

DIVISION 14
PRACTICE FOR RURAL AND PRE-1975 ROAD ADDITIONS
September 11, 2013

PURPOSE

The purpose of this practice is to provide guidance and consistency across Division 14 in the consideration of road addition requests. Since the NCDOT policy allows for interpretations across the state, this policy is needed for District Engineers to be able to better interpret the phrases vaguely written in the NCDOT policy.

NCDOT POLICY

NCDOT' s Policy regarding road additions for rural and pre-1975 roads has four requirements:

- 1) Right of way must be donated. It is usually 45 feet wide for dead end roads and 50 feet wide for through roads.
- 2) It must serve a minimum home density or traffic. It must serve at least five homes if less than one mile and five homes a mile if greater than a mile. Part time homes count as one half of a full time home. On roads that serve other needs, the amount of traffic served is considered.
- 3) It cannot just serve one property owner.
- 4) The cost to put the road in an acceptable maintenance condition must not be excessive for the amount of service it will render. The policy states up front that NCDOT reserves the right to decline a road addition request if the cost to improve the road to minimum standards is excessive within the funds presently available for maintenance and construction within the county.

NCDOT' s Policy goes on to define what those minimum standards are:

- An unpaved road must have a 20 foot travel-way and must be stabilized with a surface that will allow use of the road except in extreme weather conditions.
- Paved roads must have widths consistent with our Subdivision requirements (post-1975 Roads).
- Roads must have an adequate drainage system to reflect what it serves.
- Utilities cannot present a hazard or interfere with maintenance. Any utilities that do so must be relocated. An encroachment agreement is required for any utility remaining on NCDOT right of way.

DIVISION 14 PRACTICE

One of the critical factors in determining if a pre-1975 Road meets NCDOT' s policy for addition to the system is if the cost to improve the road to minimum standards is within reason as compared to the funds available to make those improvements. In order to make this determination, those minimum standards must be defined. Division 14 further defines those minimum standards as follows:

- The minimum top width (shoulder point to shoulder point) must be 24 feet on unpaved roads. This allows the 20 foot travel-way to comply with NCDOT Policy and two-foot unpaved shoulders on each side.
- The minimum width for paved roads shall meet Division 14 Secondary Roads requirements with a top width of 28 feet on lower volume roads.
- Drainage must be present to provide adequate drainage for a 10-year design storm for lateral drainage systems and a 25-year storm for cross drainage features. Should the road serve a facility that provides critical services (for example a hospital), a higher storm design for drainage may be required.
- Ditches, cut slopes, and fill slopes must be sufficient to provide long term stability and not show signs of failure.

For roads not meeting the requirements of NCDOT minimum standards or the Division 14 practice for minimum standards, an estimate of cost to improve the road to those minimum standards will be developed to determine if the road meets the definitions of acceptable cost to add to the system. Given that these potential costs come from maintenance funds provided for upkeep of the existing network, the allowable costs are as follows:

- \$2,000 per full time home and \$1,000 per part time home. For roads serving other needs than residential homes, this allowance shall be based on traffic counts and shall be \$2,000 per six trips a day (the equivalent of one full time home).
- The total cost to improve the road to minimum standards cannot exceed 2% of a county' s annual secondary maintenance allocation.
- No more than two roads in a county can be added in a particular fiscal year thus limiting the impact to the county' s annual secondary maintenance allocations to no more than 4% a year.
- If funds are not available the given fiscal year a road addition requests is made and the road meets all other criteria for addition, the addition request will be deferred to the following fiscal year. Multiple requests shall be first come/ first serve.