

Policy: 6770-1- Multi Use Parallel Paths

Section: Traffic Operations

Office/Department: Office of Traffic Operations

Reports To: Division of Permits & Ops

Contact: 404-635-8048

I. PURPOSE

This policy provides guidance for the approval of local government sponsored paved multi use parallel paths (PPs) which are parallel to a state highway, within state right of way, and includes the use of Personal Transportation Vehicles (PTV).

II. APPROVAL OF PARALLEL PATHS

1. All permitted PPs and the use of PTVs must comply with [GA Code 40-6-365](#) and [GA Code 40-6-368](#), including, but not limited to, the fact that all PTV Drivers must possess a valid driver's license.
2. All requests for PPs shall be made on behalf of the local government.
3. All costs associated with the design, construction, operations, and maintenance of PPs shall be at no cost to GDOT.
4. All approvals shall be in the form of a Special Encroachment Permit (Refer to [GDOT Policy 6755-11, Special Encroachment Permits on Interstate and Limited Access Right of Way](#)) which shall among other elements, require:
 - a. The applicant to indemnify the Department by a signed and executed Indemnity Agreement provided by the Department.
 - b. The applicant to provide all maintenance, and repair of the PP, and any associated operational and maintenance hardware, by a signed Mowing and Maintenance Agreement or Intergovernmental Agreement (Refer to [GDOT Policy 6755-9, Policy for Landscaping and Enhancements on GDOT Right of Way Section 2.1](#)).
5. All requests shall be made to the appropriate GDOT District Traffic Engineer and shall include:
 - a. An overall trail network plan which is connective with existing and proposed trails and paths (Refer to GDOT [Design Policy Manual Section 9.3](#)).
 - b. Plan set denoting possible utility impacts that may occur from the construction of the PPs.
 - c. Plans which detail the proposed PPs, GDOT Right of Way, stream buffers, existing and proposed grades, drainage, existing vegetation impacted by trail construction, adjacent property owners names, typical section(s), landscape design, paving detail, proposed signalization, signing and marking (Refer to GDOT [Design Policy Manual](#) and [Pedestrian and Streetscape Guide](#)).
 - d. Traffic Impact Study (Refer to either GDOT [Design Policy Manual Chapter 13](#) or [Regulations for Driveway And Encroachment Control Manual Section 2.4](#)).
6. No PPs shall be approved on limited access right of way.

7. All PPs which deviate from the rights of way onto private property must acquire an easement agreement before construction.
8. All PPs shall be restricted to roadways with a posted speed limit of 55 mph or less.
9. All PPs shall be designed for 30 mph, with a PP speed limit of 25 mph ([GA Code 40-6-368](#)).
10. The final determination of whether a Parallel Path may be implemented along GDOT right of way shall be at the discretion of the GDOT District Engineer for that District (or their designee).

III. DESIGN ELEMENTS

1. All costs associated with the design, construction, operations, and maintenance of PPs shall be at no cost to GDOT.
2. All PPs shall have a minimum width of 10' with 2' shoulders and meet the minimum buffer requirement for posted roadway speed (AASHTO Roadside Design Guide).

(From AASHTO 2011 Roadside Design Guide)

DESIGN SPEED MPH	DESIGN ADT	FILL SLOPES			CUT SLOPES		
		6:1 or Flatter	5:1 to 4:1	3:1	3:1	5:1 to 4:1	6:1 or Flatter
40 OR LESS	< 1,500	10-12	12-14	**	12-14	12-14	12-14
	1,500 – 6,000	12-14	14-16	**	14-16	14-16	14-16
	> 6,000	14-16	16-18	**	16-18	16-18	16-18
45 – 50	< 1,500	14-16	16-20	**	10-12	12-14	14-16
	1,500 – 6,000	16-18	20-26	**	12-14	14-16	16-18
	> 6,000	20-22	24-28	**	14-16	18-20	20-22
55	< 1,500	16-18	20-24	**	10-12	14-16	16-18
	1,500 – 6,000	20-22	24-30	**	14-16	16-18	20-22
	> 6,000	22-24	26-32*	**	16-18	20-22	22-24
60	< 1,500	20-24	26-32*	**	12-14	16-18	20-22
	1,500 – 6,000	26-30	32-40*	**	14-18	18-22	24-26
	> 6,000	30-32*	36-44*	**	20-22	24-26	26-28
65 - 70	Under 1,500	24-26	28-36*	**	12-16	18-20	20-22
	1,500 – 6,000	28-32*	34-42*	**	16-20	22-24	26-28
	Over 6,000	30-34*	38-46*	**	22-24	26-30	28-30

Table 4-10 Clear Zone Distances (In Feet from Edge of Traveled Way)

NOTES: * Clear zones may be limited to 30' for practicality and to provide a consistent roadway template if previous experience with similar designs indicates satisfactory performance. Greater clear zone distances may be provided where indicated by crash history.

** Fixed objects should not be present in the vicinity of the toe of these slopes. The width of the recovery zones should consider a number of factors including right of way availability, environmental concerns, economic factors, safety needs, and accident history.

All areas located within the clear zones should remain clear of obstructions such as bridge abutments, poles, trees, etc. If obstructions are unavoidable, the design should include appropriate protection such as break-away design, guardrail installation, safety end treatments on culverts, etc. The Roadside Design Guide includes a table for horizontal curve adjustments, where the clear zone correction factor is applied to the outside of curves only. Curves flatter than a 2860 foot radius do not require an adjusted clear zone. Guardrails must be kept free of nearby vegetation to allow for maintenance.

3. Landscaping along the paths shall meet GDOT requirements (Refer to [GDOT Policy 6755-9, Policy for Landscaping and Enhancements on GDOT Right of Way](#)) and the clear zone requirements according to the table below.

Horizontal Clearances for Trees and Shrubs	
Posted / Design Speed	Minimum Horizontal Clearance¹
≤ 35 mph (Commercial Area ²)	4-ft. 8-ft. median
≤ 35mph	8-ft. 8-ft. in median
40 mph	10-ft. 16-ft. in median ³
45 mph	14-ft. 22-ft. in median ³
>45 mph	Outside the clear zone
Interstates	120% of the clear zone requirement
<p>¹ From center of tree to face of curb.</p> <p>²In a Central Business District and/or where commercial businesses are typically directly adjacent to the rights of way.</p> <p>³Small trees and shrubs that mature at ≤ 4" in diameter may be planted a minimum of 8 feet from the face of the curb in medians adjacent to 40 to 45 mph speeds. Tree size is diameter of the tree at maturity, measured at dbh (4.5 feet above the ground).</p> <p>Certain situations may require an increased horizontal clearance setback for additional safety considerations.</p> <p>For rural shoulders, trees should be placed outside the clear zone.</p>	

4. PPs shall only be permitted to cross intersections, meeting the following requirements:
- Signalized:
 - Speed limit of side street must be at or less than 35 mph
 - Unsignalized:
 - Speed limit of crossing street should be at or less than 35 mph
 - Traffic volume of less than 5,000 ADT for crossing street
5. All PPs shall meet all applicable ADA requirements (AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities 5.1.1).

References:

[Click here to enter Policy references, if any.](#)

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