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27.1 INTRODUCTION

There are several types of roadside facilities that provide opportunities for travelers to safely stop, rest and manage their travel needs and safely access some of the state’s recreational facilities. These roadside facilities include rest areas with and without tourism information centers located in the rest area building, safety parking areas which do not have any buildings, scenic overlooks, fishing access sites and trailhead parking areas. These facilities are functional and desirable elements of the complete highway facility.

27.2 REST AREAS AND REST AREAS WITH TOURISM INFORMATION CENTERS

In New York State, rest areas are located on interstate highways and other controlled access freeways and are designed to provide safe, convenient facilities and travel services. Planned with consideration of alternative stopping opportunities such as private truck stops and commercial services, the rest area system provides stopping opportunities where they are most needed: in the more rural areas of the state, between large towns, and at entrances to the state or major metropolitan areas. These facilities give highway users a chance to relax, exercise their pets, plan their trip, obtain traveler information or use other services. Along with enhanced tourism, the primary benefits include reduced driver fatigue, improved safety, and refuge from adverse driving conditions. Integral parts of the highway system, rest areas are part of a comprehensive highway corridor planning and investment process.

There are three objectives for the rest area portion of this chapter:

- Provide guidance to be used in the project scoping, design, and construction of a new rest area and for the reconstruction of existing Department rest areas.
- Outline the scope of work and provide guidance for the development of detailed construction plans and specifications.
- Describe some of the partnerships that are typically developed for each individual site and the mechanisms for formalizing those partnerships.

27.2.1 Rest Area Policy

The Department’s Rest Area Policy is located in the Manual of Administrative Procedures (MAP) 1.6-2. The Policy and Planning Division maintains the policy and provides statewide oversight of its implementation.

The Federal Policy on rest areas is located in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), 23CFR 752.2(c) as well as U.S. Code, Title 23 – Highways (23 U.S.C). 23 U.S.C. 111 prohibits commercial development on the Interstate system, as well as at rest areas or tourism information centers. Privatized rest areas are allowed on toll roads such as the New York State Thruway, providing motorists with food concessions, gasoline, and other merchandise. These commercialized facilities are beyond the scope of this guidance.
27.2.2 **Rest Area Project Development**

Proposals to construct, rehabilitate, convert or close rest areas should be consistent with the Department's policy and rest area corridor plans.

A rest area project should be considered when:

- An existing rest area facility reaches 30 years in age, and/or water supply and waste treatment systems are in poor condition
- Traffic increases, including truck traffic, have resulted in overcrowded conditions at an existing rest area impacting parking and building use
- Security issues warrant the reconstruction of a rest area
- A comprehensive corridor plan has identified inadequate rest area spacing, or
- The planning and construction of a new interstate highway creates an opportunity

A rest area project consists of site planning, design and construction of all buildings, structures, highway ingress and egress, as well as the installation of all site appurtenances and utilities. Rest areas may also be used to fulfill other defined Department needs, including Commercial Vehicle Inspection. Consistent with FHWA policy, (23 CFR 752.7) information centers may also be included at a rest area. It should also be recognized that a rest area may provide a NYSP Office for patrol use and may be called upon to serve as a temporary Incident Command Center, should the need arise.

Rest area projects require the efforts of a design team with expertise in highway engineering, maintenance, architecture, building system engineering and landscape architecture. Refer to the [Project Development Manual (PDM)](#) Appendix 7 to determine the appropriate scoping and design approval document (DAD) to use for the rest area project. Typically, consultants providing architecture and other services are retained for rest area projects. The Department has also engaged the services of the New York State Office of General Services (OGS) for the design of some rest area buildings.

27.2.2.1 **Project Scope Considerations**

A program of the desired activities and services to be provided at the rest area needs to be developed, particularly for those affecting cost and schedule – e.g.; truck inspection, parking expansion requiring right of way acquisition, connections to public sewer and water, etc.

Rest Areas are unique pedestrian environments where motorists (many of whom are unfamiliar with the local area) get out of their vehicles and experience the local environment up close and on foot. Many rest areas function as gateways to the state or to specific tourism regions of the state. In fact, the rest area facility may be the initial point of contact between the traveling motorist and the State of New York. This first impression motorists receive of New York State should be positive. In many areas of the state, rest areas contribute to local and regional economic development strategies through the provision of tourism materials.

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Rest area facilities provide an opportunity to distribute information to motorists regarding attractions, accommodations, and the state’s many natural, cultural, historic, recreational and scenic resources. Rest areas can be used to communicate information about demonstration or pilot projects, and to showcase new technologies. Users may interact with other travelers, including auto and commercial vehicle operators, tourism providers, rest area maintenance crews and possibly the NYSP. Additionally, the rest area facility can provide real-time road conditions, weather and other types of advisories such as snow emergencies, flooding and “Amber Alerts” to the traveling public.

By nature, rest areas are locations involving power, telecommunications space and convenient off-roadway access. Accordingly, their design should consider the extent to which they offer a desirable location for Intelligent Transportation Systems components such as traffic detectors, Closed Circuit TV (CCTV) and Weigh-In-Motion devices. ITS device installation and operations costs can be reduced considerably when utilities and space can be shared. Maintenance can be performed more safely and conveniently when devices can be located at or near the rest area.

While the majority of the Department’s rest area projects are reconstructions on existing sites, opportunities may arise for selection of a new site for a rest area. Locations should be consistent with the Corridor Rest Area Plans. Refer to the AASHTO Rest Area Guide for a thorough discussion on criteria that should be considered when selecting a new rest area site. Development of new sites in the median is to be avoided if left side access is proposed. AASHTO’s *A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets* should be consulted on this issue. When right of way will need to be acquired either for an expansion of the existing site or for a new location, Regional Real Estate should be involved at the earliest point.

27.2.2.2 Project Scoping Requirements

An inter-disciplinary project team should be established at the scoping stage. Considering that rest area projects are not routine or frequently undertaken, early involvement of Regional and Main Office functional units is critical to the success of the rest area project.

The Public Involvement Plan is typically very important to the timely progression of the rest area project. The Department’s *Rest Area Policy* requires that other state agencies, local governments, and tourism groups be invited to become partners in the planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance of rest areas.

The primary partners have traditionally included the New York State Police Highway Patrol and Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Units (NYSP), the New York State Office of Children and Family Services Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped (for vending services as required by federal regulation pursuant to the *Randolph-Sheppard Act*), the “Green Thumb” Program to assist with Rest Area Maintenance, and various local municipal tourism providers.

Other Federal and New York State agencies and private groups are clearly important to the success of the rest area project and should also be included in the design process. Depending upon the project and its location, these external stakeholders may include:

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• Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
• Local fire departments
• Local governments
• Local citizens or civic groups
• Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)
• New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)
• New York State Department of Health (DOH)
• New York State Office of General Services (OGS)
• New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA)
• New York State Empire State Development Corporation
• New York State Commission on Quality of Care and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities
• United States Customs and Border Protection (for rest areas within 100 miles of an international border)
• Local utility providers

The scoping process should include a thorough analysis of the proposed site, definition and analysis of the proposed site components, and design calculations to preliminarily estimate the parking needs and approximate building size. The AASHTO Guide for Development of Rest Areas on Major Arterials and Freeways (AASHTO Rest Area Guide) provides guidance on these topics. Many of the Department's existing rest area sites have right-of-way (ROW) restraints, and this may dictate many design decisions. Rest area rehabilitation projects that involve demolition of existing facilities and utilities must consider the potential for removal of asbestos and/or other hazardous materials.

27.2.3 Rest Area Site Design

It is important that rest area visitors have a clear understanding of where they are expected to go for site services. In accordance with the Rest Area Policy, there will be one building constructed on the site to house all functional areas as detailed below. Site improvements shall consist of utilities for water, wastewater, electricity and telecommunications; planting, storm drainage, area lighting, fencing, on and off ramps, drives, separate parking areas for cars, trucks and buses, sidewalks, and when appropriate, commercial vehicle inspection areas.

A successful, sustainable rest area site will balance preservation of scenic, environmental and cultural features of the location and surrounding area with mobility, safety, maintainability, energy conservation and economic design requirements. Designs should ensure that both natural and built portions of the rest area are accessible and usable by all people of all ages and abilities.

The design of the rest area building and grounds and selection of all materials and fixtures should be done in a manner that maximizes energy efficiency and minimizes the operational and maintenance effort. Material selections shall consider the sustainability of the design choices including, but not limited to: energy costs, life expectancy, ease of maintenance and anticipated operating procedures.
27.2.3.1 Geometry

Many of the Department’s existing rest areas were designed and constructed at a time when geometric standards for horizontal and vertical alignments, sight distances, merging and diverging traffic movements were different than they currently are. The designer should undertake a thorough exploration of the geometric conditions, including the relationship of the building to the mainline, checking for non-standard features and recognize that significant changes may be necessary. Some existing rest area sites may be difficult to reconfigure; a rest area site may not be able to accommodate all the desired features. Guidance in HDM Chapter 5 in particular will be useful and should be followed. As with all other types of projects, critical design elements must be listed in the design approval document. A variety of site layouts may need to be considered along with the pros and cons of each, creating a balanced solution.

27.2.3.2 Advance Signage

Advance signage and entrance signing shall be in accordance with the current edition of the National Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). Considerations should be made for multi-lingual guide signs on routes leading to and from the Canadian border and to the extent that this can be done without causing confusion, safety or legal concerns.

27.2.3.3 Orientation

Ideally, the building and major use area should be placed in between the car and the truck parking areas so that all motorists are within a short distance of the building. This creates separate traffic flows and parking facilities for different vehicle types and is especially important where there is heavy truck traffic. Recognizing that topographic and right-of-way (ROW) restrictions may prevent this ideal layout, the primary objective shall be to separate the parking areas while providing access to the building from a reasonable distance from both areas. The AASHTO Rest Area Guide provides information and graphic illustrations of this orientation and other orientations.

The building should be oriented to take advantage of the best site amenities (e.g. views, southern exposure, slopes, etc.) The building should be located as far from the main line as possible to reduce noise. However, the optimum design scenario would allow the building to be visible from the highway. This location creates an inviting and more secure atmosphere to the traveling public. Sustainable/green building practices should be considered for any reconstruction, rehabilitation, or new rest area building, refer to Section 27.2.4 - Rest Area Building Design.

27.2.3.4 Security

The traveling public may not stop at a rest area if they are not comfortable with the environment. Security is also important to rest area staff. There are a number of factors that must be considered during preliminary design when planning for the security of a rest area. The layout
of site features, including the parking lots, site lighting and circulation, building, vegetation and site amenities should allow for visibility into the site, as well as prevent hidden spots that could be used for criminal activity. Security cameras may be considered for inclusion when there is a need for enhanced monitoring at a particular site, however, long-term maintenance and monitoring needs should be considered. Any plans to make use of security cameras should include coordination with Main Office and Regional IT and Traffic Operations groups as well as the NYSP for both where and how to deploy the technology, and for research and evaluation of specific technologies to be purchased and deployed. The mere presence of the NYSP has proven to be an effective way to enhance security, and their presence at a facility should be noted to the public through signage and the location of police parking spaces.

The Department and the NYSP have established a partnership to the benefit of both agencies. The Department will provide space in the form of an “office of convenience”. This office space encourages police visibility, enhances security, and provides easy access in times of emergency. Refer to Section 27.2.9 of this Chapter for information relating to occupancy agreements.

To aid motorists in recognizing where they are located in an emergency, the name of the rest area shall be prominently displayed on the exterior of the building, within the interior and by any telephones inside the building.

27.2.3.5 Lighting

Adequate lighting levels are important to enhance safety for pedestrians and motorists and deter undesirable activities. Lighting systems shall be designed to provide sufficient lighting levels, while minimizing night time light pollution, glare and the amount of fugitive light escaping from the sites. Full cutoff type fixtures shall be used. Solar and other energy conserving lighting types should be considered. All parking lots shall be lit for nighttime use and security, with increased lighting in areas that will be used for truck weighing/inspection operations. Light standards should be installed with additional electric hook-ups for use during inspections and by maintenance staff. Lighting should also be provided to illuminate secluded areas on the site such as picnic areas, pet walks and fence lines. High mast lighting is not recommended. Refer to the AASHTO Rest Area Guide and AASHTO’s Roadway Lighting Design Guide for recommended lighting levels of activity areas, parking areas, entrance and exit gores and interior roadways.

27.2.3.6 Grading and Drainage

Grading should be designed to accommodate and integrate the required development with as little disturbance to the site as possible. Grading and drainage should be harmonious with natural landforms and follow the direction of existing slopes and drainage patterns. Cuts and fills should be shaped to blend with existing landforms, and the revised terrain should complement the layout of parking areas and sidewalks.
A sustainable approach to drainage would find ways to capture stormwater runoff and use it for irrigation and ground water recharge. Consideration should be made for the visual and physical integration of stormwater features into the site in an aesthetically pleasing way in addition to eliminating direct discharge to natural resources. Drainage should be designed in accordance with Chapter 8 of the Highway Design Manual. The location and drainage of snow removal storage areas must also be considered.

27.2.3.7 Landscape Architectural Elements

The creation of inviting spaces will draw travelers to utilize the rest area facility, and allow them to become more relaxed and refreshed when they return to the highway. The rest area site and facilities should contribute to the visual environment by drawing inspiration from the cultural and historic background of the region while still cost-effectively maintaining the utilitarian functions of the rest area. Opportunities to provide educational or informational kiosks and display cultural, historical, or natural resources should be explored. Rest areas are an excellent location for Department pilot or demonstration projects exploring new technologies to be studied and promoted to the public. The use of artwork and interpretive exhibits is beneficial in developing an interesting, inviting place that will encourage motorists to relax and relieve driving fatigue.

A. Planting

Used collectively with site gradients and alignments, vegetation can create a positive first impression on the users of the rest area. Plant materials can be used to reinforce circulation patterns, define spaces and highlight areas of interest, screen unwanted views and emphasize desired views, landforms and other site features. Vegetation also can be used to provide shade in parking, picnic and pet areas, shelter from winter and blowing snow, and wildlife habitat. The goal of planting design and plant selection in rest areas is to provide all these functions while also providing a safe environment.

The planting plan should be designed for ease of maintenance and repair and should incorporate indigenous plant species. Existing vegetation, rock outcroppings and other natural features should be conserved and highlighted. Plant location and species selection should allow for clear sight lines. Do not create hiding spaces near walkways and parking lots. Vegetation should be selected to minimize water usage and minimize mowing. A sustainable approach to landscape design can minimize or eliminate the use of potable water for landscape irrigation once plants are established. Low impact development practices such as rain gardens and bio-retention areas should be explored.

B. Hardscape

The materials, shapes and textures of the elements in the rest area should reflect the native materials, shapes and textures of the region as well as life cycle costs.
Places to rest, including benches and picnic tables, should be located in areas that are inviting, comfortable, well lit and convenient. Again, consideration must be made of the needs and abilities of users of all ages and abilities, ensuring use of facilities by all.

Adequate numbers of benches, picnic tables, trash receptacles, recycling containers and cigarette disposal receptacles should be provided and located in a manner to promote use and for ease in maintenance. Items should be permanently installed and selections made with a concern for vandalism, security and ease of access. All trash receptacles shall be animal proof; “bear-proof” containers may be necessary in some locations.

27.2.3.8 Vehicular Circulation and Parking

Vehicular circulation patterns should be influenced by existing topography, site conditions and engineering guidelines. Vehicular circulation should be logical with clear pavement markings and parking lot delineations. Lot design must consider operational and maintenance activities such as snow plowing and snow storage.

Car and truck parking lot design must be well coordinated with pedestrian movements, taking into account pedestrian access to the facilities, site amenities and pet walking areas. Parking stalls should be oriented in a manner that reduces the potential vehicle/pedestrian conflict points.

The number of parking spaces provided should comply with AASHTO’s Rest Area Guide. If the rest area is located on a corridor with significant truck traffic, the methodology presented in the Appendix of the Guide for Development of Rest Areas should be used to calculate truck parking. Increased enforcement of hours of service requirements for commercial vehicle drivers and greater awareness of the dangers of “drowsy driving” have increased the need for truck parking spaces along the highway.

Parking for persons with disabilities shall be provided as per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) Accessibility Guidelines (ADA and ABA Accessibility Guidelines).

Diagonal, pull-through parking is recommended for trucks, recreational vehicles and vehicles with trailers. Adequate parking spaces should be provided for trucks that are taken out of service if inspection activities occur on site.

Due to the number of buses traveling the interstates, bus parking spaces should be provided at all rest areas. Space limitations of the site and the physical limitations of the restrooms and wastewater disposal system limit the practical number of parking spaces to three or less, regardless of the number of buses that may travel the corridor. Bus parking should be located to allow passengers to disembark onto the building plaza area, preferably without having to enter into vehicle travel ways. Where possible, avoid locating the bus parking area within the truck parking area, due to potential conflicts with children and the elderly.

Curbs are recommended around all parking lots, on approach ramps and for islands separating car and truck lots. Barrier curbs should not be used on high-speed sections of the ramps.
Parking layouts should minimize the use of interior curbed islands and complex curved layouts and should consider ease of snow removal operations. Pavement design guidance and policy is located in the Comprehensive Pavement Design Manual. Designers must also consider the affects that large expanses of paved parking area, especially when combined with large roof expanses, can have on stormwater design. Designers may want to consider permeable pavement for parking aisles and sidewalks to reduce stormwater runoff and aid in the infiltration of groundwater. The Regional Materials Engineer should be included in these decisions.

A separate fenced-in parking area to jointly accommodate NYS Police and NYSDOT maintenance staff vehicles and equipment is recommended. Vandalism of NYSP vehicles by the public has occurred in some locations.

27.2.3.9 Commercial Vehicle Inspection

Truck inspection is an essential function of the Department. Rest areas offer unique opportunities for truck inspections because of the volume of commercial vehicles traveling on the interstates. Every rest area should be considered for truck inspection activities with the exception of the designated and staffed tourism Gateway rest areas near the state borders. These rest areas are primarily designed to serve tourists, while other rest areas will accommodate truck inspections in addition to tourists and the general motorist.

All rest areas with truck inspection activities should have permanently installed mainline signs (lighted when open for inspections) that are remote controlled by inspection staff through controls in or adjacent to the parking area. Radio controlled solar powered flashing signs can at some locations provide a cost effective alternate to buried electrical services. Refer to the MUTCD for guidance.

Inspections generate queued and out-of service trucks that could potentially negatively affect routine rest area operations and traffic flows. The length of truck queues should not be allowed to develop to an extent that they disrupts normal circulation or back up onto ramps and shoulders. Emerging technologies like E-screening and weigh-in-motion (WIM) can reduce the number of vehicles subject to physical inspections, increase efficiency of operations, and reduce air emissions from otherwise idling trucks. These technologies should be considered for use and installation when agreed upon by the Department and the NYSP. If WIM is located at the site, there may be a second, smaller building constructed on site solely for the purposes of the WIM system. If both WIM or E-screening and truck inspections will be occurring at the site, care should be taken to coordinate the signs to avoid conflicting messages for truck drivers.

If space on the rest area site allows, inspection operations work best when there is an area devoted to inspections and out of service vehicles. Commercial vehicle inspection bays should be 24' wide (1 1/2 truck parking space widths) and a minimum of 5 bays should be provided. For ease of maintenance, particularly the ability to hose off pavement surfaces, the inspection area pavement preferably should be cement concrete, rather than asphalt concrete, which is much more porous.

Exterior electrical service shall be provided for truck inspections. The service shall be lockable and secure so that only authorized employees and the NYSP have access.

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27.2.3.10 Truck Stop Electrification

Truck Stop Electrification (TSE) is an emerging technology that can reduce unnecessary idling by providing electricity, heating and air conditioning at truck parking spaces - everything the driver needs to allow the truck engine to be shut off and still stay comfortable for 10 hours at a time. NYSDOT, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) and the New York State Thruway Authority (NYSTA) have supported TSE demonstration projects. TSE will yield the greatest benefits if deployed at locations that are used for long term stays. Public rest areas do not offer the amenities that truckers prefer for long term rest. Private truck stops and travel centers tend to have more parking capacity and more amenities and are more suitable for long term rest. The Department continues to support demonstration projects to help better define the appropriate technologies and trucker acceptance of them.

27.2.3.11 Pedestrian Circulation

Pedestrian circulation through the rest area should be usable and effective for all ages and abilities. Pedestrian circulation routes should be located in a manner to reduce the potential for vehicle/pedestrian conflicts. Skid resistant pavement markings should be provided in areas with potential for pedestrian use. Barrier free walkways shall be provided for access to buildings, picnic areas, pet walks, and other areas of interest. They should be designed for long-term durability and ease of maintenance. Walkways shall be designed consistent with Chapter 18 of the Highway Design Manual. Note that Americans with Disability Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) for buildings and some facilities has been updated by ADA and ABA Accessibility Guidelines issued in 2004.

27.2.3.12 Picnic Areas

Picnic areas should be located for users’ convenience and near shaded areas if possible. Picnic tables should be uniform in appearance, complementing the overall design scheme of the site. Accessible picnic tables with a paved surface underneath should be provided within 100’ of the building and accessible parking spaces. There should be a minimum of four picnic tables per site and could be greater in number for sites that have high scenic quality or serve a high quantity of motorists.

27.2.3.13 Pet Walk Areas

Pet walk areas for pets on leashes should be provided at all rest areas, preferably separate from high use areas. Where possible, pets and owners should be able to access pet areas without crossing travel lanes within the rest area. Signing shall be provided to indicate areas that are both appropriate and inappropriate for pets. Depending upon usage, the installation of a footpath and disposal facilities may be desirable. Supplying shaded areas is desirable for
both pets and owners. Recognizing the ever increasing number of service animals, barrier free design principles must be incorporated for pet areas as well.

27.2.3.14 Flagpoles

Flagpoles shall be provided to accommodate the American Flag, New York State Flag, and may also be used to accommodate a flag of significant regional interest.

27.2.3.15 Newspaper Vending Machines

If requested by a news organization, space shall be provided for newspaper vending machines at an exterior location deemed appropriate by the Department. They shall not be placed within sidewalks or other pedestrian use area. The sale of newspapers through news racks is protected by the first amendment. Machines or stands that dispense advertising materials such as home buying or rental magazines are not permitted at rest areas.

27.2.3.16 Fencing

Fencing should be installed around the rear perimeter of the rest area along the ROW boundary. There are many factors that will govern the type of fencing selected. Within the highway clear zone, highway safety standards must be met. Other considerations include building architectural styles, site context, and other site elements.

27.2.3.17 Yard Hydrant

A frost resistant yard hydrant with garden hose connections should be installed adjacent to, or in the truck parking area. This hydrant is to be used to wash down the parking areas and or walkways when the need arises, and should be in addition to any hydrants supplied for fire protection or plant watering purposes. The hydrant shall be lockable and secure, so that only authorized employees and the NYSP have access to the water.

27.2.3.18 Dumpsters

Dumpsters should be animal resistant, screened from public areas, fenced within an outside enclosed corral, and accessible to garbage removal trucks.

27.2.3.19 Snow Storage Areas

During design, consideration should be given to the location of snow storage areas. The provision of accessible, large obstacle-free areas will maximize snow removal efficiency.
27.2.3.20 Intelligent Transportation Systems

Consideration should be given to the desirability of installing ITS devices at or in proximity to rest areas. Rest areas provide a location that may meet ITS device power, space and/or telecommunications needs. In addition, the rest area may provide a convenient location to provide off-the-roadway access to the devices for operations and maintenance purposes. Examples of devices and/or functionality to be considered include freeway traffic detectors or traffic count stations, Variable Message Signs, CCTV cameras, Highway Advisory Radio (HAR), Weigh-In-Motion (WIM) and Road Weather Information Systems. It may also be convenient to locate fiber optic cable junction boxes/hubs at or near the rest area. In some cases the standard power and telecommunications services at the rest area may not provide sufficient capabilities for ITS devices. Consideration should be given to upgrading these systems during the design process. Section 27.2.4.10 discusses the need for considering kiosks for the provision of traveler information. Any plans to make use of ITS devices should include coordination with Main Office and Regional IT and Traffic Operations groups.

27.2.3.21 Additional Features

The use of artwork and interpretive exhibits is beneficial in developing an interesting, inviting place that will encourage motorists to relax and relieve driving fatigue. Interpretive displays, educational exhibits, demonstration projects, art work, an item of historical interest, or something unique to the area are all suitable features that may be provided at Department rest areas. Interpretive displays should be coordinated through the appropriate state agency to ensure information displayed is appropriate and factual. When a portion of the rest area site is designed to remain unmowed or in a “natural” condition, bird nesting boxes may be an appropriate addition. The location and installation of memorials are not allowed at Department rest areas.

27.2.4 Rest Area Building Design

The rest area building is the most important element of the rest area, serving as the site’s focal point, a tool for providing information to travelers, and a place to relax and find refuge from inclement weather and traffic conditions. A positive image fosters a positive impression of the site and the state. When a rest area serves as a “gateway” to the state and is significant from a tourism standpoint, it is appropriate to have the overall architectural style of the building reflect native or local architecture and culture and make use of materials typically found in the area.

There are many factors that must be considered in the architectural design of a rest area building. While rest areas may serve many purposes, e.g., place of rest and refuge, welcome center, commercial vehicle inspection facility; it must be remembered that they are intended to provide a service to motorists using the highways, and should not serve as a local park or other community facility.
All site buildings shall integrate the concept of access for the disabled within the overall design concept of the new facility, avoiding special places based upon disabilities. This approach will assure full compliance with ADA requirements.

Alternative energy sources for heating, cooling and electrical systems should be explored early in the design process. Not only will these reduce long-term operating costs, but alternative energy technology may be presented effectively to the public in educational displays. Methods of heating and water treatment types and equipment can vary widely and can have substantial impacts upon the size of mechanical areas within the building. These also can have significant impacts upon the types of activities needed to operate and maintain the building. Proposed systems should be carefully evaluated for long term cost and maintenance implications. Building design and material selection shall be accomplished with full consideration of maintenance implications, energy conservation, state and local building codes, the interaction of all components, and projected life expectancy.

On June 10, 2001, Executive Order No. 111 was signed, "Directing State Agencies, State Authorities, and Other Affected Entities to be More Energy Efficient and Environmentally Aware". This Executive Order continues New York's leadership as one of the most aggressive states in the union for addressing issues such as energy efficiency, renewable energy and green building practices. As part of this Order, the Governor mandates the implementation of 1) new energy efficiency goals, and 2) state buildings energy efficiency practices. These apply to existing and new buildings and substantial renovation of existing buildings. The Executive Order identified the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) as the organization responsible for coordinating and assisting agencies and other affected entities with their responsibilities. The design of new rest area buildings should comply with Executive Order 111 and will utilize green and energy efficient principles and techniques as delineated in Energy Star and Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards.

In addition, on August 26, 2009, the State Green Building Construction Act was signed into law. This act requires that the construction and substantial renovation of state buildings comply with "green" building standards established by the office of general services. The new green building requirements take effect on August 26, 2010. As of the date of this document, rules and regulations establishing construction requirements and necessary procedures has not been finalized. Project managers should request the project architect to research and follow any regulations that may be in place.

Considering the programmatic requirements of a rest area building, it is estimated that the building size will typically fall within a range of 5,000 to 6,000 square feet. Variations will be based upon the need to accommodate differing numbers of toilets and sinks to accommodate traffic levels, the amount of space allocated to the NYSP and whether or not the site will have tourism staff.

27.2.4.1 Lobby

The lobby shall be the core of the public areas of the building with the other functional areas (e.g., restrooms, vending, tourist information, NYSP) located around this core. The lobby shall
be approximately 1000 sq ft. It shall be capable of accommodating overall circulation, interactive kiosks, drinking fountains, a tourism area and brochure distribution area. The lobby shall be climate-controlled with an enclosed vestibule entrance from both the car parking area and from the truck parking area. The relationship of the core lobby to the other functional areas is shown in Exhibit 27-1. The provision of multi-lingual-lingual signs for the facilities within the rest area should be considered for corridors likely to serve significant numbers of non-English speaking passengers. Refer to 27.2.3.21 Additional Features for a discussion on the inclusion of interpretive displays, artwork, etc.

If security cameras will be installed in the lobby, it is recommended to provide signage within the lobby area alerting the public to this. This can assist in the deterrent effect of the cameras.

Exhibit 27-1 Lobby- Core Public Area

\[\text{INDICATES A NEED FOR DIRECT ACCESS.}\]
27.2.4.2 Restrooms

Restrooms shall be climate controlled and accessible through the lobby. The number of toilet fixtures should be based upon the formulas in the AASHTO Rest Area Guide and as required by the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code. Rest rooms should be dividable to allow cleaning without closing the facility with either a “swing” or “split” facilities. A “swing” restroom is located between the men’s and women’s restrooms and provides an opportunity to expand a particular area if traffic demands it, and assures that at any given time, there are always both men’s and women’s restroom facilities available to the public. “Split” rest room facilities allow for partial closure of both the women’s and men’s room facilities during periods of reduced traffic or to facilitate cleaning and maintenance. Direct access should be provided for the janitorial staff from the maintenance area to the restrooms. The relationship of
the restrooms to the lobby and maintenance areas is illustrated in Exhibit 27-2, Schematic Building Floor Plan. There should be at least one assisted use or “family” restroom located conveniently to the lobby. Clearly, the design of all restrooms, not just the family rest room, must be compliant with ADAAG. “Open access” rest rooms (no doors) eliminate the need for electronic door openers.

Restrooms shall be equipped with hot (anti-scald device) and cold running water, diaper-changing stations (in both men’s and women’s), lockable hose bib, floor drains (at least one in front of the stalls), hand dryers, at least one paper towel dispenser located near the diaper changing station, trash containers near to the paper towel dispensers, and a lockable electrical outlet. The assisted use or family restroom shall contain one toilet, one sink with hot and cold water, one hand dryer, one soap dispenser, one mirror, one diaper-changing station, a floor drain, lockable hose bib, and a lockable electrical outlet. A privacy curtain to screen off the toilet area should be installed.

27.2.4.3 Telephones

With increased cell phone use, the need for numerous pay phones has decreased significantly. Regardless, each rest area lobby shall be equipped with one pay phone in addition to an emergency telephone with direct access to the NYSP or 911.

27.2.4.4 Vending Machine Areas

As required under the Randolph-Sheppard Act, rest area vending is to be operated by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped. As specified in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between NYSDOT and the Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped, a vending area suitable for up to six food/beverage machines, a change machine, small counter top and a trash container shall be located adjacent to the central lobby area. The area shall not be located directly in the lobby. The amount of space needed is approximately 220 sq ft. A small sign should be placed on the vending machines indicating that some of the profits benefit blind residents of the state. It may be desirable to provide a small vending stock room in the proximity of the vending area. The decision to provide the stock room should be made with an understanding of how the vending machines will be maintained. If the decision is made to provide the stock room, it shall be sized to accommodate reasonable storage shelving and a trash container.

27.2.4.5 Maintenance Work Areas

A maintenance staff work area will provide working space for caretakers of the facility. A room, approximately 250 sq ft should be available for breaks, lunch and protection from the elements. It should be equipped with lockers, and have a sink, refrigerator and a microwave oven.

Storage space for towels, toilet paper, cleaning products, and a “slop tub” is needed for maintenance of the rest area facility. This maintenance storage/work space should be
accessible from the Restrooms. A rest area in a remote location may dictate less frequent deliveries and have greater storage needs.

All equipment for lawn mowing, sidewalk snow removal, or truck inspection activities shall either be stored in the interior maintenance storage area or under cover outside in the enclosed corral. As provided in the Rest Area Policy, there shall be no separate, exterior storage facilities. Lockable storage should be considered during design. Securable storage for flammable liquids with an automatic foam extinguisher system should be provided.

27.2.4.6 Commercial Vehicle Inspection Area

At rest areas where it has been determined that inspection activities will be occurring, space will be provided for the NYSDOT Commercial Vehicle Inspection personnel. This space may be combined with the maintenance work areas or with the NYSP space on an occasional basis.

27.2.4.7 Exterior Corral Area

An exterior corral directly adjacent to the building shall be provided for dumpster(s), emergency generator, air-conditioning condensers, and miscellaneous equipment. Considerations should be made to visually screen the area from the parking area and pedestrian paths in a manner that does not inhibit maintenance access.

27.2.4.8 Map Display and Brochure Rack

Each rest area shall have a wall mounted New York State Map. If there is not a designated tourist information facility located in the rest area, brochure racks for the dissemination of “I Love NY” information and NYSDOT informational brochures shall be installed.

27.2.4.9 Memorials

The location and installation of memorials either within or outside the building are not allowed at Department Rest Areas. A public rest room facility is not an appropriate location for a memorial. Approval of one request for a memorial could lead to multiple requests which could not be accommodated without detriment to the facility.

27.2.4.10 Motorist Information

Access to real-time traffic reports, road conditions, weather, public information and tourism information is extremely beneficial to motorists. Interactive kiosks with access to 511NY the Department's Travel and Traffic information source and/or televisions with cable news and weather should be installed in the rest area lobby or tourism information space. Wi-Fi access is provided in rest areas in some other states. There are several factors to be considered with its
installation, including a prohibition against commercial activities at rest areas, potential undesirable use, and increased visit time, straining capacity of the rest area. Any considerations for this service must involve the Main Office Property Management Bureau.

27.2.4.11 Tourism Office

If it has been determined in the rest area corridor plan that the rest area would be suitable for a staffed tourist information facility, the arrangement for the provision of tourist information materials should be made in the preliminary stages of the project. A competitive “Request for Proposal” process should be used to arrange for staffing. Potential vendors include local chambers, private companies or nonprofits. Typical facilities to be provided by NYSDOT include provision of approximately 150 sq ft for a tourism “booth” with brochure racks and counter for staff person/motorist interface and approximately 120 sq ft for storage of materials. Kiosks with access to reservation systems and brochure displays should also be located in general lobby space. Refer to Section 27.2.9 of this Chapter for information relating to occupancy agreements.

27.2.4.12 State Police Office

Where provided for occasional police use, approximately 250 sq. ft. of space is needed for an “Office of Convenience”. Such facilities should be provided at all new and reconstructed rest areas where the NYSP will commit to regular use.

There should be close coordination with the NYSP throughout the design of the building. Standard design requirements include the following: Bullet proof glass shall be specified for all designs in the NYSP facility. A separate exterior entrance with one way glazed panel should be provided for the NYSP in addition to a doorway directly off the lobby. The doorway from the lobby should have the NYSP seal or other signage identifying it. The exterior entrance should be less conspicuous to avoid being mistaken for a public entrance to the building. Refer to Section 27.2.9 of this Chapter for information relating to occupancy agreements.

27.2.5 Rest Area Utilities

When possible, connections to locally provided water and sewer services must be considered unless they are not readily available. Well water systems installed at rest areas are regulated by the state and local Health Departments and are subject to a variety of routine (daily) and periodic testing, must have a disinfection system and must be run by a certified operator. Septic systems have often proved unreliable at rest areas due to uneven loading; package or mechanical systems require employment of a certified operator; other types of systems have various environmental, regulatory and visual effects that have operational and cost implications.

Designers should become familiar with the local utility providers and all their required construction standards. Unobtrusive placement of meters, generators, and utility appurtenances (e.g. transformers) should be considered as early as possible, as overall aesthetics and ROW requirements may be affected. Early coordination with the Regional Utility Engineer is recommended.
27.2.5.1 Water Supply

Water supply systems must comply with the State and local Departments of Health requirements for wells, treatment, and construction standards. Typically, the potable domestic water supply system must provide for peak demands. Where wells are used, the system shall include two wells (minimum) chlorination facilities or other acceptable disinfecting methods, minimum pressure (through local distribution system or by hydro-pneumatic pressure tank); backflow prevention; filtration, and depending on water quality, treatment. Hydro-pneumatic tanks that are below grade are considered "confined space" under Occupational Health and Safety (OSHA) regulations and to avoid this, should be accessible above grade and in a building.

27.2.5.2 Waste Water System

Plans and specifications must satisfy the local NYSDOH and depending upon permit volumes, must satisfy NYSDEC State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) permit requirements.

27.2.5.3 Electrical Systems

Electrical controls and breakers should be located in the maintenance work area. Design should include enough circuits for individual room controls and separate controls for exterior lighting. Interior lights should be accessible for maintenance workers and utilize standard fixtures and bulbs that are available under “state contract”. If ITS devices are to be installed in conjunction with the rest area then the electrical system will need to consider their needs.

Rest areas are a refuge for motorists during all weather conditions and should have the capacity to remain open and operating. An emergency generator that is capable of providing a lighted (and heated in winter) facility shall be installed at the rest area to keep the facility open for public use during power outages. The generator shall be a permanent installation with an automatic transfer switch.

27.2.5.4 Telephone Service

Telephone service is to be provided by a local carrier in the designated location in the rest area. The local telephone service provider is responsible for installing the system as well as for determining ADAAG requirements. Typically, the responsibility of maintaining the telephone service belongs to NYSDOT. See also Section 27.2.4.3 Telephones If ITS devices are to be installed in conjunction with the rest area then the electrical system will need to consider their needs.
27.2.5.5  Internet Access

The installation of interactive tourism kiosks, kiosks for 511NY, and television monitors for cable news and weather will require appropriate services to provide internet access, and satellite or cable television.

27.2.6  Contract Drawings and Specifications

New York State’s Wick’s Law requires that rest area building project contracts be let in the individual areas of trade responsibility (i.e., Plumbing; Electrical; Heating, Ventilating, and Air Conditioning; and General Construction). Chapter 21 of the Highway Design Manual provides guidance on this issue.

Due to the separate contracts, coordination between contractors is critical. In addition to work plan requirements discussed in Chapter 21, due to Wick’s Law, Critical Path Method (CPM) scheduling shall be employed, per Engineering Instruction (EI 04-043). To assist in coordination, job meetings scheduled by the architect’s site representative and the Engineer in Charge (EIC) are recommended to be held every two weeks.

27.2.7  Construction Permit and Inspection Requirements

27.2.7.1  General

The construction of a rest area building is very different from the typical highway project. Therefore, it is recommended that the project architect be retained to provide a full time site representative to work with the EIC. The site representative will identify building construction issues as they arise and work with the EIC to resolve them. As with any project, any deviations from or revisions to plans must be discussed with the designer of record.

27.2.7.2  NYS Office of General Services Requirements

Rest area buildings require a construction permit issued through the NYS Office of General Services (OGS). This can be accomplished in one of two ways:

A. Submission of four sets of plans, an application form, a design certification form BDC 401 from the Department’s consultant, and the required fee to the OGS Codes and Permits Unit. OGS will review the plans, issue a construction permit, and will assign the project to an OGS regional representative for inspection during construction.

B. The Department may have the plan review performed by a Registered Architect or Professional Engineer (Department consultant). This requires the Department to submit
two sets of plans, a design certification form BDC 403 with the Architect's or Engineer's seal, a completed application form, and the required fee to OGS. OGS will issue a construction permit and then arrange for construction inspection by an OGS regional representative.

27.2.8 Operations Manual

The project designer should prepare and submit to the Department at least three copies of an Operations and Maintenance Manual. At least one copy should be retained at the rest area, with others stored at the county residency. The manual should include record drawings from each contract, shop drawings and catalog cuts for all facilities constructed, operating procedures and equipment maintenance books for all major mechanical, electrical, water and wastewater equipment and be organized in the format as bid. Also included should be copies of all permits, and a list of emergency contacts.

27.2.9 Agreements, Permits, Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs)

Any state or local organization occupying space in one of the Department's rest areas must do so under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or through a Use and Occupancy Permit or other agreement as determined by NYSDOT Real Estate Property Management and Legal Affairs. The following are brief descriptions of the various groups that may occupy space within the Department's rest areas and the type of agreements.

27.2.9.1 New York State Police

A statewide MOU was signed 7/12/95 between DOT and NYSP. This MOU spells out responsibilities of each party. Schedule “A” of the MOU lists each rest area and is updated by the NYSP when they occupy a rest area. A copy of this MOU may be obtained from Main Office Property Management Bureau.

27.2.9.2 Vending Machines

A statewide MOU was signed by DOT and the Commission for the Blind. This MOU permits up to six machines at new rest areas (2 cold beverage, one candy/snack/pastry, one hot drink, one ice cream, and one hot choice food. Transportation Maintenance Division has the original agreement. The Commission for the Blind is responsible for updating the agreement with Main Office DOT as each rest area is changed/added.

27.2.9.3 Tourism Organizations

Tourism information services may be obtained in several ways. When no local organization is interested in providing this service and the Department has determined that this use is appropriate for the rest area, provision of the service may be put out for competitive bid. In this
case, the permittee has the right to charge “advertisers” a nominal fee for dispensing of brochures for various attractions and services, except for information provided by NYS Empire State Development. No fees shall be charged to the public for any information provided. In this instance, a “Use and Occupancy Permit” is issued by Regional Real Estate. When a local chamber of commerce or tourism office will be providing tourism information, the Region may issue a permit (waiving the annual fee). This permit should include clearly spelled out terms of service. This agreement/permit should be developed by the Regional Real Estate Officer. Examples of agreements/permits are available from the Main Office Property Management Bureau.

27.2.10 Rest Area Closure

27.2.10.1 Permanent Closure

As part of the development of the rest area corridor plans, existing Department rest areas may be identified as suitable for closure and elimination from the statewide system. These may include antiquated facilities with failing septic and water systems that due to fiscal limitations and redundancy along the system can be eliminated while still meeting AASHTO spacing guidelines and providing services at nearby facilities. The decision to close a rest area should be coordinated with external stakeholders, including state, county and local officials, and other interested groups such as the American Trucking Association.

The Department’s Rest Area Policy precludes constructing new parking areas on limited access highways. However, there are many locations where there are documented shortages of parking spaces for commercial vehicles along several highway corridors. In these instances, it may be advantageous to consider conversion of the closed rest area site to a parking facility primarily for use by commercial vehicles. This decision should be made only after discussion with input from a wide variety of program areas, including Regional Traffic, Regional Operations/Resident Engineer, Main Office Policy and Planning, among others. A maintenance plan should be developed and agreed upon. Conversion of the site to a parking area must include removal of the existing rest area building and the removal or appropriate abandonment of septic and sanitary systems, utilities, drainage features, and other appurtenances.

The Regional Director will prepare a recommendation for closure, with supporting documentation summarizing stakeholder input, recommendations from the rest area corridor plan, input from affected Department units and other affected governmental agencies. A specific plan to accomplish the closure must be included. The on site work necessary to complete a rest area closure includes:

- The removal of buildings and pavements and the removal or appropriate abandonment of septic and sanitary systems, utilities, drainage features, and other appurtenances.

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- Grading, seeding, planting and any other work required to blend the site with its setting and to make it evident that the rest area is closed.

The Region will send the recommendation package to the Office of Policy, Planning and Performance with a copy to the Landscape Architecture Bureau where it will be reviewed by both organizations for completeness, statewide consistency and compliance with this guidance and FHWA policy as described in *Federal Aid Policy Guide NS23CFR 752 Non-Regulatory Supplement*.

Recommendations for approval of the closure proposal will be obtained from the Deputy Commissioner for Policy and Planning, the Chief Engineer, Director of the Operations Division, and Chief Administrative Officer, and submitted to the Executive Deputy Commissioner for approval. Upon approval, the Office of Policy, Planning and Performance will prepare and submit the approved closure recommendation to FHWA for their concurrence.

Work necessary to eliminate a rest area includes the removal of buildings and removal and abandonment of septic and sanitary systems, utilities, drainage features and other site appurtenances. Unless the site is to be converted to a parking area, all pavements shall be removed. Grading, seeding and any other work required to blend the site into the surrounding area and discourage use shall be included. Highway signage must be modified to alert motorists to the closure, including changed driving distances to the next facility and ultimately removed when determined appropriate.

27.2.10.2 Temporary Closure

There may be periodic need for temporary rest area closures. Failure of sanitary or water systems, or lack of staffing due to budgetary constraints or other issues may require a non-permanent closure of a rest area.

As with a permanent closure, external stakeholders, including state, county and local officials, and other interested groups such as the American Trucking Association should be notified.

Any contracts for cleaning, staffing or security services will need to be reviewed and adjusted accordingly and involved groups notified. This may require a reassignment or an elimination of forces.

The building will need to be secured and vending machines removed by the owner. With temporary closures, the Region will continue to provide lighting and heating/air conditioning to prevent frozen pipes/mold.

Closed rest areas will have gates and be plowed to allow continued use for staff monitoring and truck inspections. Highway signage must be modified to alert motorists to the closure,
27.2.11 Applicable Codes and Standards

NYSDOT Rest Area Policy - MAP Code 1.6-2
AASHTO Guide for the Development of Rest Areas on Major Arterials and Freeways
AASHTO A Policy on Geometric Design for Highways and Streets
New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) Accessibility Guidelines (2004)
NYSDOT Environmental Procedures Manual
23 CFR 752
Federal Aid Policy Guide NS23CFR 752 Non-Regulatory Supplement
MUTCD

27.3 ROADSIDE PARKING AREAS

Similar to rest areas, roadside parking areas are functional and important elements of the complete highway facility. Roadside parking areas exist on other than limited access highways and provide an opportunity for vehicles to park off the highway and to exit and enter the highway with relative safety. The areas should always be designed for motorists to safely leave their vehicles to rest, walk around and/or to take advantage of scenic vistas. They may also be constructed to provide fishing access and safe parking and access to recreational trails. All parking areas should provide accessible parking spaces in the proportions indicated in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) Accessibility Guidelines.

In some cases, a roadside parking area may fulfill several of the above functions. For example, a safety parking area may also provide an outstanding view of the surrounding landscape from the parking area. A fishing access site may be an appropriate place for a motorist to safely pull off the highway and rest for a few minutes.

27.3.1 Safety Parking Areas

These parking areas are intended to provide motorists a place to safely pull off the highway and take a short break from driving, use a cell phone, or stop during inclement weather. Intended for short duration stays, facilities are not provided, although some Regions may opt to provide picnic tables or trash receptacles. State regulations (17NYCRR Chapter IV, Part 156) prohibit parking for more than three hours at night, although there are exceptions for commercial vehicle drivers. The regulations also prohibit use of the parking area or scenic overlook as a park and ride, camping, active recreation or local picnic grounds.
27.3.2 Scenic Overlooks

These parking areas provide motorists an opportunity to safely pull off the highway to stop and take in an outstanding view. Scenic overlooks are intended for very short duration stays; places to take a photo and continue on down the highway. Scenic overlooks are only located where outstanding views and scenery exist and can be taken advantage of. Any scenic overlooks located on a New York State Scenic Byway should be coordinated with the byway management organization for that byway. In addition, Regional Scenic Byway Coordinators should be contacted for a copy of the Byway’s Corridor management Plan. In general, scenic overlooks should be in full view of the highway and sight distance, grading and the relationship to any residential properties must be considered. Sites on or adjacent to developed property or property where development is anticipated should be avoided.

Scenic overlooks should be designed for the short term use of tourist vehicles. Generally, the accommodation of 5-7 cars is sufficient, although some locations with higher traffic volumes may accommodate more vehicles. Depending upon the location, there should be some consideration for space for longer vehicles (cars with trailers, recreational vehicles and buses). Adequate space should be available to for earth mounding and planting to minimize the visual impact of larger facilities. Placement of an interpretive sign or other information highlighting the significance of the site is appropriate. Picnic tables or other furnishings encouraging long visits should not be provided.

27.3.3 Fishing Access Parking Areas

Fishing access parking areas or fishing access sites allow for motorists to pull safely off of the highway to park their vehicles and gain access to rivers and streams where the Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) has acquired public fishing access rights on private lands and to state-owned lands where formally designated launches or fishing access sites have been approved as part of an adopted unit management plan. In some instances, these areas may be improved with universally accessible trails and fishing access sites. Fishing and car-top boating access sites may occur within the state highway right-of-way or may occur on municipal or private lands by easement. Recreational boating may also occur from these locations.

Fishing access parking may be provided where the highway is adjacent to a public fishing stream and where access to the stream can be obtained without crossing private property. A small dock with sufficient depth to it will improve the ability to launch boats and canoes. Consideration of these facilities is best coordinated with NYSDEC in the preliminary design stage. Discussions should include the need for an agreement for litter removal and other maintenance responsibilities. Fishing access parking areas should be designed for long term (day long or overnight) parking. Parking space should be provided, where appropriate and possible, for recreational vehicles and vehicles with camping or small boat trailers. However, where space is limited, providing a safe place to park for even a few cars may be appropriate.

The ADA requires, among other things, that newly constructed and altered State and local government facilities and places of public accommodation be readily accessible to and usable
by individuals with disabilities. Recreation facilities are among the types of facilities covered by titles II and III of the ADA. Refer to [ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) for Recreation Facilities](#) for guidance.

### 27.3.4 Trailhead Parking Areas

Trailhead parking areas allow motorists to pull safely off of the highway to park their vehicles and to gain access to nearby hiking, biking, skiing, snowmobiling or horse trails. Where such trailhead parking areas involve hiking, biking, horse, or snowmobile trails on the State Forest Preserve, NYSDEC (and APA within the Adirondack Park) must be involved to determine whether the size and location of these parking areas are in conformance with guidelines and criteria of the State Land Master Plan and the land’s capacity to withstand use. New or expanded trailhead parking areas may be provided when requested and approved by the Department of Environmental Conservation, the Adirondack Park Agency, or The New York State Canal Corp., (and possibly local sponsors) but only where all safety consideration can be met.

Similar to fishing access parking areas, trailhead parking areas should be designed for long term parking. Parking space should be provided, where appropriate and possible, for recreational vehicles and vehicles with camping trailers.

### 27.3.5 General Design

When the need for rehabilitation or new construction has been identified, the following shall apply:

Typically, roadside parking areas are on two lane highways and they should be designed to accommodate vehicles entering from both directions. Regardless of the type of facility or intended use, entrance and exit drives shall meet the driveway standards for that highway. Where feasible, the designs should not preclude emergency use by commercial vehicles.

Parking may be either parallel or angle, depending on the design requirements at any given site. Parallel parking accommodates passenger cars, cars with trailers and trucks and is generally recommended for most situations. Where parallel parking is provided and walking facilities are provided, some of the spaces will need to conform to the requirements in [R308.2 of the draft Public Rights of Way Accessibility Guidelines](#). At certain sites, 90 degree angle parking is necessary to accommodate two-way traffic where space is limited. The design should provide for both passenger car and truck parking in safety parking areas. A minimum of 5 parking spaces should be provided in a new facility. Parking stalls, although they do not need to be striped, should be provided for cars at 10 ft x 20 ft and for trucks at 12 ft x 60 ft. Pavement shall be of a type determined as adequate for the anticipated traffic. In some locations the use of more permeable pavements may be preferable. Pavement design guidance and policy is located in the [Comprehensive Pavement Design Manual](#). At a minimum, entrance/exit drives of safety parking areas that are built and maintained by the Department shall be paved.
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Many of the Department’s existing parking areas are 40-50 years in age, with naturalized vegetation. Efforts to rehabilitate a parking area should include an evaluation of the existing native vegetation and where appropriate, incorporate it into the plans for site restoration. The site plantings should be designed for ease of mowing, maintenance and repair. Existing vegetation, rock outcroppings and other natural features should be conserved and highlighted as focal points within the site. Plant location and species selection should allow for clear sight lines.

Interpretive displays may be appropriate, particularly when the parking facility is located alongside a designated scenic byway or when there are local environmental, ecological or historic features that would benefit from being interpreted. Parking areas may also be appropriate locations for historic site markers. Although historic markers are no longer funded by State Museum appropriations, information on past markers continues to serve as a database for research, marker replacement, and tourism development. The Office of Cultural Education at the New York State Museum should be contacted to erect new markers. Existing markers may already be located at parking areas and may be replaced when a rehabilitation project is undertaken by the Department. For additional background and information visit http://www.nysm.nysed.gov/services(marker/srvmarker.html

Any interpretive signs located on a scenic byway should be coordinated with the byway management organization. Contact information may be obtained from the Regional Scenic Byway Contact or from the Department’s Scenic Byways website. Signs to be located on roadways that are not designated scenic byways should be coordinated with local community or advocacy organizations. Displays should interpret the features being viewed to inform and educate the public. The location and installation of memorials are not allowed at Department roadside parking areas.

Fencing, curbing, lighting, guiderail, drainage, clearing or selective thinning, erosion control or planting, as well as other necessary work, should be included as appropriate.

Signing should be as shown in the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).