

## **WT Harris Boulevard and Brookshire Boulevard Roadway Classification Study**

### **Why are we doing a roadway classification study?**

Brookshire Boulevard and W.T. Harris Boulevard are undergoing changes that will affect access, mobility, and overall public safety. These two roadways contain a variety of different roadway classifications and are being affected by specific land development and transportation investment decisions. This study can help identify different uses of the roadways and land use which will help classify roadways to improve access, development, and mobility for residents, businesses and users.

### **What is a roadway classification study?**

A roadway classification is a way of categorizing roads based on their different uses. How a road is classified can help determine the following:

- For **motorists**: speed limits, lane and median widths, shoulder, curb & gutter, street lighting, and driveway & street connections.
- For **pedestrians and transit users**: sidewalk location and width, intersection crosswalks, pedestrian signals, median refuge, bus stops, and mid-block pedestrian crossings.
- For **bicyclists**: bike lane location and width, multi-use paths, connectivity to greenways & trails, and overall bicycle accommodations.
- For **development**: setbacks, access, and connectivity.

### **What is the goal of this study?**

These studies will determine the classifications and cross-sections for various segments of W.T. Harris Boulevard and Brookshire Boulevard.

### **What is the purpose of this study?**

The purpose of these studies is to:

- Develop an overall plan for “functional” or “roadway type” classification
- Determine appropriate classification and cross section by segments and transition areas
- Provide consistency and compatibility in land development and transportation investment decisions
- Improve access, development, and mobility for residents, businesses and users

### **What is not included in a Roadway Classification Study?**

It is NOT a preliminary or final design project

It is NOT a construction project

It is NOT a maintenance project

It is NOT a widening or alignment study

It is NOT a right-of-way acquisition project

It is NOT an environmental assessment

It is NOT a land use plan

It is NOT a funding prioritization plan

## Key Terms & Definitions

Mobility – The efficient movement of people and goods.

Access Management – The planning of the location, design and operation of driveways, median openings, interchanges and street connections to provide access to land in a manner that preserves traffic safety and efficient traffic flow.

Tradeoffs – A design decision that benefits one user over another. When considering tradeoffs, all stakeholders must be evaluated fairly.

## What are the current Roadway Classification Systems?

Brookshire Boulevard and W.T. Harris Boulevard have varying classifications based on the classification systems below:

- **Federal (FHWA) Functional Classification** – The functional classification reflects a highway's balance between providing land access and motorist mobility. The Federal Functional Classification has high levels of variability among different roads within the same classification, but also has the highest priority and lowest level of detail. This study will not evaluate the Federal classification nor will the recommendations of the study have any impact on the Federal functional classification.
- **Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Planning Organization (MUMPO) Thoroughfare Plan** – The *Thoroughfare Plan* is adopted by NCDOT and MUMPO and is used by City Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances. However, the *Thoroughfare Plan* is evolving into and will eventually be replaced by the *Comprehensive Transportation Plan*. The *Thoroughfare Plan* provides more detail than the Federal Functional Classification in terms of access, but does not fully address non-motorist users.
- **MUMPO Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP)** – The *CTP* is a multi-modal transportation plan that identifies the future transportation system needs and includes highways, public transportation, rail, and bicycle facilities needed to serve the anticipated travel demand. It is a mutually adopted legal document between the state and the Metropolitan Planning organization. When a *CTP* is adopted by the NCDOT it represents the state's concurrence with the locally identified transportation needs. Ultimately, the *CTP* will replace MUMPO's existing *Thoroughfare Plan*. The *CTP* addresses non-motorist users from a needs perspective, but not with detailed criteria or specifics (location, width, appropriateness, etc.).
- **City of Charlotte Urban Street Design Guidelines (USDG)** – The *USDG* addresses capacity, mobility, and access while also considering safety and accessibility for pedestrians, cyclists, transit users, residents, business owners, etc. The *USDG* provides guidance for choices and tradeoffs among multiple users. It also offers more specific detail regarding location, width, appropriateness, etc., than the Federal Functional Classification, the *Thoroughfare Plan*, or the *CTP*.
- **NCDOT Complete Streets** – Under this policy, NCDOT will collaborate with local cities, towns, and communities to provide the options needed to serve the community and complement the context. Desired benefits include improved ease of travel, encouraging alternative forms of transportation, sustainability, increased connectivity, and improved safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists. The Complete Streets guidelines are based on and very similar to Charlotte's *USDG* with few distinguishing differences.

## How can you participate in the vision for Brookshire Boulevard and W.T. Harris Boulevard?

A survey is available for Brookshire Boulevard and W.T. Harris Boulevard.

[Brookshire Boulevard Survey](#)

[W.T. Harris Boulevard Survey](#)

**What are the next steps?**

Steering Committee meetings were held on January 31, 2012 and February 2, 2012. The next steps include:

- Public outreach including online surveys, mail-in surveys, and focus groups to consider choices, tradeoffs, and to develop vision (March/April 2012)
- Analysis, findings & recommendations (April 2012)
- Public meetings to present recommendations (May/June 2012)
- Refine vision, adjust findings & recommendations, finalize study (June/July 2012)

**Who do I contact with questions?**

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Visit <http://cdotprojects.charlottenc.gov> and click on "Brookshire Blvd. and W.T. Harris Boulevard Study" to find out more.