



Expires – Upon Issuance of LPP

Design Standards for 3R Projects on NHS Freeways

I. BACKGROUND

On January 3, 2022 the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) issued a final rule in the Federal Register to amend Title 23 Code of Federal Regulations Part 625 - Design Standards for Highways: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/01/03/2021-28236/design-standards-for-highways>. Per the final rule, FHWA allows the State and Local Public Agencies (LPAs) to adopt procedures or design criteria, as approved by FHWA, to undertake resurfacing, restoration, and rehabilitation (3R) projects on freeways, including interstate highways, without utilizing design exceptions as long as the 3R procedures or criteria are met. Since other principal arterials have been allowed for 3R projects, the roads of all classifications on the NHS are now eligible for the 3R application.

II. POLICY

The current policy specified in the Local Assistance Procedures Manual (LAPM) does not allow LPAs to conduct 3R projects on National Highway Systems (NHS) freeways without design exceptions. However, effective February 3, 2022, federal fund participation is no longer restricted when LPAs undertake 3R projects on NHS freeways within their jurisdiction as long as FHWA's approved design standards are utilized. In addition, Caltrans Design Information Bulletin (DIB) 79-03 has been superseded by DIB 79-04 to accommodate the changes.

III. PROCEDURE

LPAs are now able to move forward with their 3R projects on NHS freeways. For 3R projects located on the State Highway System (SHS) the current design standards (Caltrans DIB 79-04) must be utilized, which are fully updated for the new regulatory change and suitable for use on NHS freeways. If the projects are located off the SHS, LAPM Exhibit 11-A: Geometric Design Standards should apply.

IV. APPLICABILITY/IMPACTS

This Office Bulletin applies to all aspects of the federal-aid program including, but not limited to, traffic operations, safety, geotechnical, and structural engineering. The following table lists the changes to the January 2022 LAPM and associated Exhibit that take effect with the publication of this Office Bulletin. Changes to the LAPM listed in the table will be incorporated into the January 2023 Local Programs Procedure (LPP); changes to the Exhibit will be incorporated and released as 2022 version.



Chapter Section / Exhibit	Description of Changes that supersede current publications
<p style="text-align: center;">LAPM 2.4 Delegated Projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal of the word “non-interstate” on page 3 of 18.
<p style="text-align: center;">LAPM 11.2 Design Guidance for Local Assistance Projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal of the phrase “other than freeways” and “non-freeway” on page 3 of 11.
<p style="text-align: center;">Exhibit 12-D, VII Geometric Design Standards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change of Caltrans DIB 79-03 to Caltrans DIB 79-04.

Recommended: Original signature on file March 21, 2022
 Kitae Nam, Policy Liaison Date

Approved: Original signature on file March 21, 2022
 Tanzeeba Kishwar, Chief Date
 Office of Guidance and Oversight