APPENDIX I: WALK BIKE COLUMBIA!

PEDESTRIAN, BICYCLE, AND COMPLETE STREETS DESIGN GUIDELINES

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PLANNING + DESIGN

DECEMBER 2014
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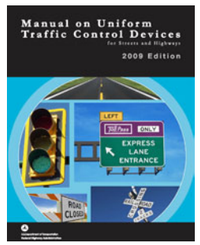
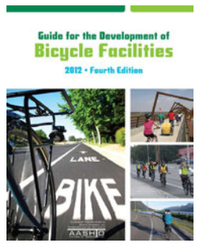
CONTENTS

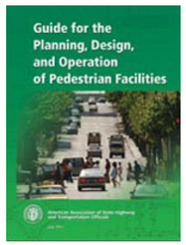
INTRODUCTION

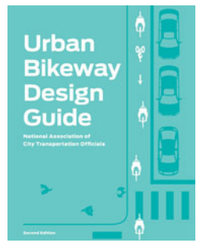
This technical handbook is intended to assist the City of Columbia in the selection and design of pedestrian, bicycle, transit facilities. The following sections pull together best practices by facility type from public agencies and municipalities nationwide. Within the design sections, treatments are covered within a single sheet tabular format relaying important design information and discussion, example photos, schematics (if applicable), and existing summary guidance from current or upcoming draft standards. Existing standards are referenced throughout and should be the first source of information when seeking to implement any of the treatments featured here.

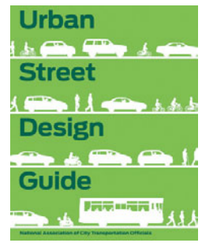
National Standards











The Federal Highway Administration's **Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices** (MUTCD) defines the standards used by road managers nationwide to install and maintain traffic control devices on all public streets, highways, bikeways, and private roads open to public traffic. The MUTCD is the primary source for guidance on lane striping requirements, signal warrants, and recommended signage and pavement markings.

The National Committed on Traffic Control Devices (NUTCD) has submitted draft language for consideration in future editions of the MUTCD to include contemporary bicycle facilities. Guidance for these treatments are evolving, and practitioners should reference future editions of national guidance to understand current best practice.

To further clarify the MUTCD, the FHWA created a table of contemporary bicycle facilities that lists various bicycle-related signs, markings, signals, and other treatments and identifies their official status (e.g., can be implemented, currently experimental). See **Bicycle Facilities and the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.**[1]

Bikeway treatments not explicitly covered by the MUTCD are often subject to experiments, interpretations and official rulings by the FHWA. The **MUTCD Official Rulings** is a resource that allows website visitors to obtain information about these supplementary materials. Copies of various documents (such as incoming request letters, response letters from the FHWA, progress reports, and final reports) are available on this website.[2]

American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) **Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities**, updated in June 2012 provides guidance on dimensions, use, and layout of specific bicycle facilities. The standards and guidelines presented by AASHTO provide basic information, such as minimum sidewalk widths, bicycle lane dimensions, detailed striping requirements and recommended signage and pavement markings.

The National Association of City Transportation Officials' (NACTO[3]) **Urban Bikeway Design Guide** and **Urban Streets Design Guide** is the newest publication of nationally recognized street design guidelines, and offers guidance on the current state of the practice designs. The NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide is based on current practices in the best cycling cities in the world. The intent of the guide is to offer substantive guidance for cities seeking to improve bicycle transportation in places where competing demands for the use of the right of way present unique challenges. All of the NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide treatments are in use internationally and in many cities around the US.

Offering similar guidance for pedestrian design, the 2004 AASHTO **Guide for the Planning, Design and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities** provides comprehensive guidance on planning and designing for people on foot.

Some of these treatments are not directly referenced in the current versions of the AASHTO Guide or the MUTCD, although many of the elements of these treatments are found within these documents. In all cases, engineering judgment is recommended to ensure that the application makes sense for the context of each treatment, given the many complexities of urban

1 *Bicycle Facilities and the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. (2011). FHWA. http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/mutcd_bike.htm*

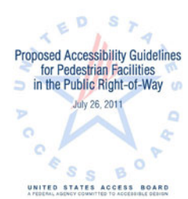
2 *MUTCD Official Rulings. FHWA. http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/orsearch.asp*

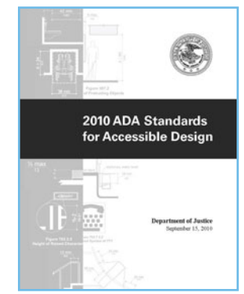
3 *http://nacto.org/*

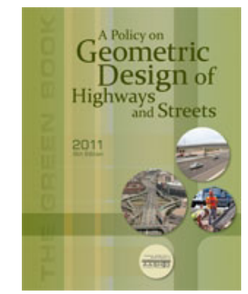
Local Standards

The South Carolina Department of Transportation has published a variety of additional resources for designing bicycle and pedestrian facilities. These include the SCDOT Highway Design Manual, SCDOT Traffic Calming Design Guidelines, SCDOT Traffic Signal Design Guidelines and SCDOT Access and Roadside Management Standards. In recent years, SCDOT has also issued several Traffic Engineering Guidelines, and Engineering Directive Memorandums for such treatments as pedestrian hybrid beacons, shared lane markings, rumble strips and other complete streets treatments.

Additional US Federal Guidelines







Meeting the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is an important part of any bicycle and pedestrian facility project. The United States Access Board's proposed Public Rights-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines[1] (PROWAG) and the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design[2] (2010 Standards) contain standards and guidance for the construction of accessible facilities. This includes requirements for sidewalk curb ramps, slope requirements, and pedestrian railings along stairs.

The 2011 AASHTO: A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets commonly referred to as the "Green Book," contains the current design research and practices for highway and street geometric design.

1 http://www.access-board.gov/prowac/

2 http://www.ada.gov/2010ADAstandards_index.htm

PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES SHOULD CONSIDER A WIDE RANGE OF PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS, AND ACCOMMODATE THE NEEDS AND ABILITIES OF ALL PEDESTRIANS

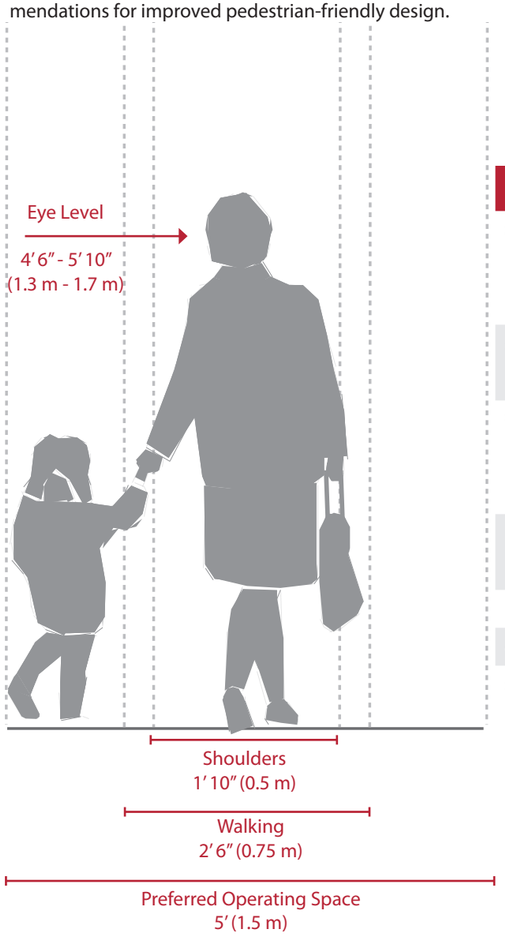
DESIGN NEEDS OF PEDESTRIANS

Types of Pedestrians

Pedestrians have a variety of characteristics and the transportation network should accommodate a variety of needs, abilities, and possible impairments. Age is one major factor that affects pedestrians' physical characteristics, walking speed, and environmental perception. Children have low eye height and walk at slower speeds than adults. They also perceive the environment differently at various stages of their cognitive development. Older adults walk more slowly and may require assistive devices for walking stability, sight, and hearing. The table below summarizes common pedestrian characteristics for various age groups.

The MUTCD recommends a normal walking speed of 3.5 feet per second when calculating the pedestrian clearance interval at traffic signals. The walking speed can drop to 3 feet per second for areas with older populations and persons with mobility impairments. While the type and degree of mobility impairment varies greatly across the population, the transportation system should accommodate these users to the greatest reasonable extent.

The table below summarizes common physical and cognitive impairments, how they affect personal mobility, and recommendations for improved pedestrian-friendly design.



Pedestrian Characteristics by Age

Age	Characteristics
0-4	Learning to walk
	Requires constant adult supervision
	Developing peripheral vision and depth perception
5-8	Increasing independence, but still requires supervision
	Poor depth perception
9-13	Susceptible to "darting out" in roadways
	Insufficient judgment
	Sense of invulnerability
14-18	Improved awareness of traffic environment
	Insufficient judgment
19-40	Active, aware of traffic environment
41-65	Slowing of reflexes
65+	Difficulty crossing street
	Vision loss
	Difficulty hearing vehicles approaching from behind

Source: AASHTO. *Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities*, Exhibit 2-1. 2004.

Disabled Pedestrian Design Considerations

Impairment	Effect on Mobility	Design Solution
Wheelchair and Scooter Users	Difficulty propelling over uneven or soft surfaces.	Firm, stable surfaces and structures, including ramps or beveled edges.
	Cross-slopes cause wheelchairs to veer downhill.	Cross-slopes of less than two percent.
	Require wider path of travel.	Sufficient width and maneuvering space.
Walking Aid Users	Difficulty negotiating steep grades and cross slopes; decreased stability.	Smooth, non-slipperly travel surface.
	Slower walking speed and reduced endurance; reduced ability to react.	Longer pedestrian signal cycles, shorter crossing distances, median refuges, and street furniture.
Hearing Impairment	Less able to detect oncoming hazards at locations with limited sight lines (e.g. driveways, angled intersections, channelized right turn lanes) and complex intersections.	Longer pedestrian signal cycles, clear sight distances, highly visible pedestrian signals and markings.
Vision Impairment	Limited perception of path ahead and obstacles; reliance on memory; reliance on non-visual indicators (e.g. sound and texture).	Accessible text (larger print and raised text), accessible pedestrian signals (APS), guide strips and detectable warning surfaces, safety barriers, and lighting.
Cognitive Impairment	Varies greatly. Can affect ability to perceive, recognize, understand, interpret, and respond to information.	Signs with pictures, universal symbols, and colors, rather than text.

DESIGN NEEDS OF WHEELCHAIR USERS

As the American population ages, the number of people using mobility assistive devices (such as manual wheelchairs, powered wheelchairs) increases.

Manual wheelchairs are self-propelled devices. Users propel themselves using push rims attached to the rear wheels. Braking is done through resisting wheel movement with the hands or arm. Alternatively, a second individual can control the wheelchair using handles attached to the back of the chair.

Power wheelchairs user battery power to move the wheelchair. The size and weight of power wheelchairs limit their ability to negotiate obstacles without a ramp.

Maneuvering around a turn requires additional space for wheelchair devices. Providing adequate space for 180 degree turns at appropriate locations is an important element for accessible design.

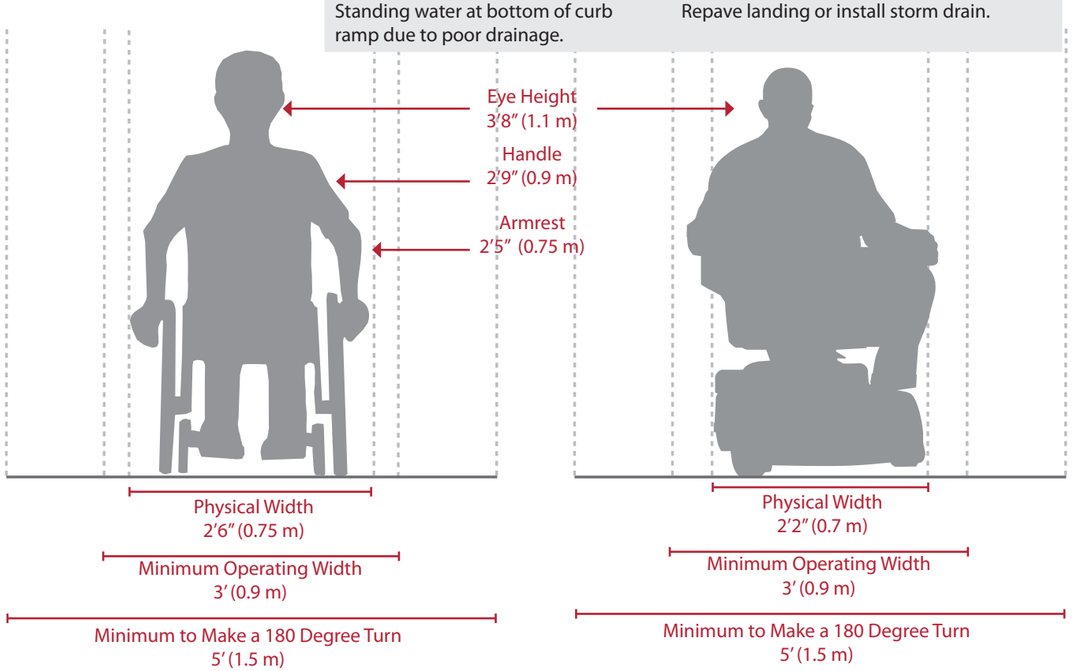
ADA inadequacies should be inventoried in an ADA transition plan and addressed in a systematic fashion.

Wheelchair User Typical Speed

User	Typical Speed
Manual Wheelchair	3.6 mph
Power Wheelchair	6.8 mph

Wheelchair User Design Considerations

Effect on Mobility	Design Solution
Difficulty propelling over uneven or soft surfaces.	Firm, stable surfaces and structures, including ramps or beveled edges.
Cross-slopes cause wheelchairs to veer downhill.	Cross-slopes of less than two percent.
Pavement lip over 1/4" due to settling or root buckling.	Grind down pavement or replace sidewalk section.
Ramp slope difficult for wheelchair users to climb.	Ensure 8.3% ramp slope.
Standing water at bottom of curb ramp due to poor drainage.	Repave landing or install storm drain.



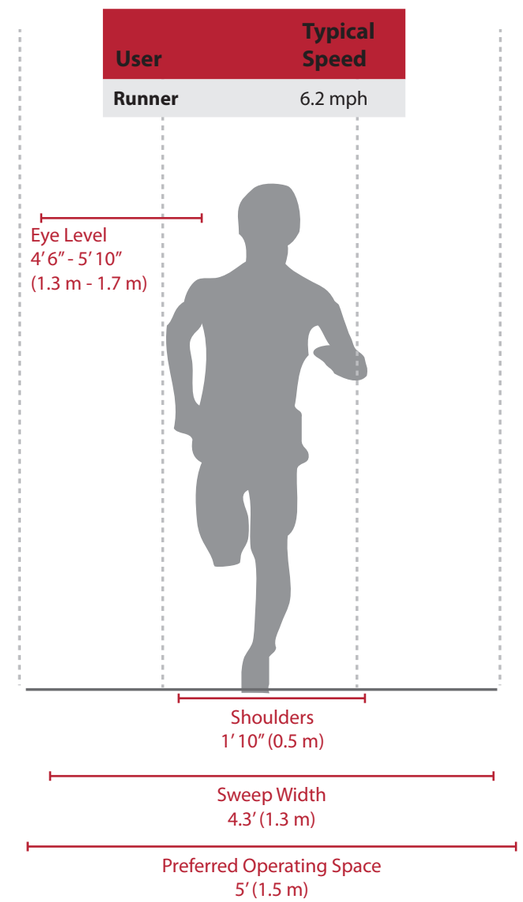
Source: FHWA. *Characteristics of Emerging Road and Trail Users and Their Safety.* 2004.
USDOJ. *2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design.* 2010.

DESIGN NEEDS OF RUNNERS

Running is an important recreation and fitness activity commonly performed on shared use paths. Many runners prefer softer surfaces (such as rubber, bare earth or crushed rock) to reduce impact. Runners can change their speed and direction frequently. If high volumes are expected, controlled interaction or separation of different types of users should be considered.

Typical Speed

User	Typical Speed
Runner	6.2 mph

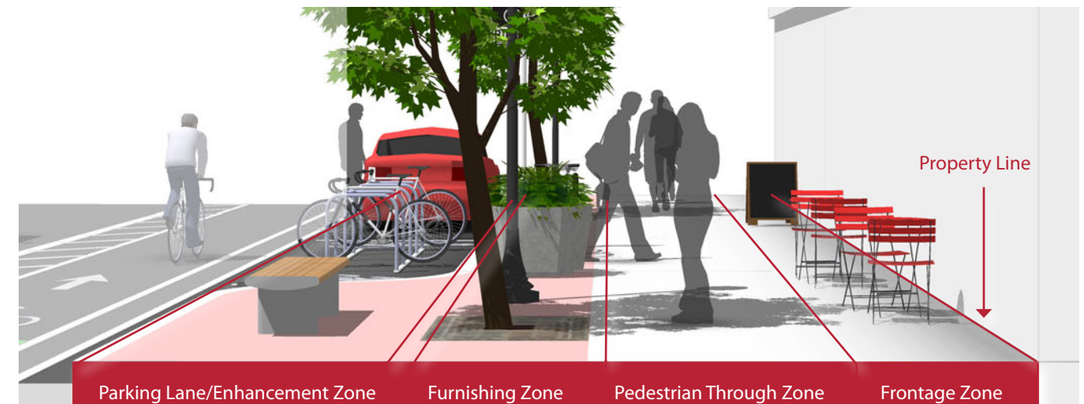


SIDEWALKS

ZONES IN THE SIDEWALK CORRIDOR

Description

Sidewalks are the most fundamental element of the walking network, as they provide an area for pedestrian travel separated from vehicle traffic. A variety of considerations are important in sidewalk design. Providing adequate and accessible facilities can lead to increased numbers of people walking, improved safety, and the creation of social space.



Parking Lane/Enhancement Zone	Edge Zone	Furnishing Zone	Pedestrian Through Zone	Frontage Zone
The parking lane can act as a flexible space to further buffer the sidewalk from moving traffic. Curb extensions and bike corrals may occupy this space where appropriate. In the edge zone there should be a 6 inch wide curb.		The furnishing zone buffers pedestrians from the adjacent roadway, and is also the area where elements such as street trees, signal poles, signs, and other street furniture are properly located.	The through zone is the area intended for pedestrian travel. This zone should be entirely free of permanent and temporary objects. Wide through zones are needed in downtown areas or where pedestrian flows are high.	The Frontage Zone allows pedestrians a comfortable "shy" distance from the building fronts. It provides opportunities for window shopping, to place signs, planters, or chairs. Not applicable if adjacent to a landscaped space.

Discussion

Sidewalks should be more than areas to travel; they should provide places for people to interact. There should be places for standing, visiting, and sitting. Sidewalks should contribute to the character of neighborhoods and business districts, strengthen their identity, and be an area where adults and children can safely participate in public life.

Additional References and Guidelines

USDOJ. *ADA Standards for Accessible Design.* 2010.
United States Access Board. *Proposed Accessibility Guidelines for Pedestrian Facilities in the Public-Right-of-Way (PROWAG).* 2011.
AASHTO. *Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities.* 2004.
NACTO. *Urban Street Design Guide.* 2013.
SCDOT. Highway Design Manual. 2003.

Materials and Maintenance

Sidewalks are typically constructed out of concrete and are separated from the roadway by a curb or gutter and sometimes a landscaped space. Colored, patterned, or stamped concrete can add distinctive visual appeal.

SIDEWALK WIDTHS

Description

The width and design of sidewalks will vary depending on street context, functional classification, and pedestrian demand. Below are preferred widths of each sidewalk zone according to general street type. Standardizing sidewalk guidelines for different areas of the city, dependent on the above listed factors, ensures a minimum level of quality for all sidewalks.

Guidance

Sidewalk width should be determined based on desired user comfort. While a 3 foot wide through zone may accommodate a single person walking, it is inadequate for two people to walk side-by-side or comfortably pass other users. Designers should strive for sidewalk conditions that allow for side-by-side walking and comfortable passing.

Street Classification	Parking Lane/ Enhancement Zone	Furnishing Zone	Pedestrian Through Zone	Frontage Zone	Total
Local Streets	Varies	2 - 8 feet	4 - 6 feet	N/A	6 - 14 feet
Commercial/Downtown Areas	Varies	4 - 8 feet	6 - 12 feet	2.5 - 10 feet	11 - 30 feet
Arterials and Collectors	Varies	2 - 8 feet	4 - 8 feet	2.5 - 5 feet	8 -21 feet

Seating for outdoor dining is most common and functional in furnishing zones of 6 ft, although narrower configurations are possible.

Six feet enables two pedestrians (including wheelchair users) to walk side-by-side, or to pass each other comfortably

Discussion

It is important to provide adequate width along a sidewalk corridor. Two people should be able to walk side-by-side and pass a third comfortably. In areas of high demand, sidewalks should contain adequate width to accommodate the high volumes and different walking speeds of pedestrians. The Americans with Disabilities Act requires a 4 foot clear width in the pedestrian zone plus 5 foot passing areas every 200 feet.

Additional References and Guidelines

USDOJ. *ADA Standards for Accessible Design.* 2010.
United States Access Board. *Proposed Accessibility Guidelines for Pedestrian Facilities in the Public-Right-of-Way (PROWAG).* 2011.
AASHTO. *Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities.* 2004.
NACTO. *Urban Street Design Guide.* 2013.
SCDOT. Highway Design Manual. 2003.

Materials and Maintenance

Sidewalks are typically constructed out of concrete and are separated from the roadway by a curb or gutter and sometimes a landscaped boulevard. Surfaces must be firm, stable, and slip resistant.

SIDEWALK OBSTRUCTIONS AND DRIVEWAY RAMPS

Description

Obstructions to pedestrian travel in the sidewalk corridor typically include driveway ramps, curb ramps, sign posts, utility and signal poles, mailboxes, fire hydrants and street furniture.

Guidance

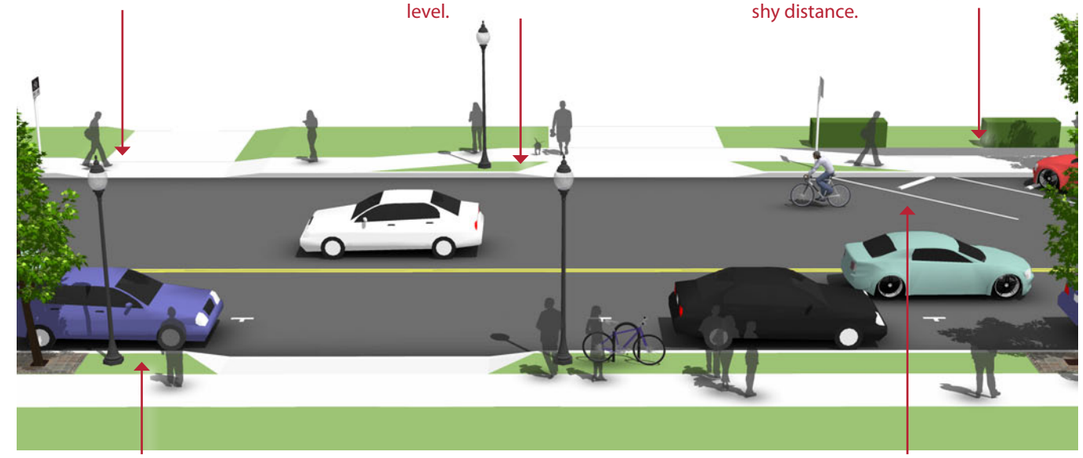
Reducing the number of accesses reduces the need for special provisions. This strategy should be pursued first.

Obstructions should be placed between the sidewalk and the roadway to create a buffer for increased pedestrian comfort.

Dipping the entire sidewalk at the driveway approaches keeps the cross-slope at a constant grade. This is the least-preferred driveway option.

Where constraints preclude a planter strip, wrapping the sidewalk around the driveway allows the sidewalk to still remain level.

When sidewalks abut hedges, fences, or buildings, an additional two feet of lateral clearance should be added to provide appropriate shy distance.



Planter strips allow sidewalks to remain level, with the driveway grade change occurring within the planter strip.

When sidewalks abut angled on-street parking, wheel stops should be used to prevent vehicles from overhanging in the sidewalk.

Discussion

Driveways are a common sidewalk obstruction, especially for wheelchair users. When constraints only allow curb-tight sidewalks, dipping the entire sidewalk at the driveway approaches keeps the cross-slope at a constant grade. However, this may be uncomfortable for pedestrians and could create drainage problems behind the sidewalk.

Additional References and Guidelines

USDOJ. *ADA Standards for Accessible Design.* 2010.
United States Access Board. *Proposed Accessibility Guidelines for Pedestrian Facilities in the Public-Right-of-Way (PROWAG).* 2011.
AASHTO. *Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities.* 2004.

SCDOT. Highway Design Manual. 2003.

Materials and Maintenance

Sidewalks are typically constructed out of concrete and are separated from the roadway by a curb or gutter and sometimes a landscaped space. Surfaces must be firm, stable, and slip resistant.

PEDESTRIAN AMENITIES

Description

A variety of streetscape elements can define the pedestrian realm, offer protection from moving vehicles, and enhance the walking experience. Key features are presented below.

Street Trees

In addition to their aesthetic and environmental value, street trees can slow traffic and improve safety for pedestrians. Trees add visual interest to streets and narrow the street's visual corridor, which may cause drivers to slow down. It is important that trees do not block light or the vision triangle.

Street Furniture

Providing benches at key rest areas and viewpoints encourages people of all ages to use the walkways by ensuring that they have a place to rest along the way. Benches should be 20" tall to accommodate elderly pedestrians comfortably. Benches can be simple (e.g., wood slats) or more ornate (e.g., stone, wrought iron, concrete). If alongside a parking zone, street furniture should be placed to minimize interference with passenger loading.

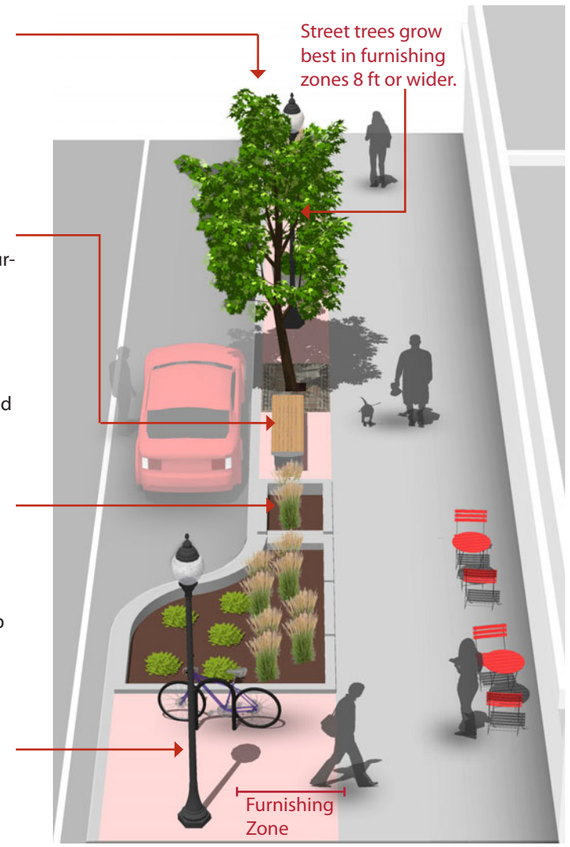
Green Features

Green stormwater strategies may include bioretention swales, rain gardens, tree box filters, and pervious pavements (pervious concrete, asphalt and pavers).

Bioswales are natural landscape elements that manage water runoff from a paved surface. Plants in the swale trap pollutants and silt from entering a river system.

Lighting

Pedestrian scale lighting improves visibility for both pedestrians and motorists - particularly at intersections. Pedestrian scale lighting can provide a vertical buffer between the sidewalk and the street, defining pedestrian areas.



Discussion

Additional pedestrian amenities such as banners, public art, special paving, along with historical elements and cultural references, promote a sense of place. Public activities should be encouraged and commercial activities such as dining, vending and advertising may be permitted when they do not interfere with safety and accessibility.

Pedestrian amenities should be placed in the furnishing zone on a sidewalk corridor. See Zones in the Sidewalk Corridor for a discussion of the functional parts of a sidewalk. Signs, meters, tree wells should go between parking spaces.

Additional References and Guidelines

United States Access Board. *Proposed Accessibility Guidelines for Pedestrian Facilities in the Public-Right-of-Way (PROWAG)*. 2011.
NACTO. *Urban Street Design Guide*. 2013.

Materials and Maintenance

Establishing and caring for your young street trees is essential to their health. Green features may require routine maintenance, including sediment and trash removal, and clearing curb openings and overflow drains.

ACCESSIBLE BUS STOP DESIGN

Description

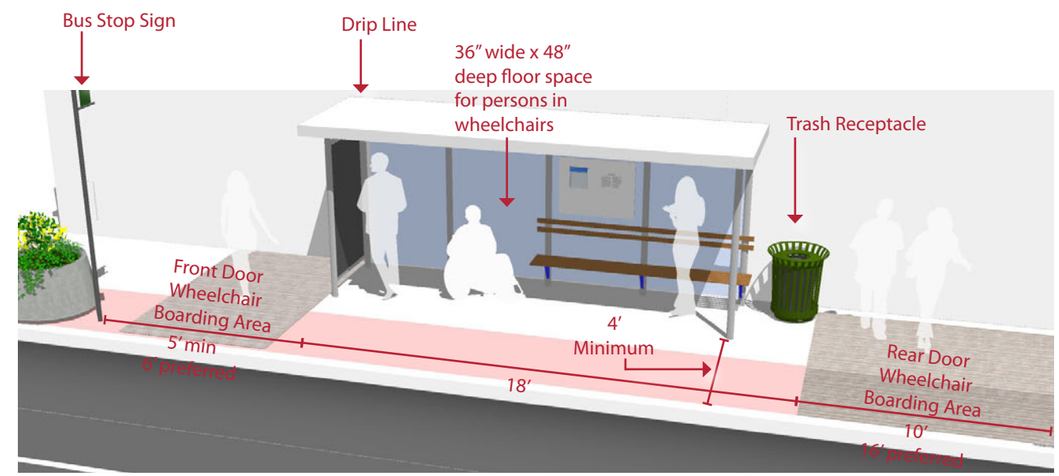
Bus stops should be connected to a continuous sidewalk and be located with adequate right of way to provide amenities such as shelters, benches and bike racks for users. The bus stop should offer direct pedestrian connectivity to adjacent destinations. Bus stops should be placed in a conspicuous, well-lit location to improve safety and reduce vandalism.

Bus stops should be designed to accomadate all users through the Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility requirements.

Guidance

Successful stop design provides good pedestrian traffic flow and thoughtful placement of amenities while meeting ADA accessibility requirements.

- Site fixtures should be placed at the back of the site, allowing for pedestrian flow adjacent to the street.
- A 5' minimum clear area should be maintained between any site fixtures and the street.
- The boarding and alighting areas should also be kept clear of obstacles. This includes benches, trash receptacles, trees, utility poles, newsracks, etc.
- The space for front door boarding and alighting should be a minimum of 5' wide (6' preferred) and the space for each of the rear doors should be a minimum of 10' wide (16' preferred).



Discussion

Far-side bus stops have been shown to offer advantages for pedestrians and motorists – by improving visibility of pedestrians at crosswalks and not disrupting motor vehicle turning movements. For bus stops located at intersections, far-side bus stops should be utilized wherever possible.

Additional References and Guidelines

USDOJ. *ADA Standards for Accessible Design*. 2010.
United States Access Board. *Proposed Accessibility Guidelines for Pedestrian Facilities in the Public-Right-of-Way (PROWAG)*. 2011.
AASHTO. *Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities*. 2004.

Materials and Maintenance

Regularly inspect transit stops and keep clear of debris and trash.

PEDESTRIANS AT INTERSECTIONS

MARKED CROSSWALKS

Description

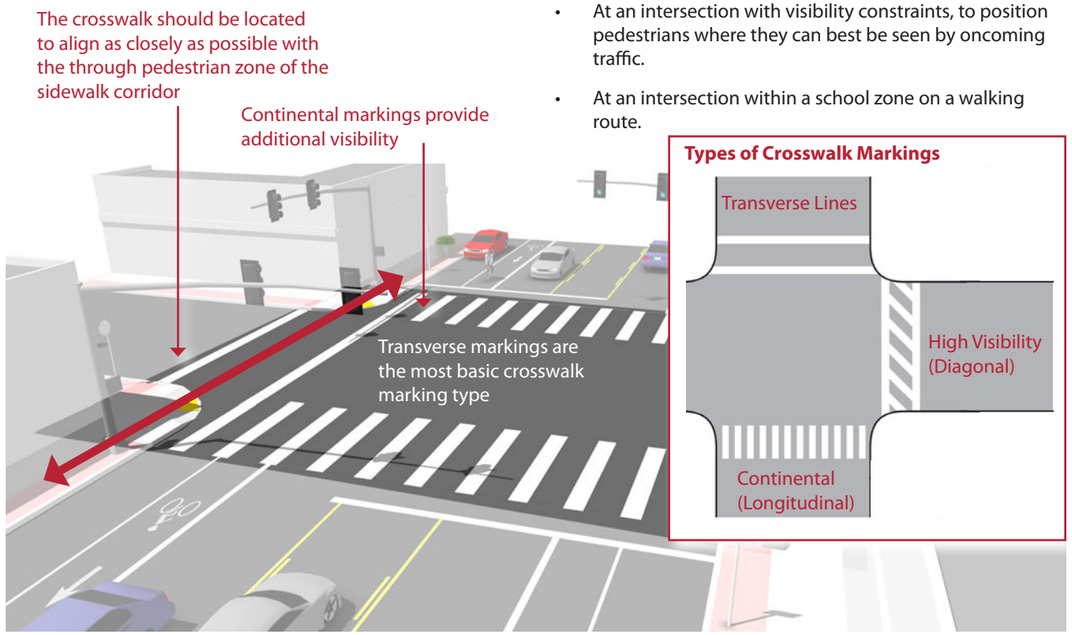
A marked crosswalk signals to motorists that they must stop for pedestrians and encourages pedestrians to cross at designated locations. Installing crosswalks alone will not necessarily make crossings safer especially on multi-lane roadways.

At mid-block locations, crosswalks can be marked where there is a demand for crossing and there are no nearby marked crosswalks.

Guidance

At signalized intersections, all crosswalks should be marked. At un-signalized intersections, crosswalks may be marked under the following conditions:

- At a complex intersection, to orient pedestrians in finding their way across.
- At an offset intersection, to show pedestrians the shortest route across traffic with the least exposure to vehicular traffic and traffic conflicts.
- At an intersection with visibility constraints, to position pedestrians where they can best be seen by oncoming traffic.
- At an intersection within a school zone on a walking route.



Discussion

Continental crosswalk markings should be used at crossings with high pedestrian use or where vulnerable pedestrians are expected, including: school crossings, across arterial streets for pedestrian-only signals, at mid-block crosswalks, and at intersections where there is expected high pedestrian use and the crossing is not controlled by signals or stop signs.

Additional References and Guidelines

FHWA. *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. (3B.18). 2009.*
AASHTO. Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities. 2004.
FHWA. *Safety Effects of Marked vs. Unmarked Crosswalks at Uncontrolled Locations.* 2005.
FHWA. *Crosswalk Marking Field Visibility Study.* 2010.
NACTO. *Urban Street Design Guide.* 2013.

Materials and Maintenance

Because the effectiveness of marked crossings depends entirely on their visibility, maintaining marked crossings should be a high priority. Thermoplastic markings offer increased durability than conventional paint.

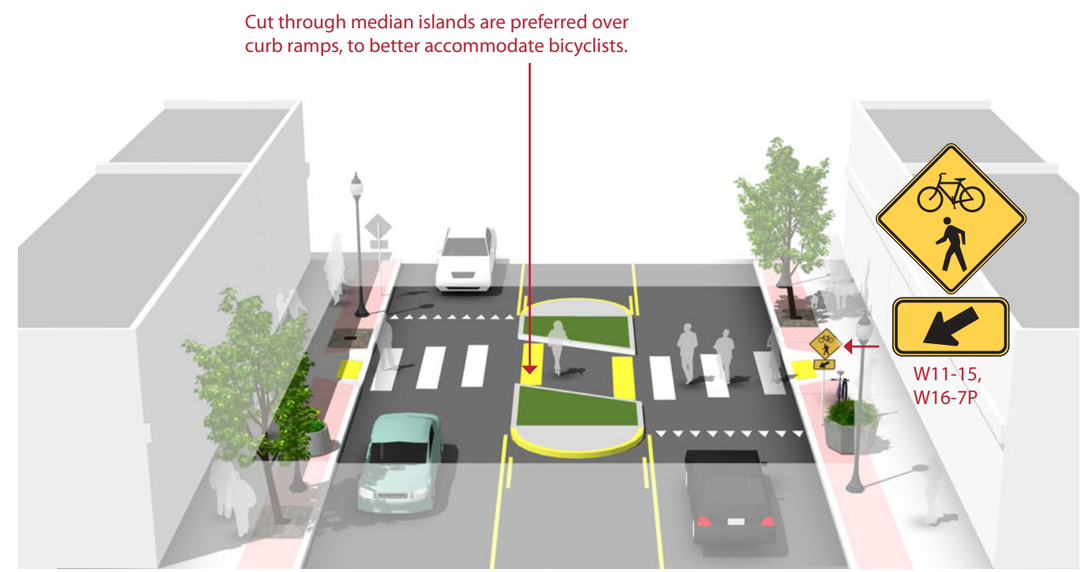
MEDIAN REFUGE ISLANDS

Description

Median refuge islands are located at the mid-point of a marked crossing and help improve pedestrian safety by allowing pedestrians to cross one direction of traffic at a time. Refuge islands minimize pedestrian exposure by shortening crossing distance and increasing the number of available gaps for crossing.

Guidance

- Can be applied on any roadway with a left turn center lane or median that is at least 6' wide.
- Appropriate at signalized or unsignalized crosswalks
- The refuge island must be accessible, preferably with an at-grade passage through the island rather than ramps and landings.
- The island should be at least 6' wide between travel lanes (to accommodate bikes with trailers and wheelchair users) and at least 20' long.
- On streets with speeds higher than 25 mph there should also be double centerline marking, reflectors, and "KEEP RIGHT" signage.



Discussion

If a refuge island is landscaped, the landscaping should not compromise the visibility of pedestrians crossing in the crosswalk. Shrubs and ground plantings should be no higher than 1 ft 6 in.

On multi-lane roadways, consider configuration with active warning beacons for improved yielding compliance.

Additional References and Guidelines

FHWA. Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. 2009.
AASHTO. Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities. 2004.
NACTO. Urban Bikeway Design Guide. 2012.
NACTO. *Urban Street Design Guide.* 2013.
SCDOT. Traffic Calming Guidelines. 2006.

Materials and Maintenance

Refuge islands may collect road debris and may require somewhat frequent maintenance. Refuge islands should be visible to snow plow crews and should be kept free of snow berms that block access.

MINIMIZING CURB RADII

Description

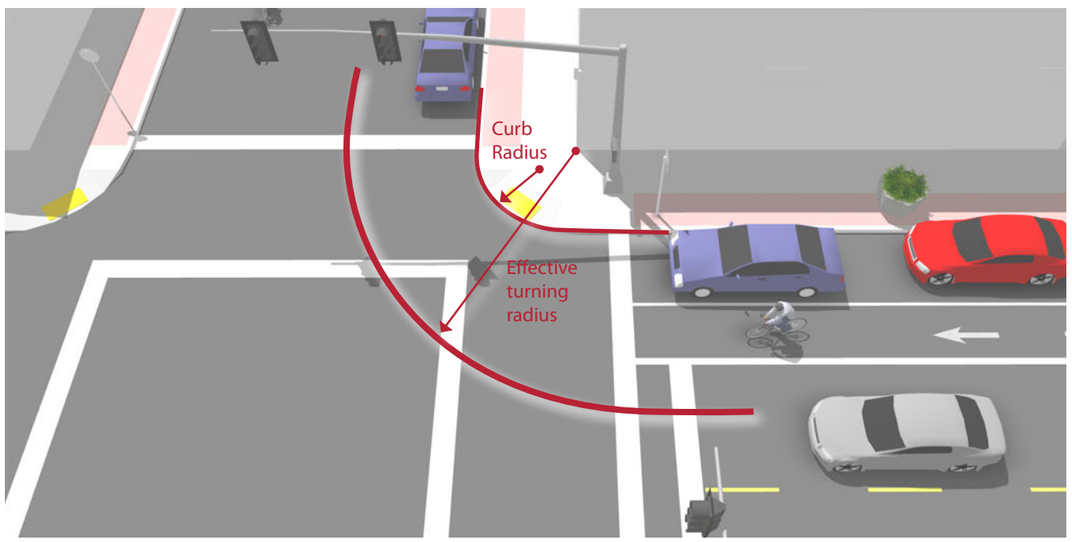
The size of a curb's radius can have a significant impact on pedestrian comfort and safety. A smaller curb radius provides more pedestrian area at the corner, allows more flexibility in the placement of curb ramps, results in a shorter crossing distance and requires vehicles to slow more on the intersection approach. During the design phase, the chosen radius should be the smallest possible for the circumstances.

Guidance

- The radius may be as small as 3 ft where there are no turning movements, or 5 ft where there are turning movements, adequate street width, and a larger effective turning radius created by parking or bike lanes.

The designer should differentiate between two types of vehicles:

- The Design Vehicle: the frequent user that should be able to make a turn at the intersection with ease.
- The Intersection Check Vehicle, the infrequent user that must be able to accomplish the turn, but may involve occupying adjacent or opposing lanes temporarily during the maneuver.



Discussion

Several factors govern the choice of curb radius in any given location. These include the desired pedestrian area of the corner, traffic turning movements, street classifications, design vehicle turning radius, intersection geometry, and whether there is parking or a bike lane (or both) between the travel lane and the curb.

Additional References and Guidelines

AASHTO. *Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities.* 2004.
AASHTO. *A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets.* 2004.
NACTO. *Urban Street Design Guide.* 2013.

Materials and Maintenance

Improperly designed curb radii at corners may be subject to damage by large trucks.

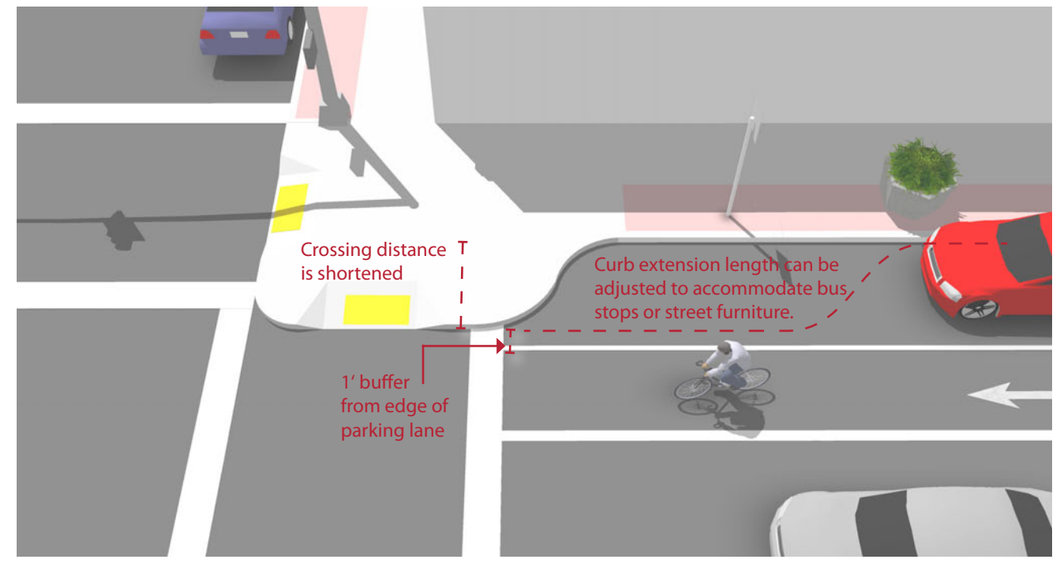
CURB EXTENSIONS

Description

Curb extensions minimize pedestrian exposure during crossing by shortening crossing distance and giving pedestrians a better chance to see and be seen before committing to crossing. They are appropriate for any crosswalk where it is desirable to shorten the crossing distance and there is a parking lane adjacent to the curb.

Guidance

- In most cases, the curb extensions should be designed to transition between the extended curb and the running curb in the shortest practicable distance.
- For purposes of efficient street sweeping, the minimum radius for the reverse curves of the transition is 10 ft and the two radii should be balanced to be nearly equal.
- Curb extensions should terminate one foot short of the parking lane to maximize bicyclist safety.



Discussion

If there is no parking lane, adding curb extensions may be a problem for bicycle travel and truck or bus turning movements.

Additional References and Guidelines

AASHTO. *Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities.* 2004.
AASHTO. *A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets.* 2004.
NACTO. *Urban Street Design Guide.* 2013.

Materials and Maintenance

Planted curb extensions may be designed as a bioswale, a vegetated system for stormwater management.

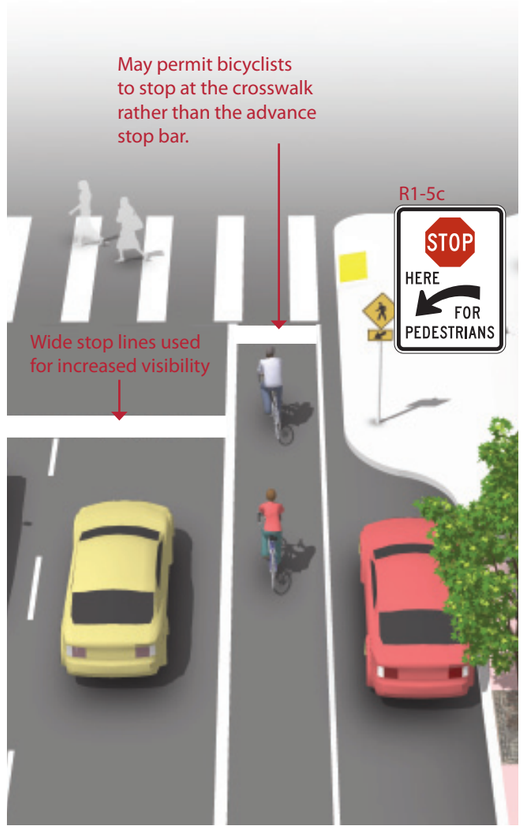
ADVANCED YIELD LINE OR STOP BAR

Description

Advance stop bars and yield lines increase pedestrian comfort and safety by stopping motor vehicles well in advance of marked crosswalks, allowing vehicle operators a better line of sight of pedestrians and giving inner lane motor vehicle traffic time to stop for pedestrians.

Guidance

- On streets with at least two travel lanes in each direction.
- Prior to a marked crosswalk
- In one or both directions of motor vehicle travel
- Recommended 15-50 feet or more in advance of the crosswalk
- A "Stop Here for Pedestrians" sign should accompany the advance stop bar



Discussion

If a bicycle lane is present, mark the advance stop bar or yield line to permit bicyclists to stop at the crosswalk ahead of the stop bar.

Additional References and Guidelines

FHWA. *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.* 2009.

Materials and Maintenance

Because the effectiveness of markings depends entirely on their visibility, maintaining markings should be a high priority.

PARKING CONTROL

Description

Parking control involves restricting or reducing on-street parking near intersections or other locations with high pedestrian activity, such as bus stops, driveways, bridge or tunnel entrances, and school zones. Locating parking away from the intersection improves motorist's visibility on the approach to the intersection and crosswalk. Improved sight lines at intersections reduces conflicts between motorists and pedestrians.

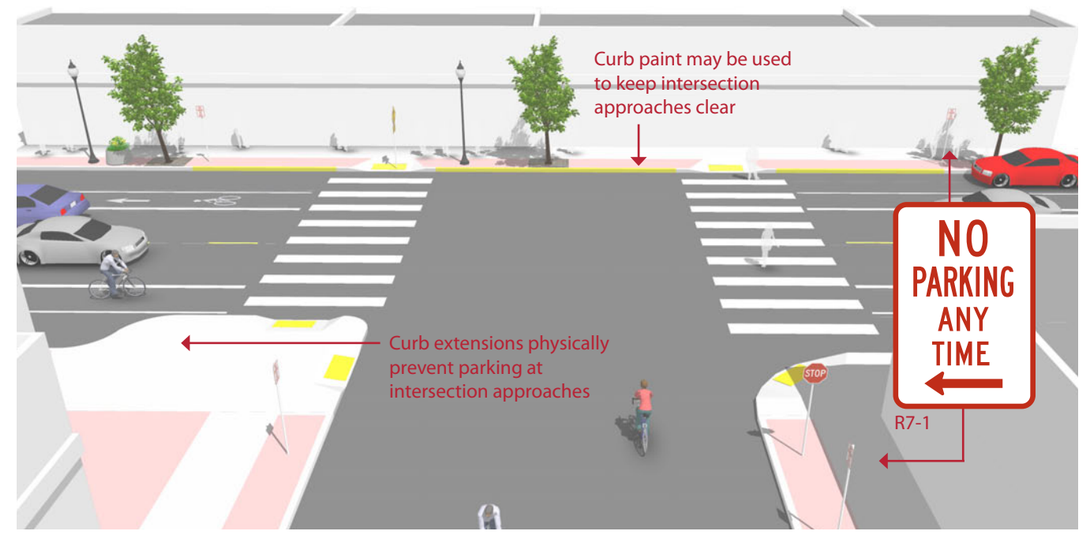
Guidance

Curb extensions, NO PARKING signage, or curb paint can be used to keep the approach to intersections clear of parked vehicles.

At "T" and offset intersections, where the boundaries of the intersection may not be obvious, this prohibition should be made clear with signage.

Parking should not be allowed within any type of intersection adjacent to schools, school crosswalks, and parks. This includes "T" and offset intersections.

SCDOT Access and Roadside Management Standards recommend a minimum 20 foot clearance from signalized intersections, 30 feet from stop-controlled intersections, and 50 feet from railway or highway crossings.



Discussion

In areas where there is high parking demand parking compact vehicles may be allowed within "T" or offset intersections and on either side of the crosswalk. At these locations, signs will be placed to prohibit parking within the designated crosswalk areas, and additional enforcement should be provided, particularly when the treatment is new.

Additional References and Guidelines

AASHTO. *Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities.* 2004.
AASHTO. *A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets.* 2004.
SCDOT. Access and Roadside Management Standards. 2012.

Materials and Maintenance

Signage and striping require routine maintenance.

ADA COMPLIANT CURB RAMPS

Description

Curb ramps are the design elements that allow all users to make the transition from the street to the sidewalk. There are a number of factors to be considered in the design and placement of curb ramps at corners. Properly designed curb ramps ensure that the sidewalk is accessible from the roadway. A sidewalk without a curb ramp can be useless to someone in a wheelchair, forcing them back to a driveway and out into the street for access.

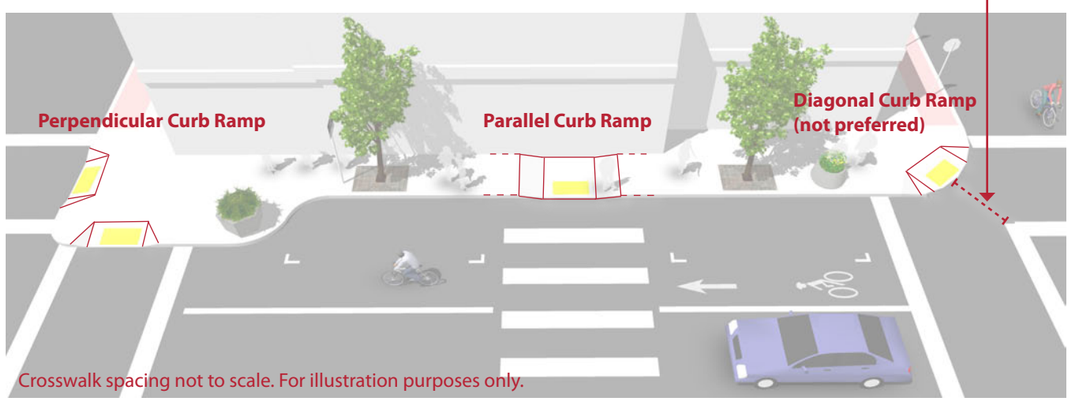
Although diagonal curb ramps might save money, they create potential safety and mobility problems for pedestrians,including reduced maneuverability and increased interaction with turning vehicles, particularly in areas with high traffic volumes. Diagonal curb ramp configurations are the least preferred of all options.

Guidance

- The landing at the top of a ramp shall be at least 4 feet long and at least the same width as the ramp itself.
- The ramp shall slope no more than 1:12 , with a maximum cross slope of 2.0%.
- If the ramp runs directly into a crosswalk, the landing at the bottom will be in the roadway.
- If the ramp lands on a dropped landing within the sidewalk or corner area where someone in a wheelchair may have to change direction, the landing must be a minimum of 5′-0″ long and at least as wide as the ramp, although a width of 5′-0″ is preferred.

Curb ramps shall be located so that they do not project into vehicular traffic lanes, parking spaces, or parking access aisles. Three configurations are illustrated below.

Diagonal ramps shall include a clear space of at least 48″ within the crosswalk for user maneuverability



Discussion

The edge of an ADA compliant curb ramp may be marked with a tactile warning device (also known as truncated domes) to alert people with visual impairments to changes in the pedestrian environment. Contrast between the raised tactile device and the surrounding infrastructure is important so that the change is readily evident. These devices are most effective when adjacent to smooth pavement so the difference is easily detected. The devices should provide color contrast so partially sighted people can see them.

Additional References and Guidelines

United States Access Board. *Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities.* 2002.
United States Access Board. *Proposed Accessibility Guidelines for Pedestrian Facilities in the Public-Right-of-Way (PROWAG).* 2011.
USDOJ. *ADA Standards for Accessible Design.* 2010.
SCDOT. *Highway Design Manual.* 2003.

Materials and Maintenance

It is critical that the interface between a curb ramp and the street be maintained adequately. Asphalt street sections can develop potholes at the foot of the ramp, which can catch the front wheels of a wheelchair.

PEDESTRIANS AT RAILROAD GRADE CROSSINGS

Description

Locations where sidewalks must cross railroad tracks are problematic for pedestrians, particularly for those with mobility or vision impairments.

Wheelchair and scooter casters can easily get caught in the flangeway gap, and slippery surfaces, degraded rough materials, or elevated track height can cause tripping hazards for all pedestrians.

Angled track crossings also limit sight triangles, impacting the ability to see oncoming trains.

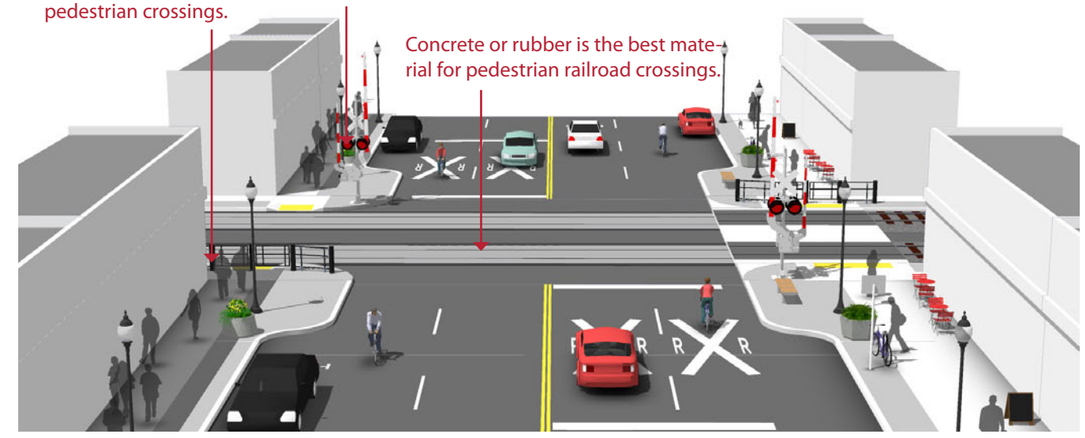
Guidance

- Bells or other audible warning devices may be included in the flashing-light signal assembly to provide additional warning for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Pedestrians need clear communication and warning to know that they may encounter a train and when a train is coming. Provide clear definition of where the safest place to cross is.
- The crossing should be as close as practical to perpendicular with tracks. Ensure clear lines of sign and good visibility so that pedestrians can see approaching trains
- The crossing must be level and flush with the top of the rail at the outer edge and between the rails.
- Flangeway gaps should not exceed 2.5 in (3.0 in for tracks that carry freight.)

Barriers and swing arm gates may be appropriate to channelize pedestrian crossings.

Pedestrian automatic gate arms or manually operated swing gates may help control pedestrian movements.

Concrete or rubber is the best material for pedestrian railroad crossings.



Discussion

Crossing design and implementation is a collaboration between the railroad company and highway agency. The railroad company is responsible for the crossbucks, flashing lights and gate mechanisms, and the highway agency is responsible for advance warning markings and signs. Warning devices should be recommended for each specific situation by a qualified engineer based on various factors including train frequency and speed, path and trail usage and sight distances.

Additional References and Guidelines

AASHTO. *Planning, Design, and Operation of Ped. Facilities.* 2004.
FHWA. *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.* 2009.
FHWA. *Railroad-Highway Grade Crossing Handbook.* 2007.
TRB. *TCRP 17: Integration of Light Rail Transit into City Streets.* 1996.
Rails-to-Trails Conservancy. *Rails-with-Trails: A Preliminary Assessment of Safety and Grade Crossings.* 2005.

Materials and Maintenance

Surfaces must be firm, stable, and slip resistant. Concrete or rubber are the preferred materials for use at railroad crossings. Rubber may become slippery when wet and degrade over time. (AASHTO 2012)

CROSSINGS BEACONS AND SIGNALS FOR PEDESTRIANS

ACCOMMODATING PEDESTRIANS AT SIGNALIZED CROSSINGS

Description

Pedestrian Signal Head

Pedestrian signal indicators demonstrate to pedestrians when to cross at a signalized crosswalk. All traffic signals should be equipped with pedestrian signal indications except where pedestrian crossing is prohibited by signage. An Accessible Pedestrian Signal (APS) using audible and/or vibrotactile indication should be provided for pedestrians upon detection/actuation.

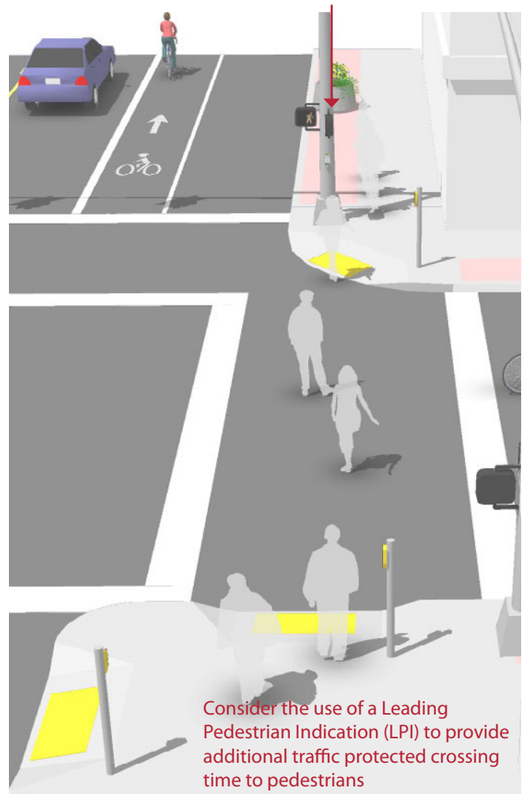
Countdown pedestrian signals are particularly valuable for pedestrians, as they indicate whether a pedestrian has time to cross the street before the signal phase ends. Countdown signals should be used at all signalized intersections.

Signal Timing

Providing adequate pedestrian crossing time is a critical element of the walking environment at signalized intersections. The MUTCD recommends traffic signal timing to assume a pedestrian walking speed of 4′ per second, meaning that the length of a signal phase with parallel pedestrian movements should provide sufficient time for a pedestrian to safely cross the adjacent street.

At crossings where older pedestrians or pedestrians with disabilities are expected, crossing speeds as low as 3′ per second may be assumed. Special pedestrian phases can be used to provide greater visibility or more crossing time for pedestrians at certain intersections.

In busy pedestrian areas such as downtowns, the pedestrian signal indication should be built into each signal phase, eliminating the requirement for a pedestrian to actuate the signal by pushing a button.



Discussion

When push buttons are used, they should be located so that someone in a wheelchair can reach the button from a level area of the sidewalk without deviating significantly from the natural line of travel into the crosswalk, and marked (for example, with arrows) so that it is clear which signal is affected.

In new construction, APS should be installed wherever pedestrian signals are installed. New accessible signals should be prioritized where insufficient acoustic information exists — at all times — to permit safe crossing at a particular intersection or crosswalk. See http://www.apsguide.org/ for more information.

Additional References and Guidelines

United States Access Board. *Proposed Accessibility Guidelines for Pedestrian Facilities in the Public-Right-of-Way (PROWAG).* 2011.
AASHTO. *Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities.* 2004.
NACTO. *Urban Street Design Guide.* 2013.

Materials and Maintenance

It is important to repair or replace traffic control equipment before it fails. Consider semi-annual inspections of controller and signal equipment, intersection hardware, and loop detectors.

ACTIVE WARNING BEACONS (RRFB)

Description

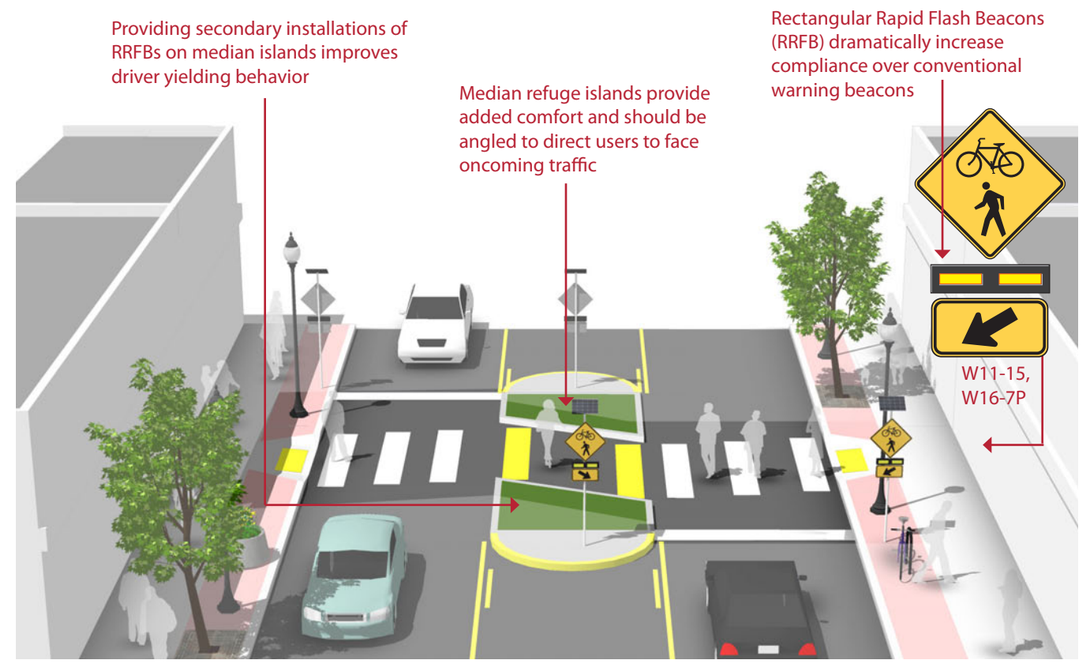
Enhanced marked crossings are unsignalized crossings with additional treatments designed to increase motor vehicle yielding compliance on multi-lane or high volume roadways.

These enhancements include pathway user or sensor actuated warning beacons, Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacons (RRFB) shown below, or in-roadway warning lights.

Guidance

Guidance for marked/unsignalized crossings applies.

- Warning beacons shall not be used at crosswalks controlled by YIELD signs, STOP signs, or traffic control signals.
- Warning beacons shall initiate operation based on user actuation and shall cease operation at a predetermined time after the user actuation or, with passive detection, after the user clears the crosswalk.



Discussion

Rectangular rapid flash beacons show the most increased compliance of all the warning beacon enhancement options.

A study of the effectiveness of going from a no-beacon arrangement to a two-beacon RRFB installation increased yielding from 18 percent to 81 percent. A four-beacon arrangement raised compliance to 88%. Additional studies of long term installations show little to no decrease in yielding behavior over time.

Additional References and Guidelines

NACTO. *Urban Bikeway Design Guide.* 2012.
FHWA. *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.* 2009.
FHWA. *MUTCD - Interim Approval for Optional Use of Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (IA-11).* 2008.
SCDOT. *Traffic Engineering Guideline TG-33: Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacons.*

Materials and Maintenance

Locate markings out of wheel tread when possible to minimize wear and maintenance costs. Signing and striping need to be maintained to help users understand any unfamiliar traffic control.

HYBRID WARNING BEACON (HAWK) FOR MID-BLOCK CROSSING

Description

Pedestrian hybrid beacons provide a high level of comfort for crossing users through the use of a red-signal indication to stop conflicting motor vehicle traffic.

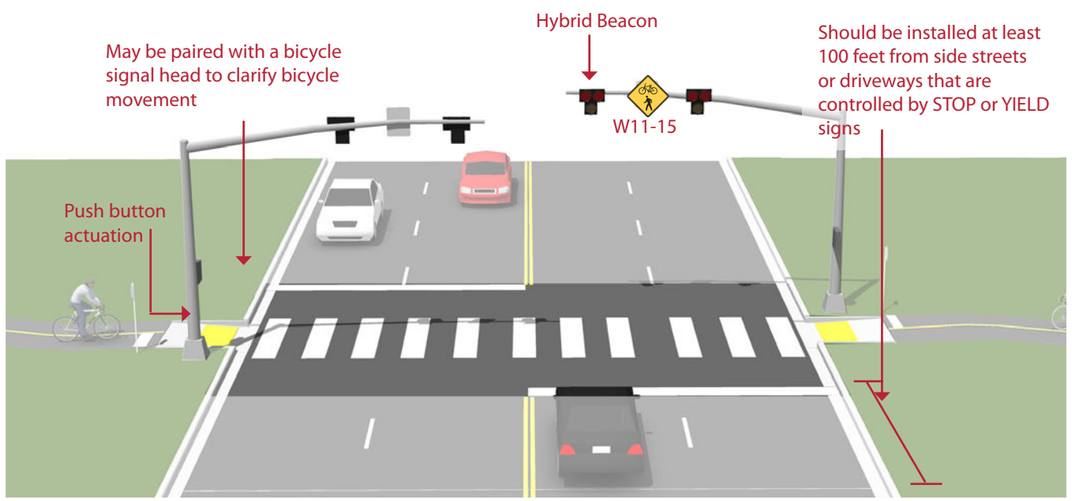
Hybrid beacon installation faces only cross motor vehicle traffic, stays dark when inactive, and uses a unique 'wig-wag' signal phase to indicate activation. Vehicles have the option to proceed after stopping during the final flashing red phase, which can reduce motor vehicle delay when compared to a full signal installation.

Guidance

Hybrid beacons (illustrated here) may be installed without meeting traffic signal control warrants if roadway speed and volumes are excessive for comfortable path crossings.

FHWA does not allow bicycle signals to be used with Hybrid beacons, though some cities have done so successfully.

To maximize safety when used for bicycle crossings, the flashing 'wig-wag' phase should be very short and occur after the pedestrian signal head has changed to a solid "DON'T WALK" indication as bicyclists can enter an intersection quickly.



Discussion

Shared use path signals are normally activated by push buttons but may also be triggered by embedded loop, infrared, microwave or video detectors. The maximum delay for activation of the signal should be two minutes, with minimum crossing times determined by the width of the street.

Each crossing, regardless of traffic speed or volume, requires additional review by a registered engineer to identify sight lines, potential impacts on traffic progression, timing with adjacent signals, capacity and safety.

Additional References and Guidelines

SCDOT. *Traffic Guideline TG-26: Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon Guideline*
FHWA. *Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon Guide - Recommendations and Case Study.* 2014.
NACTO. *Urban Bikeway Design Guide.* 2012.
FHWA. *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.* 2009.

Materials and Maintenance

Hybrid beacons are subject to the same maintenance needs and requirements as standard traffic signals. Signing and striping need to be maintained to help users understand any unfamiliar traffic control.

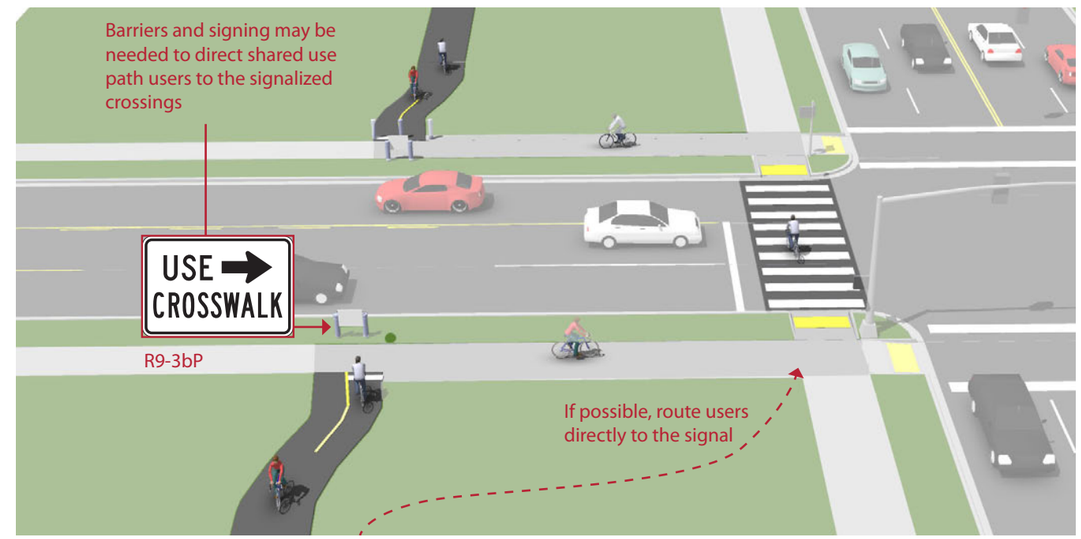
ROUTE USERS TO SIGNALIZED CROSSINGS

Description

Path crossings within approximately 400 feet of an existing signalized intersection with pedestrian crosswalks are typically diverted to the signalized intersection to avoid traffic operation problems when located so close to an existing signal. For this restriction to be effective, barriers and signing may be needed to direct path users to the signalized crossing. If no pedestrian crossing exists at the signal, modifications should be made.

Guidance

Path crossings should not be provided within approximately 400 feet of an existing signalized intersection. If possible, route path directly to the signal.



Discussion

In the US, the minimum distance a marked crossing can be from an existing signalized intersection varies from approximately 250 to 660 feet. Engineering judgement and the context of the location should be taken into account when choosing the appropriate allowable setback. Pedestrians are particularly sensitive to out of direction travel and undesired mid-block crossing may become prevalent if the distance is too great.

Additional References and Guidelines

AASHTO. *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities.* 2012.
AASHTO. *Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities.* 2004.

Materials and Maintenance

If a sidewalk is used for crossing access, it should be kept clear of snow and debris and the surface should be level for wheeled users.

SHARED USE PATHS ARE SEPARATED FROM TRAFFIC AND PROVIDE A COMFORTABLE AND DESIRABLE TRANSPORTATION AND RECREATIONAL FACILITY FOR USERS OF ALL SKILL LEVELS

GENERAL DESIGN PRACTICE

Description

Shared use paths can provide a desirable facility, particularly for recreation, and users of all skill levels preferring separation from traffic. Bicycle paths should generally provide directional travel opportunities not provided by existing roadways.

Guidance

Width

- 10 feet is recommended in most situations and will be adequate for most usage levels.
- 12 feet is recommended for heavy use situations with high concentrations of multiple users. A separate track (5' minimum) can be provided for pedestrian use.
- In constrained conditions for short distances, 8 foot width may be acceptable.

Lateral Clearance

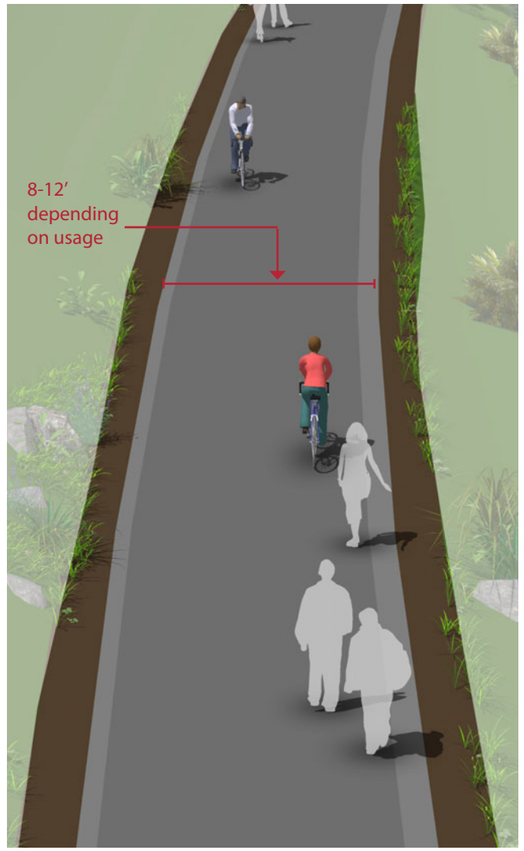
- A 2 foot or greater shoulder on both sides of the path should be provided. An additional foot of lateral clearance (total of 3') is required by the MUTCD for the installation of signage or other furnishings.
- If bollards are used at intersections and access points, they should be colored brightly and/or supplemented with reflective materials to be visible at night.

Overhead Clearance

- Clearance to overhead obstructions should be 8 feet minimum, with 10 feet recommended.

Striping

- When striping is required, use a 4 inch dashed yellow centerline stripe with 4 inch solid white edge lines.
- Solid centerlines can be provided on tight or blind corners, and on the approaches to roadway crossings.



Discussion

Terminate the path where it is easily accessible to and from the street system, preferably at a controlled intersection or at the beginning of a dead-end street.

Additional References and Guidelines

AASHTO. *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities.* 2012.
FHWA. *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.* 2009.
Flink, C. *Greenways: A Guide To Planning Design And Development.* 1993.

Materials and Maintenance

Asphalt is the most common surface for bicycle paths. The use of concrete for paths has proven to be more durable over the long term. Saw cut concrete joints rather than troweled improve the experience of path users.

GREENWAYS IN RIVER AND UTILITY CORRIDORS

Description

Utility and waterway corridors often offer excellent shared use path development and bikeway gap closure opportunities. Utility corridors typically include powerline and sewer corridors, while waterway corridors include canals, drainage ditches, rivers, and beaches. These corridors offer excellent transportation and recreation opportunities for bicyclists of all ages and skills.

Guidance

Shared use paths in utility corridors should meet or exceed general design practices. If additional width allows, wider paths, and landscaping are desirable.

Access Points

Any access point to the path should be well-defined with appropriate signage designating the pathway as a bicycle facility and prohibiting motor vehicles.

Path Closure

Public access to the shared use path may be prohibited during the following events:

- Canal/flood control channel or other utility maintenance activities
- Inclement weather or the prediction of storm conditions

Discussion

Similar to railroads, public access to flood control channels or canals may be undesirable. Hazardous materials, deep water or swift current, steep, slippery slopes, and debris all may constitute risks for public access. Appropriate fencing may be desired to keep path users within the designated travel way. Creative design of fencing is encouraged to make the path facility feel welcoming to the user.

Additional References and Guidelines

AASHTO. *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities.* 2012.
FHWA. *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.* 2009.
Flink, C. *Greenways: A Guide To Planning Design And Development.* 1993.

Materials and Maintenance

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GREENWAYS IN ABANDONED RAIL CORRIDORS

Description

Commonly referred to as Rails-to-Trails or Rail-Trails, these projects convert vacated rail corridors into off-street paths. Rail corridors offer several advantages, including relatively direct routes between major destinations and generally flat terrain.

In some cases, rail owners may rail-bank their corridors as an alternative to a complete abandonment of the line, thus preserving the rail corridor for possible future use.

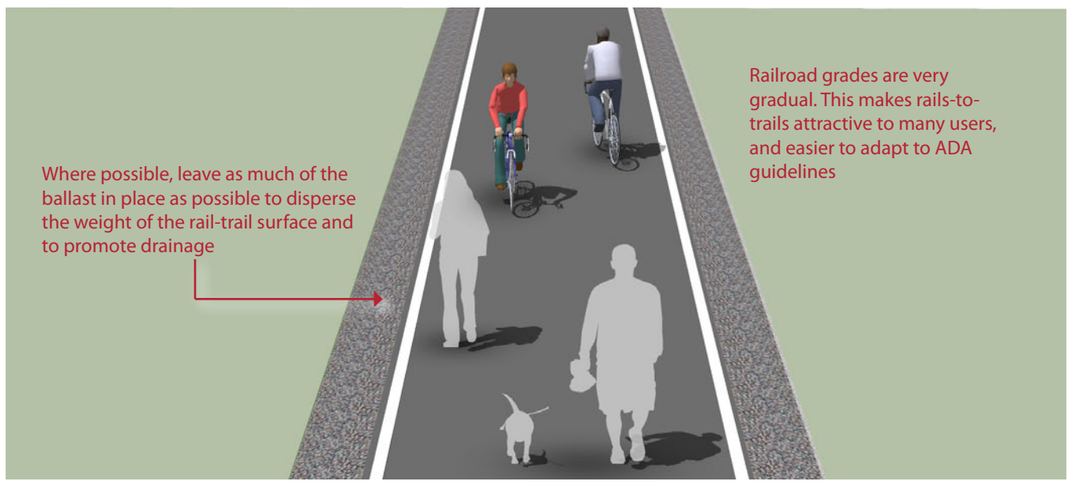
The railroad may form an agreement with any person, public or private, who would like to use the banked rail line as a trail or linear park until it is again needed for rail use. Municipalities should acquire abandoned rail rights-of-way whenever possible to preserve the opportunity for trail development.

Guidance

Shared use paths in abandoned rail corridors should meet or exceed general design practices. If additional width allows, wider paths, and landscaping are desirable.

In full conversions of abandoned rail corridors, the sub-base, superstructure, drainage, bridges, and crossings are already established. Design becomes a matter of working with the existing infrastructure to meet the needs of a rail-trail.

If converting a rail bed adjacent to an active rail line, see Shared Use Paths in Active Rail Corridors.



Discussion

It is often impractical and costly to add material to existing railroad bed fill slopes. This results in trails that meet minimum path widths, but often lack preferred shoulder and lateral clearance widths.

Rail-to-trails can involve many challenges including the acquisition of the right of way, cleanup and removal of toxic substances, and rehabilitation of tunnels, trestles and culverts. A structural engineer should evaluate existing railroad bridges for structural integrity to ensure they are capable of carrying the appropriate design loads.

Additional References and Guidelines

AASHTO. *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities.* 2012.
FHWA. *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.* 2009.
Flink, C. *Greenways: A Guide To Planning Design And Development.* 1993.

Materials and Maintenance

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GREENWAYS IN ACTIVE RAIL CORRIDORS

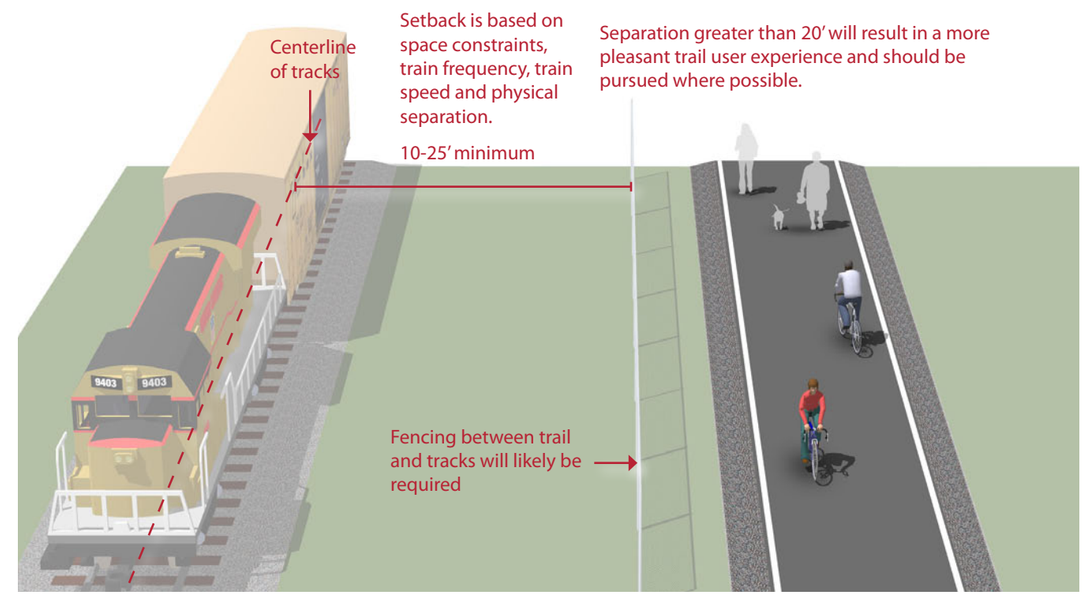
Description

Rails-with-Trails projects typically consist of paths adjacent to active railroads. It should be noted that some constraints could impact the feasibility of rail-with-trail projects. In some cases, space needs to be preserved for future planned freight, transit or commuter rail service. In other cases, limited right-of-way width, inadequate setbacks, concerns about safety/trespassing, and numerous crossings may affect a project's feasibility.

Guidance

Shared use paths in utility corridors should meet or exceed general design standards. If additional width allows, wider paths, and landscaping are desirable.

If required, fencing should be a minimum of 5 feet in height with higher fencing than usual next to sensitive areas such as switching yards. Setbacks from the active rail line will vary depending on the speed and frequency of trains, and available right-of-way.



Discussion

Railroads may require fencing with rail-with-trail projects. Concerns with trespassing and security can vary with the volume and speed of train traffic on the adjacent rail line and the setting of the shared use path, i.e. whether the section of track is in an urban or rural setting.

Additional References and Guidelines

AASHTO. *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities*. 2012.
FHWA. *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.* 2009.
FHWA. *Rails-with-Trails: Lessons Learned.* 2002.

Materials and Maintenance

Asphalt is the most common surface for bicycle paths. The use of concrete for paths has proven to be more durable over the long term. Saw cut concrete joints rather than troweled improve the experience of path users.

LOCAL NEIGHBORHOOD ACCESSWAYS

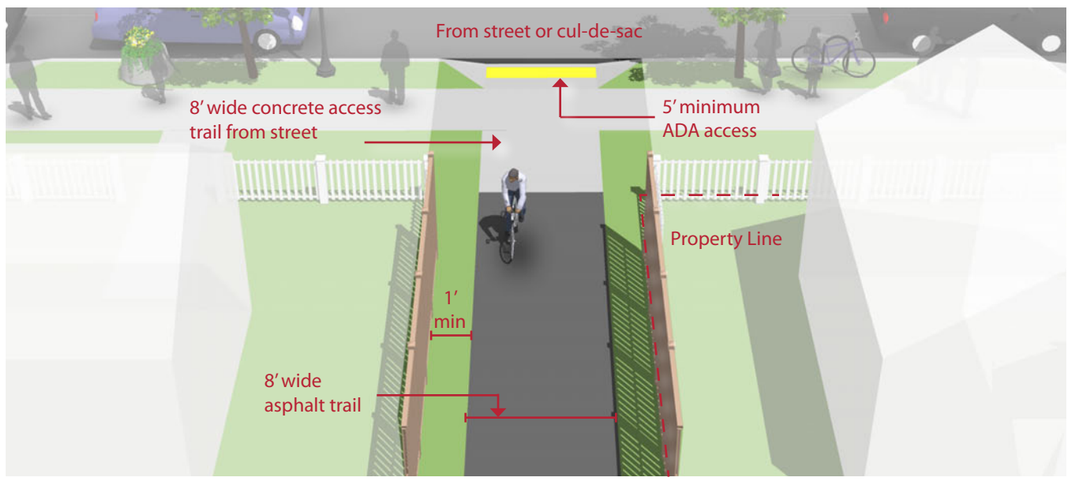
Description

Neighborhood accessways provide residential areas with direct bicycle and pedestrian access to parks, trails, greenspaces, and other recreational areas. They most often serve as small trail connections to and from the larger trail network, typically having their own rights-of-way and easements.

Additionally, these smaller trails can be used to provide bicycle and pedestrian connections between dead-end streets, cul-de-sacs, and access to nearby destinations not provided by the street network.

Guidance

- Neighborhood accessways should remain open to the public.
- Trail pavement shall be at least 8' wide to accommodate emergency and maintenance vehicles, meet ADA requirements and be considered suitable for multi-use.
- Trail widths should be designed to be less than 8' wide only when necessary to protect large mature native trees over 18" in caliper, wetlands or other ecologically sensitive areas.
- Access trails should slightly meander whenever possible.



Discussion

Neighborhood accessways should be designed into new subdivisions at every opportunity and should be required by City/County subdivision regulations.

For existing subdivisions, Neighborhood and homeowner association groups are encouraged to identify locations where such connects would be desirable. Nearby residents and adjacent property owners should be invited to provide landscape design input.

Additional References and Guidelines

AASHTO. *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities.* 2012.
FHWA. *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.* 2009.
FHWA. *Federal Highway Administration University Course on Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation. Lesson 19: Greenways and Shared Use Paths.* 2006.
NACTO. *Urban Street Design Guide.* 2013.

Materials and Maintenance

Asphalt is the most common surface for bicycle paths. The use of concrete for paths has proven to be more durable over the long term. Saw cut concrete joints rather than troweled improve the experience of path users.

SHARED USE PATHS ALONG ROADWAYS

Description

Shared Use Paths along roadways, also called Sidepaths, are a type of path that run adjacent to a street.

Because of operational concerns it is generally preferable to place paths within independent rights-of-way away from roadways. However, there are situations where existing roads provide the only corridors available.

Along roadways, these facilities create a situation where a portion of the bicycle traffic rides against the normal flow of motor vehicle traffic and can result in wrong-way riding where bicyclists enter or leave the path.

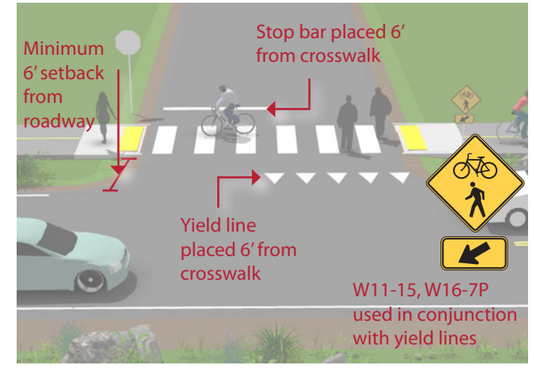
The AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities cautions practitioners of the use of two-way sidepaths on urban or suburban streets with many driveways and street crossings.

In general, there are two approaches to crossings: adjacent crossings and setback crossings, illustrated below.

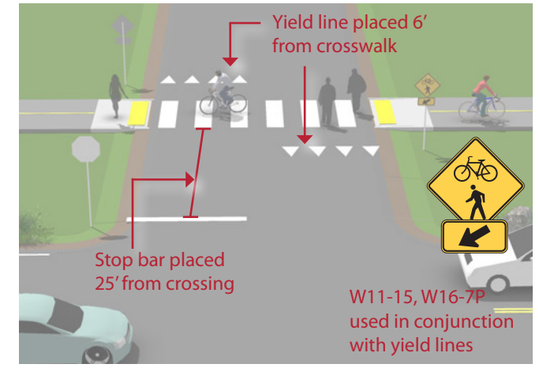
Guidance

- Guidance for sidepaths should follow that for general design practises of shared use paths.
- A high number of driveway crossings and intersections create potential conflicts with turning traffic. Consider alternatives to sidepaths on streets with a high frequency of intersections or heavily used driveways.
- Where a sidepath terminates special consideration should be given to transitions so as not to encourage unsafe wrong-way riding by bicyclists.
- Crossing design should emphasize visibility of users and clarity of expected yielding behavior. Crossings may be STOP or YIELD controlled depending on sight lines and bicycle motor vehicle volumes and speeds.

Adjacent Crossing - A separation of 6 feet emphasizes the conspicuity of riders at the approach to the crossing.



Setback Crossing - A set back of 25 feet separates the path crossing from merging/turning movements that may be competing for a driver's attention.



Discussion

The provision of a shared use path adjacent to a road is not a substitute for the provision of on-road accommodation such as paved shoulders or bike lanes, but may be considered in some locations in addition to on-road bicycle facilities.

To reduce potential conflicts in some situations, it may be better to place one-way sidepaths on both sides of the street.

Additional References and Guidelines

AASHTO. *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities.* 2012.
NACTO. *Urban Bikeway Design Guide.* See entry on Raised Cycle Tracks. 2012.

Materials and Maintenance

Asphalt is the most common surface for bicycle paths. The use of concrete for paths has proven to be more durable over the long term. Saw cut concrete joints rather than troweled improve the experience of path users.

PATH/ROADWAY CROSSING TYPES

MARKED/UNSIGNALIZED CROSSINGS

Description

A marked/unsignalized crossing typically consists of a marked crossing area, signage and other markings to slow or stop traffic. The approach to designing crossings at mid-block locations depends on an evaluation of vehicular traffic, line of sight, pathway traffic, use patterns, vehicle speed, road type, road width, and other safety issues such as proximity to major attractions.

When space is available, using a median refuge island can improve user safety by providing pedestrians and bicyclists space to perform the safe crossing of one side of the street at a time.

See Active Warning Beacons (RRFB) and Hybrid Warning Beacons (HAWK) for more information on enhanced bicycle and pedestrian crossing treatments at unsignalized crossings locations.

Guidance

Maximum traffic volumes

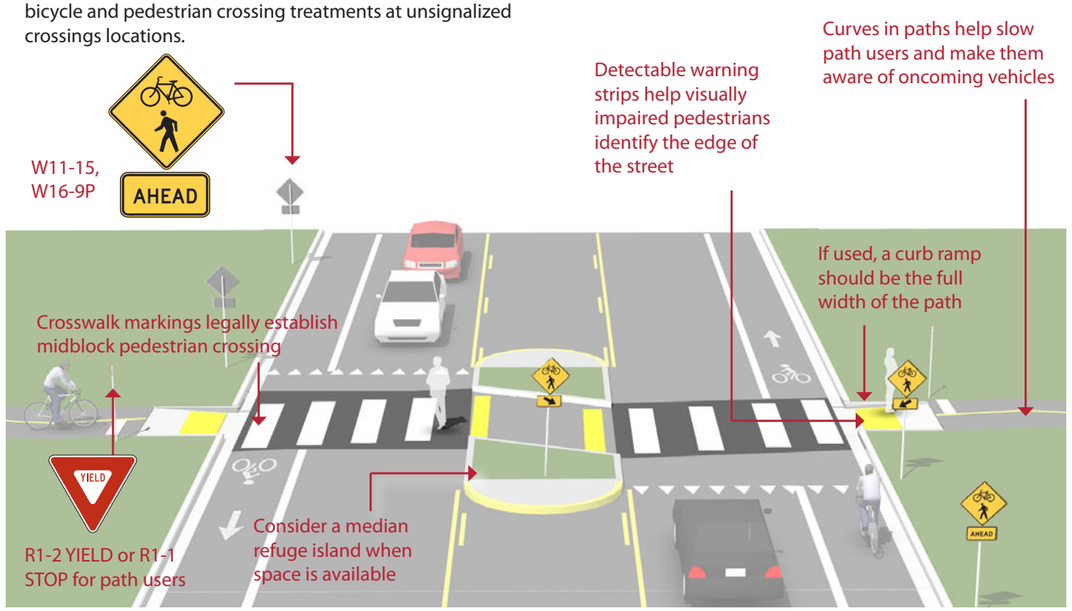
- ≤9,000-12,000 Average Daily Traffic (ADT) volume
- Up to 15,000 ADT on two-lane roads, preferably with a median
- Up to 12,000 ADT on four-lane roads with median

Maximum travel speed

- 35 MPH

Minimum line of sight

- 25 MPH zone: 155 feet
- 35 MPH zone: 250 feet
- 45 MPH zone: 360 feet



Discussion

Unsignalized crossings of multi-lane arterials over 15,000 ADT may be possible with features such as sufficient crossing gaps (more than 60 per hour), median refuges, and/or active warning devices like rectangular rapid flash beacons or in-pavement flashers, and excellent sight distance. For more information see the discussion of active warning beacons.

On roadways with low to moderate traffic volumes (<12,000 ADT) and a need to control traffic speeds, a raised crosswalk may be the most appropriate crossing design to improve pedestrian visibility and safety.

Additional References and Guidelines

AASHTO. *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities.* 2012.
FHWA. *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.* 2009.

Materials and Maintenance

Locate markings out of wheel tread when possible to minimize wear and maintenance costs.

FULL TRAFFIC SIGNAL CROSSINGS

Description

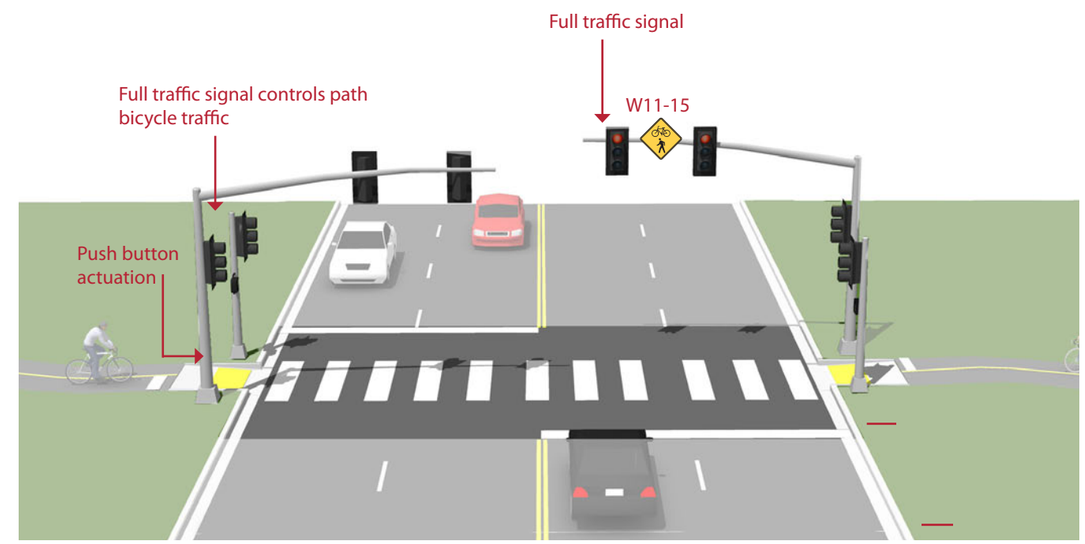
Signalized crossings provide the most protection for crossing path users through the use of a red-signal indication to stop conflicting motor vehicle traffic.

A full traffic signal installation treats the path crossing as a conventional 4-way intersection and provides standard red-yellow-green traffic signal heads for all legs of the intersection.

Guidance

Full traffic signal installations must meet MUTCD pedestrian, school or modified warrants. Additional guidance for signalized crossings:

- Located more than 300 feet from an existing signalized intersection
- Roadway travel speeds of 40 MPH and above
- Roadway ADT exceeds 15,000 vehicles



Discussion

Shared use path signals are normally activated by push buttons but may also be triggered by embedded loop, infrared, microwave or video detectors. The maximum delay for activation of the signal should be two minutes, with minimum crossing times determined by the width of the street.

Each crossing, regardless of traffic speed or volume, requires additional review by a registered engineer to identify sight lines, potential impacts on traffic progression, timing with adjacent signals, capacity and safety.

Additional References and Guidelines

FHWA. *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.* 2009.
NACTO. *Urban Bikeway Design Guide.* 2012.

Materials and Maintenance

Traffic signals require routine maintenance. Signing and striping need to be maintained to help users understand any unfamiliar traffic control.

UNDERCROSSINGS

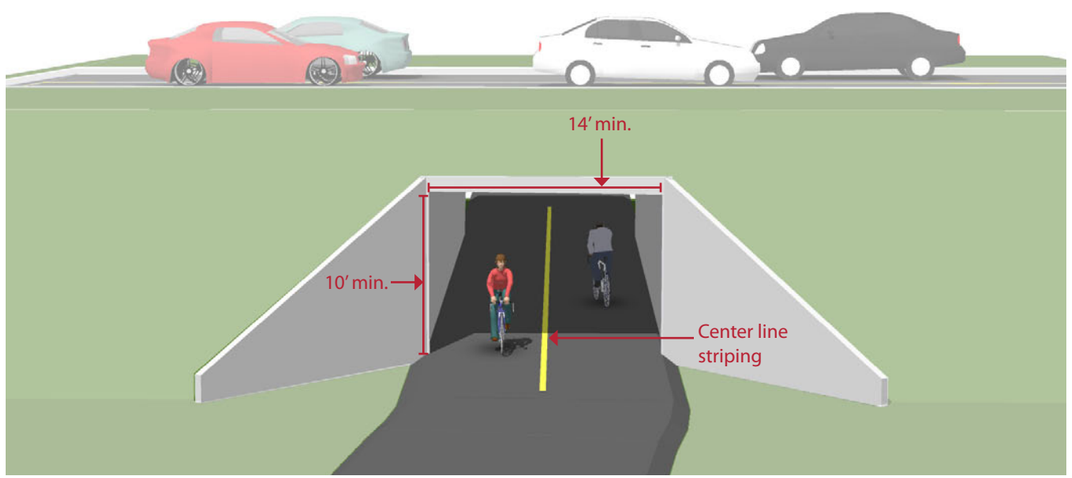
Description

Bicycle/pedestrian undercrossings provide critical non-motorized system links by joining areas separated by barriers such as railroads and highway corridors. In most cases, these structures are built in response to user demand for safe crossings where they previously did not exist.

There are no minimum roadway characteristics for considering grade separation. Depending on the type of facility or the desired user group grade separation may be considered in many types of projects.

Guidance

- 14 foot minimum width, greater widths preferred for lengths over 60 feet.
- 10 foot minimum height.
- The undercrossing should have a centerline stripe even if the rest of the path does not have one.
- Lighting should be considered during the design process for any undercrossing with high anticipated use or in culverts and tunnels.



Discussion

Safety is a major concern with undercrossings. Shared use path users may be temporarily out of sight from public view and may experience poor visibility themselves. To mitigate safety concerns, an undercrossing should be designed to be spacious, well-lit, equipped with emergency call boxes at each end and completely visible for its entire length from end to end.

Additional References and Guidelines

AASHTO. *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities.* 2012.
AASHTO. *Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities.* 2004.

Materials and Maintenance

14 foot width allows for maintenance vehicle access.

Potential problems include conflicts with utilities, drainage, flood control and vandalism.

OVERCROSSINGS

Description

Bicycle/pedestrian overcrossings provide critical non-motorized system links by joining areas separated by barriers such as deep canyons, waterways or major transportation corridors. In most cases, these structures are built in response to user demand for safe crossings where they previously did not exist.

There are no minimum roadway characteristics for considering grade separation. Depending on the type of facility or the desired user group grade separation may be considered in many types of projects.

Overcrossings require a minimum of 17 feet of vertical clearance to the roadway below versus a minimum elevation differential of around 12 feet for an undercrossing. This results in potentially greater elevation differences and much longer ramps for bicycles and pedestrians to negotiate.

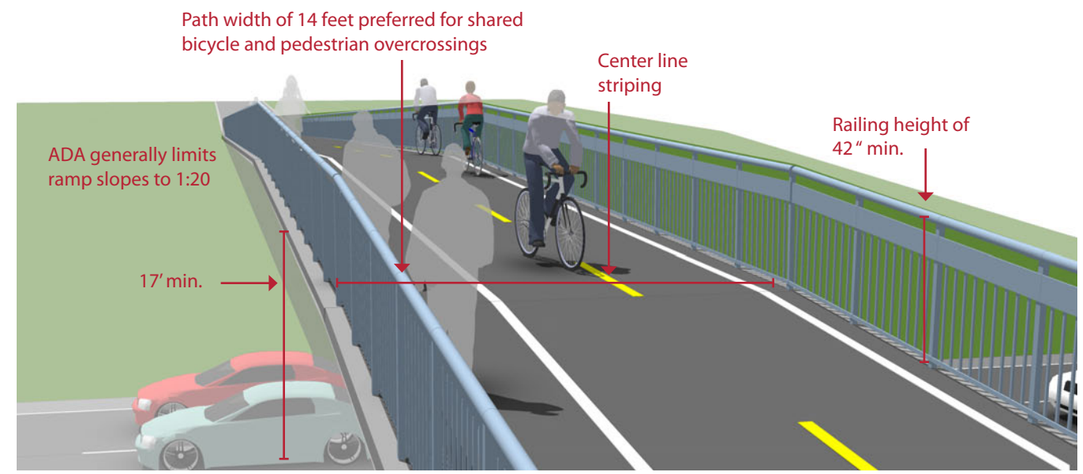
Guidance

8 foot minimum width, 14 feet preferred. If overcrossing has any scenic vistas additional width should be provided to allow for stopping. A separate 5 foot pedestrian area may be provided for facilities with high bicycle and pedestrian use.

10 foot headroom on overcrossing; clearance below will vary depending on feature being crossed.

Roadway:	17 feet
Freeway:	18.5 feet
Heavy Rail Line:	23 feet

The overcrossing should have a centerline stripe even if the rest of the path does not have one.



Discussion

Overcrossings for bicycles and pedestrians typically fall under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which strictly limits ramp slopes to 5% (1:20) with landings at 400 foot intervals, or 8.33% (1:12) with landings every 30 feet.

Overcrossings pose potential concerns about visual impact and functional appeal, as well as space requirements necessary to meet ADA guidelines for slope.

Additional References and Guidelines

AASHTO. *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities*. 2012.
AASHTO. *Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities.* 2004.

Materials and Maintenance

Potential issues with vandalism.

Overcrossings can be more difficult to clear of snow than undercrossings.