowed to use funds available for street or road construction, maintenance, or improvement for building, improving, or maintaining bicycle facilities such as

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paths, lanes, roadways, or routes. If funds are used for bicycle improvements, they must be expended for suitable bicycle transportation purposes and not solely for recreational purposes. Furthermore, bicycle facilities constructed or modified after June 10, 1982, shall meet or exceed the Department of Transportation (DOT) standards. Design standards for bicycle and pedestrian facilities are included in the DOT's design manual.

Executive Order E 1028, adopted by the Secretary of Transportation on November 24, 2003, directs the DOT employees to implement a context sensitive solutions approach for all department projects. A context sensitive solutions approach means that the DOT employees working on projects and facilities should engage affected communities, assure the transportation objectives are clearly described and discussed with the local communities, recognize and address community and citizen concerns, and ensure the project is a safe facility for both the user and community.

The DOT's Office of Highways and Local Programs and the State Design Engineer are responsible for carrying out this Executive Order. Approaches to context sensitive design include a publication by the Institute of Transportation Engineers' (ITE) publication entitled *Context Sensitive Solutions in Designing Major Urban Thoroughfares for Walkable Communities* as well as the *Geometric Design of Highways and Streets* published by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). The AASHTO also publishes a bicycle guide and a pedestrian guide.

Summary of Bill:

The bill extends the option for cities and towns to use funds available for street or road construction, maintenance, or improvement for building, improving, and maintaining both bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Standards that bicycle and pedestrian facilities shall meet or exceed are expanded to include the AASHTO bicycle or pedestrian guide and the AASHTO geometric design for highways and streets publication as well as other design guides provided by the city or town.

For new construction or major repairs on streets, bridges, or other portions of the transportation network for street projects initially planned or scoped after July 1, 2011, the DOT must consult with the local jurisdiction in the design and planning phase. This consultation must include public outreach, meetings with stakeholders, and identification of community goals and priorities. The DOT must consider the needs of all users by applying context sensitive design solutions consistent with the ITE publication. "All users" is defined as bicyclists, pedestrians, transit users, and motorists of all ages and abilities as well as movers of commercial goods.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.