

SECTION A

Introduction

In 1995 Standards for Maine Non-NHS Highway Systems were developed in response to ISTEA REGULATIONS ALLOWING States to establish their own standards for roadways not on the National Highway System. It has been five years since these standards were approved and adopted by the Department. Therefore a Task Force was appointed by the Chief Engineer to revisit the standards and also develop standards for the Minor Collectors in light of the recently adopted Urban and Rural Initiatives Program (URIP).

Members of this Task Force were:

Jeff Adams	Bureau of Project Development
Dave Bernhardt	Bureau of Project Development
Gail MacMunn	Bureau of Project Development
Brian Burne	Bureau of Project Development
Scott Rollins	Office of Environmental Services
Norm Haggan	Bureau of Maintenance & Operations
Galen Costigan	Bureau of Maintenance & Operations
Gerry Audibert	Bureau of Planning, Research & Community Services
Dale Peabody	Bureau of Planning, Research & Community Services

The purpose of the State Standards Task Force is to revise/redevelop the minimum design standards that may be applied to minor arterials, major collectors and minor collectors throughout the State of Maine. The Task Force is expected to minimize project impacts by defining an acceptable balance between the level of safety provided and the overall cost of improving the highway. In developing these standards, consideration shall be given to the following: right-of-way standards, utility standards, environmental standards, design integrity, constructability, maintenance, traffic volumes, truck volumes, clear zones, the MDSOT Shoulder Paving Policy, traffic speeds, and bicycle & pedestrian usage. The resulting standards are to be used consistently on all highway projects developed with either State or Federal funds that are located off the National Highway System.

This State Standards highway Design Guide is the result of the Task Force findings and deliberations. Information found herein should be used during the planning, design and construction of non-NHS highway projects.

These standards cannot provide for all situations. They are intended to assist, but not to substitute for, competent work by design professionals.

The decision to use a particular road design element at a particular locations should be made on the basis of an engineering analysis of the location. Thus, while this document provides design standards, it is not a substitute for engineering judgment.

Engineers should take into account all available information, including available funding, and use the professional judgment that comes from training and experience to make the final design determination. There should be some record, not necessarily formal or cumbersome, of the matters considered during the design process that justify decisions made regarding the final project design.

It should be understood that these standards are directed at substantive improvements, not at so called “spot improvements” that affect only a small portion of a facility, such as an isolated curve or a minor intersection. Spot improvements on a geometrically substandard facility should be evaluated on an individual basis and be designed to blend in with the remaining adjacent features whenever a more extensive improvement cannot be justified.

The intent of these standards is identical to that of the **AASHTO** policy, which is “...to provide guidance to the designer by referencing a recommended range of values for critical dimensions. Sufficient flexibility is permitted to encourage independent designs tailored to particular situations.”