

CSS Quick Facts – Principles, Qualities and Outcomes of CSS



Integrating CSS in Planning and Project Development



Context Sensitive Solutions Definition and Principles

CSS Defined

Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) is a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders in building a transportation facility that fits its setting. It is an approach that leads to preserving and enhancing scenic, aesthetic, historic, community and environmental resources, while improving or maintaining safety, mobility, and infrastructure conditions.

CSS Principles

- These core CSS principles apply to transportation processes, outcomes and decision making.
- Strive towards a shared stakeholder vision to provide a basis for decisions.
- Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of contexts.
- Foster continuing communication and collaboration to achieve consensus.
- Exercise flexibility and creativity to shape effective transportation solutions, while preserving and enhancing community and natural environments.

CSS Qualities

Context Sensitive Solutions is guided by a process which:

- Establishes an interdisciplinary team early, including a full range of stakeholders, with skills based on the needs of the transportation activity.
- Seeks to understand the landscape, the community, valued resources, and the role of all appropriate modes of transportation in each unique context before developing engineering solutions.
- Communicates early and continuously with all stakeholders in an open, honest, and respectful manner, and tailors public involvement to the context and phase.
- Utilizes a clearly defined decision-making process.
- Tracks and honors commitments through the life cycle of projects.
- Involves a full range of stakeholders (including transportation officials) in all phases of a transportation program.
- Clearly defines the purpose and seeks consensus on the shared stakeholder vision and scope of projects and activities, while incorporating transportation, community, and environmental elements.
- Secures commitments to the process from local leaders.
- Tailors the transportation development process to the circumstances and uses a process that examines multiple alternatives, including all appropriate modes of transportation, and results in consensus.
- Encourages agency and stakeholder participants to jointly monitor how well the agreed-upon process is working, to improve it as needed, and when completed, to identify any lessons learned.
- Encourages mutually supportive and coordinated multimodal transportation and land-use decisions.
- Draws upon a full range of communication and visualization tools to better inform stakeholders, encourage dialogue, and increase credibility of the process.

Context Sensitive Solutions Leads to Outcomes That:

- Are in harmony with the community and preserve the environmental, scenic, aesthetic, historic, and natural resource values of the area.
- Are safe for all users.
- Solve problems that are agreed upon by a full range of stakeholders.
- Meet or exceed the expectations of both designers and stakeholders, thereby adding lasting value to the community, the environment, and the transportation system.
- Demonstrate effective and efficient use of resources (people, time, budget) among all parties.