



**Currituck County**

Planning and Inspections Department  
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Currituck NC 27929  
252-232-3055

To: Planning Board

From: Planning Staff

Date: May 9, 2025

Subject: PB 25-07 Currituck County Text Amendment  
Sidewalks & Pedestrian Circulation

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**Request Summary**

The enclosed text amendment submitted by the Currituck County Board of Commissioners (BOC) amends the Sidewalk and Pedestrian standards to clarify that sidewalks are required for new streets in major subdivisions.

Since the adoption of the Currituck County Unified Development Ordinance effective January 1, 2013, Section 5.6.10, Sidewalks and Pedestrian Circulation has been implemented inconsistently for subdivisions, commercial, multi-family, mixed-use, institutional, and industrial projects.

At the February 26, 2025, work session, the Board of Commissioners directed staff to amend the ordinance to only require sidewalk construction along all new streets in major subdivisions. Additionally, it is good planning practice to allow for future construction of sidewalks where adopted plans identify future pedestrian improvements, the amendment language requires that new development and redevelopment adjacent to planned public sidewalk systems shall provide a 15-foot-wide easement adjacent to the right-of-way for future public sidewalk construction.

**Text Amendment Review Standards**

The advisability of amending the text of the UDO is a matter committed to the legislative discretion of the BOC and is not controlled by any one factor. In determining whether to adopt or deny the proposed text amendment, the BOC may weigh the relevance of and consider whether and the extent to which the proposed text amendment:

1. Is consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of the Land Use Plan and other applicable county-adopted plans;
2. Is not in conflict with any provision of this Ordinance or the County Code of Ordinances;
3. Is required by changed conditions;
4. Addresses a demonstrated community need;
5. Is consistent with the purpose and intent of the zoning districts in this Ordinance, or would improve compatibility among uses and ensure efficient development within the county;
6. Would result in a logical and orderly development pattern; and
7. Would not result in significantly adverse impacts on the natural environment, including but not limited to water, air, noise, stormwater management, wildlife, vegetation,

wetlands, and the natural functioning of the environment.

***Imagine Currituck 2040 Vision Plan***

The following goals, policies, or actions of the plan may apply to the text amendment request:

**Land Use Policy 2.1**

Continue to encourage businesses to coordinate site design with nearby businesses including shared or connected parking and access, pedestrian and vehicular movement, and consistent signage.

**Parks and Recreation Goal 2**

Increase pedestrian and bicycle connectivity by expanding greenways, multi-use paths, and trails.

**Parks and Recreation Policy 2.1**

Continue to require new development to construct pedestrian walkways and multi-use greenways that connect to external adjacent residential, commercial, recreation, and open space areas.

**Transportation Goal 2**

Improve and expand pedestrian and bicycle facilities throughout the County.

**Transportation Policy 2.1**

New development shall construct pedestrian walkways and multi-use greenways that connect adjacent residential and commercial areas.

**Staff Recommendation**

Staff suggests the following consistency statement:

The requested text amendment is in conformance with the General Purpose and Intent of the Unified Development Ordinance and is consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of the *Imagine Currituck 2040 Vision Plan*, including Land Use Policy 2.1.



## PB 25-07 CURRITUCK COUNTY TEXT AMENDMENT SIDEWALKS AND PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

Currituck County requests an amendment to the Unified Development Ordinance,

BE IT ORDAINED by the Board of Commissioners of the County of Currituck, North Carolina that the Unified Development Ordinance of the County of Currituck be amended as follows:

**Item 1:** That Chapter 5, Section 5.6.10. Sidewalks and Pedestrian Circulation is amended by deleting the following strikethrough language, adding the underlined language, and renumbering accordingly:

### **5.6.10. Sidewalks and Pedestrian Circulation**

#### **A. Applicability**

- (1) Except as otherwise provided in this section, sidewalks shall be required along new streets.
- (2) New development and redevelopment adjacent to planned public sidewalk systems shall provide a 15-foot-wide easement adjacent to the right-of-way for future public sidewalk construction. The easement width may be reduced at the discretion of the Director.

#### **B. Location**

- (1) Sidewalks shall be located within an existing public street right of way or an easement dedicated to the public and running parallel to the street. Pedestrian pathways and trails shall be located within open space set-asides.
- (2) Sidewalks shall be required on both sides of all new streets in major subdivisions, except:
  - (a) In the SFR and SFI districts, and in subdivisions of five or fewer lots (where no sidewalks are required);
  - (b) Along alleys (where no sidewalks are required);
  - (c) In residential subdivisions where the average lot area is greater than one acre in size, or there are fewer than 20 lots (in these instances, pedestrian pathways or trails are required that provide an equivalent level of pedestrian circulation);
  - (d) On cul-de-sacs less than 500 feet in length (where sidewalks are required only on one side of the street);

- (e) Where an existing or proposed sidewalk or pedestrian pathway paved with asphalt, concrete, or other hard-surface material located outside a street right-of-way trail can provide an equivalent level of pedestrian circulation to all lots in the subdivision; and
- (f) In cases where environmental, ~~or~~ topographic, or existing conditions make such provision prohibitive and no practicable alternative design is available as determined by the Director.

#### C. Configuration

- (1) Except as otherwise provided in this ordinance,
  - (a) Sidewalks shall be ADA-accessible, at least five feet in width, may be required to match the width of a connecting sidewalk that exceeds five feet in width; and,
  - (b) Pedestrian pathways, walkways, and trails shall be ADA-accessible and at least eight feet in width;
- (2) Sidewalks, pedestrian pathways, and trails shall be constructed of asphalt, concrete, or other hard-surface materials, consistent with an approved site plan, or with the established sidewalk patterns in the general area of the development;
- (3) Pedestrian street crossings and crosswalks shall be:
  - (a) Ten feet in width on major arterial streets and no less than six feet in width on all other streets; and,
  - (b) Well defined and raised above the adjacent street level, be a different material, or be striped as a traffic-calming measure.
- (4) Sidewalks, pedestrian pathways, and trails shall connect with existing or planned sidewalks at property boundaries. In cases where the property boundary is within a drainage swale or ditch, the sidewalk connection shall terminate at the edge of the swale, ditch, or drainage easement. An easement shall be established that will grant current and future owners of the abutting properties the right to construct sidewalk connections. The new development shall connect to the sidewalk stub to form pedestrian circulation; and
- (5) New nonresidential, mixed-use, and multi-family development shall provide at least one on-site improved connection between the development and an existing adjacent public sidewalk system (~~planned or existing~~).

#### D. Credit for Trails

Hard-surfaced, ADA-accessible trails within open space set-asides may be credited towards these sidewalk requirements when trails connect developments or connect open space set-asides to schools, shopping areas, or other recreation areas.

**Item 2:** Statement of Consistency:

[STATEMENT OF CONSISTENCY TO BE ADDED FOLLOWING BOARD ACTION]

**Item 3:** The provisions of this Ordinance are severable and if any of its provisions or any sentence, clause, or paragraph or the application thereof to any person or circumstance shall be held unconstitutional or violative of the Laws of the State of North Carolina by any court of competent jurisdiction, the decision of such court shall not affect or impair any of the remaining provisions which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application.

**Item 4:** This ordinance amendment shall be in effect from and after the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2025.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board of Commissioners' Chairman  
Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Leeann Walton  
Clerk to the Board

(SEAL)

DATE ADOPTED: \_\_\_\_\_  
MOTION TO ADOPT BY COMMISSIONER: \_\_\_\_\_  
SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER: \_\_\_\_\_  
VOTE: \_\_\_\_\_AYES \_\_\_\_\_NAYS \_\_\_\_\_  
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PLANNING BOARD DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
PLANNING BOARD RECOMMENDATION: \_\_\_\_\_  
VOTE: \_\_\_\_\_AYES \_\_\_\_\_NAYS \_\_\_\_\_  
ADVERTISEMENT DATE OF PUBLIC HEARING: \_\_\_\_\_  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS PUBLIC HEARING: \_\_\_\_\_  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_  
POSTED IN UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE: \_\_\_\_\_  
AMENDMENT NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_