

100 Introduction

100.1 Purpose of the Design Manual

This Design Manual provides policies, standard practices, criteria, guidance, and references approved by, and often unique to, the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) for use in carrying out the design of its roadways. It is intended to encourage the uniform application of design details statewide, under normal conditions.

The Design Manual allows flexibility to encourage independent design tailored to unique situations. When flexibility is applied and critical elements of a proposed design do not meet the project design standard, the manual describes the appropriate documentation and approvals required to record the decision-making process.

The information provided in the Design Manual serves as a supplement to the engineering analyses and judgment that shall be applied to all roadway projects.

100.2 Intended Users

The Design Manual is intended to be used by NMDOT employees, partner agencies, and consultants involved with the design of NMDOT-owned facilities. The manual is also intended to be used by local jurisdictions designing any element of a state highway facility.

100.3 Description of Chapters

Each chapter of the Design Manual covers a major category of project work. Federal and state laws, codes, and external design guidance are presented up front in each chapter as they relate to the specific subject matter.

Hyperlinks to other chapters are provided to make users aware of related information in a different category of work. Also, where appropriate, references and web links to outside resources are provided.

Where applicable, the chapters conclude with a list of the documentation that accompanies the design process for that category of work.

100.4 Updates

This manual was prepared and reviewed by a team of NMDOT engineers and consultant staff, and first released for use in October 2016. During the development of this manual, designers and other users were given the opportunity to correct, edit, add to, or improve it in any way possible. Still, the NMDOT encourages each user of this manual to contribute to its continuing improvement by submitting suggestions to make it more useful and practical.

Comments on this manual should be sent to:

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Approved changes will be incorporated into the next update. As changes in policies, standards and/or criteria occur, modifications will be made electronically and the revised chapters will be posted on the NMDOT website. The most recent electronic version of the manual available online will be considered the official document in contracts with consultants.

When revisions to a chapter in the manual are made, the online Design Manual Revisions Log will be updated. A link to the revisions log is included on the NMDOT Design Manual webpage. Users of this manual are encouraged to view the revisions log on a regular basis. In each chapter of the manual, all revised material will be indicated by a change line in the margin of the text. The change lines within any given chapter will remain until the next revision, at which time all change lines in that chapter will be removed. The Design Manual chapters will have either a publication date or revision date on each page to allow users to determine if they are using the most recent document.

Adding new or modifying criteria to the Design Manual through the revision process does not imply that existing features are deficient nor does it suggest or mandate immediate engineering review or initiation of new projects.

