

New 'Complete Streets' policy to add access to more users

By Pete Poore

SCDOT has adopted a wide-ranging "Complete Streets" Policy for the state-owned highway system. Secretary of Transportation **Christy A. Hall** signed the document in Columbia on Feb. 4, 2021.

The "Complete Streets" policy requires SCDOT to work with the state's regional Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), Councils of Governments (COGs) and regional transit providers to include walking, bicycling and transit needs on targeted routes as part of their regional plans. These plans will serve as a guide for project planning and design, construction, maintenance and operations. The Policy is a "living document" that will call for reviews in rapidly changing areas that occur in a state where rapid growth is occurring in all regions.

Hall said, "The goal of the Policy is to make our highway system accessible to all users; drivers, passengers, bicyclists, pedestrians, transit riders, and those who

use highway facilities for fitness activities. In addition, the Policy can increase safety and reduce crashes among all users.

Key components of the Policy include:

- Funding for these accommodations is to be included in the budget for each project.

- SCDOT engineers will continue to use many sources to study the design of accommodations for various users, including federal, state and research institutions.

- SCDOT will establish a council to facilitate ongoing communication to seek continuous improvement opportunities and initiatives.

Secretary Hall thanked all the parties involved for their efforts to formulate the "Complete Streets" Policy. "I appreciate the time and effort the various advocacy groups put into the new Policy. They have worked side-by-side with us from the beginning and we count on their input as we begin to make South Carolina's highway system more efficient and safer for all of our citizens," said Hall.



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The 'Complete Streets' policy works with local officials to incorporate bicycling, walking and other transit needs during the design, construction, maintenance and operations in areas of rapid growth. Contractors marked bike paths on the Isle of Palms Connector (S.C. 517) in Charleston County on April 13, 2021.

SCDOT improves, increases public beach parking at IOP

By Pete Poore

After a number of meetings between Secretary of Transportation **Christy A. Hall** and local officials representing the City of Isle of Palms, all entities agreed to SCDOT's plan to improve public parking on Palm Boulevard and its access to the beach.

The land side of Palm Boulevard has a suitable amount of SCDOT right of way and shoulders. SCDOT engineers redesigned the parallel parking configuration to a diagonal parking situation.

The new design added up to 80 more spaces to the existing 190 parking spaces. SCDOT crews began installing concrete blocks and painting lines on Monday, April 19, 2021. The work was completed by the morning of April 21, 2021.

In addition to the new land side parking spaces, parallel parking on the beach side of Palm Boulevard is still available. All parking on the SCDOT right of way on Palm Boulevard is free of charge. The speed limit on this road has been reduced from 35 mph to 30 mph. No palmetto trees were removed during the installation.

While on-site during the parking design installation, Secretary Hall told the media that the issue of beach parking and access affects the state as a whole. "South Carolina's beaches are a beautiful destination and should be available for all to enjoy. I am thankful that SCDOT has been able to help restore the public's right to have equitable access to state-owned assets," said Hall.



CODY CROUCH/THE CONNECTOR

SCDOT crews place concrete curb stops and paint lines on the right of way along the 'land' side of Palm Boulevard at the Isle of Palms. The change increases the number of beach parking spaces by changing parallel parking to diagonal parking on one side of the roadway.