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1410.01 General

High-occupancy vehicle (HOV) facilities are a Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO) strategy that includes separate HOV roadways, HOV lanes, transit lanes, HOV direct access ramps, and flyer stops. The objectives for the HOV facilities are:

- Improve the capability of corridors to move more people by increasing the number of people per vehicle.
- Provide travel time savings and a more reliable trip time to HOV lane users.
- Provide travel options for HOVs without adversely affecting the general-purpose lanes.

Plan, design, and construct HOV facilities that provide intermodal linkages. Give consideration to future highway system capacity needs. Whenever possible, design HOV lanes so that the level of service for the general-purpose lanes is not degraded.

In urban corridors that do not currently have planned or existing HOV lanes, complete an analysis of the need for HOV lanes before proceeding with any projects for additional general-purpose lanes. In corridors where both HOV and general-purpose facilities are planned, construct the HOV lane before or simultaneously with the construction of new general-purpose lanes.

For additional information, see the following:

[Chapter 1230](#) Geometric cross section

[Chapter 1240](#) General-purpose turning roadway widths

[Chapter 1420](#) HOV direct access

1410.02 Preliminary Design and Planning

1410.02(1) Planning Elements for Design

In order to determine the appropriate design options for an HOV facility, establish the travel demand and capacity, identify suitable corridors, evaluate the HOV facility location and length, and estimate the HOV demand. A viable HOV facility satisfies the following criteria:

- It is part of an overall transportation plan.
- It has the support of the community and public.
- It responds to demonstrated congestion or near-term anticipated congestion: Level of Service E or F for at least one hour of peak period (traffic approaching a capacity of 1,700 to 2,000 vehicles per hour per lane) or average speeds less than 30 mph during peak periods over an extended distance.
- Except for a bypass of a local bottleneck, it is of sufficient length to provide a travel time saving of at least five minutes during the peak periods.

- It has sufficient numbers of HOV users for a cost-effective facility and avoids the perception of under-utilization (HOV volumes of 400 to 500 vehicles per hour on nonseparated lanes and 600 to 800 on separated facilities).
- It provides a safe, efficient, and enforceable operation.

A queue or bottleneck bypass can be effective without satisfying all of the above. An isolated bypass can be viable when there is localized, recurring traffic congestion, and such treatment can provide a travel time saving to a sufficient number of HOV users.

The efficiency of the HOV facility can be affected by the access provisions. Direct access between park & ride/transit facilities and an HOV lane is the most desirable, but it is also an expensive alternative. Direct access options are discussed in [Chapter 1420](#).

Document the need for the HOV lane and how the proposed lane will meet those needs.

1410.02(2) HOV Facility Type

Make a determination as to the type of HOV lane. The three major choices are: separated roadway, buffer-separated lane, and nonseparated HOV lane.

1410.02(2)(a) Separated Roadway

The separated roadway can be either a one-way reversible or a two-way operation. The directional split in the peak periods, available space, and operating logistics are factors to be considered. A separated HOV roadway may be located in the median of the freeway, next to the freeway, or on an independent alignment. Separated HOV facilities are more effective for:

- Large HOV volumes.
- Large merging and weaving volumes.
- Long-distance HOV travel.

Reversible separated roadways operate effectively where there are major directional splits during peak periods. Consider potential changes in this traffic pattern and design the facility to accommodate possible conversion to a two-way operation. The separated roadway is normally more efficient, provides for the higher level of safety, and is more easily enforced. However, it is generally the most expensive type of HOV facility.

1410.02(2)(b) Buffer-Separated Lane

A buffer-separated HOV lane is similar to a freeway nonseparated HOV lane on the left, but with a buffer between the HOV lane and the general-purpose lanes. The addition of a buffer provides better delineation between the lanes and controls access between the HOV lane and general-purpose lanes to improve operations.

1410.02(2)(c) Nonseparated Lane

Nonseparated HOV lanes operate in the same direction and immediately adjacent to the general-purpose lanes. They are located either to the left (desirable) or to the right of the general-purpose lanes. Nonseparated HOV lanes are normally less expensive and easier to implement, and they provide more opportunity for frequent access. However, the ease of access can create more problems for enforcement and a greater potential for conflicts.

1410.02(3) Freeway Operational Alternatives

For an HOV lane on a limited access facility, consider the following operational alternatives:

- Inside (desirable) or outside HOV lane
- Lane conversion
- Using existing shoulder— permanent operations requires a design analysis
- HOV direct access ramps
- Queue bypasses
- Flyer stops
- Hours of operation

When evaluating alternatives, consider a combination of alternatives to provide the optimum solution for the corridor. Also, incorporate flexibility into the design in order not to preclude potential changes in operation, such as changing an outside lane to an inside lane or a reversible facility to two-way operations. Access, freeway-to-freeway connections, and enforcement will have to be accommodated for such changes. Document the operational alternatives.

1410.02(3)(a) Inside vs. Outside HOV Lane

System continuity and consistency of HOV lane placement along a corridor are important, and they influence facility development decisions. Other issues include land use, trip patterns, transit vehicle service, HOV volume, ramp volume, congestion levels, enforcement, and direct access to facilities.

The inside (left) HOV lane is most appropriate for a corridor with long-distance trip patterns, such as a freeway providing mobility to and from a large activity center. These trips are characterized by long-distance commuters and express transit service. Maximum capacity for an effective inside HOV lane is approximately 1,500 vehicles per hour. When HOVs weaving across the general-purpose lanes cause severe congestion, consider providing HOV direct access ramps, separated HOV roadways, or a higher-occupancy designation. Inside lanes are preferred for HOV lanes on freeways.

The outside (right) HOV lane is most appropriate for a corridor with shorter, more widely dispersed trip patterns. These trip patterns are characterized by transit vehicle routes that exit and enter at nearly every interchange. The maximum capacity for an effective outside HOV lane is reduced and potential conflicts are increased by heavy main line congestion and large entering and exiting general-purpose volumes.

1410.02(3)(b) Conversion of a General-Purpose Lane

The use of an existing general-purpose lane for an HOV lane is an undesirable option; however, conversion of a lane to an HOV lane might be justified when the conversion provides greater people-moving capability on the roadway. Use of an existing freeway lane as an HOV lane will be considered only with a Design Analysis.

Given sufficient existing capacity, converting a general-purpose lane to an HOV lane can provide for greater people moving capability in the future without significantly affecting the existing roadway operations.

The fastest and least expensive method for providing an HOV lane is through conversion of a general-purpose lane. Restriping and signing are sometimes all that is needed. Converting a general-purpose lane to HOV use will likely have environmental benefits. This method, however, is controversial from a public acceptance standpoint. Public support might be gained through an effective Community Engagement program (see [Chapter 210](#)).

Do not convert a general-purpose lane to an HOV lane unless it enhances the corridor's people-moving capacity. Conduct an analysis that includes:

- Public acceptance of the lane conversion.
- Current and long-term traffic impacts on the adjacent general-purpose lanes and the HOV lane.
- Impacts to the neighboring streets and arterials.
- Legal, environmental, and safety impacts.

1410.02(3)(c) Use of Existing Shoulder

When considering the alternatives in order to provide additional width for an HOV lane, the use of the existing shoulder is an undesirable option. Use of the shoulder on a freeway or freeway ramp as an HOV lane requires a Design Analysis.

Another alternative is to use the shoulder as a part time shoulder. This managed lane strategy allows vehicles to utilize the roadway's inside or outside shoulder as a travel lane during specified periods and then revert back to a shoulder. See [Chapter 1730](#).

The use of the shoulder creates special signing, operational, and enforcement issues. An agreement may be required with the transit agency to limit transit vehicle use of the shoulder to peak hours or to help ensure drivers adhere to conditions associated with use of the part time shoulder. Such conditions may include the maximum speed and/or speed differential between buses and adjacent traffic lanes. Provide signing that clearly defines the use of the shoulder. Institute special operations to clear the shoulder for the designated hours.

The existing shoulder pavement is often not designed to carry heavy volumes of vehicles, especially transit vehicles. As a result, repaving and reconstruction of the shoulder might be required.

1410.02(3)(d) HOV Direct Access Ramps

To improve the efficiency of an HOV system, exclusive HOV access connections for an inside HOV lane may be considered. (See [Chapter 1420](#) for information on HOV direct access connections.) Direct access reduces the need for HOVs to cross the general-purpose lanes from right-side ramps. Transit vehicles will be able to use the HOV lane and provide service to park & ride lots, flyer stops, or other transit stops by the HOV direct access ramps.

1410.02(3)(e) Queue Bypass Lanes

A queue bypass lane allows HOVs to save time by avoiding congestion at an isolated bottleneck. Consider a queue bypass if the time savings for bypassing HOVs is one minute or more. Typical locations for queue bypasses are at ramp meters, signalized intersections, toll plazas or ferry approaches, and locations with isolated main line congestion. Queue bypass lanes can be built along with a corridor HOV facility or independently. In most cases, they are relatively low cost and easily implemented.

Where an HOV bypass is being considered at a ramp metering site, consult the Region Traffic Engineer prior to implementation. When an HOV bypass is constructed at a ramp metering site, the ramp meter system should be designed to allow for metering the HOV bypass lane as well. At a minimum, an overhead signal support (Type II) with a tenon position for a signal display for the HOV bypass lane, and sufficient space in the conduit system for additional wiring, should be provided.

1410.02(3)(f) Flyer Stops

Flyer stops reduce the time required for express transit vehicles to serve intermediate destinations. However, passengers must travel greater distances to reach the loading platform. (See [Chapter 1420](#) for information on flyer stops.)

1410.02(3)(g) Hours of Operation

An HOV designation on freeway HOV lanes 24 hours a day provides benefits to users during off-peak periods, minimizes potential confusion, makes enforcement easier, and simplifies signing and striping. However, 24-hour operation also might result in a lane not used during off-peak periods, negative public opinion, and the need for full-time enforcement.

1410.02(4) Arterial Street Operational Alternatives

Arterial street HOV lanes also have a variety of HOV alternatives to be considered. Some of these alternatives are site-specific or have limited applications. Arterial HOV lanes differ from freeway HOV lanes in slower speeds, little access control (turning traffic can result in right-angle conflicts), and traffic signals. Arterial HOV lanes are occasionally designated for transit vehicles only, especially in cities with a large concentration of transit vehicles. When evaluating alternatives, consider traffic signal queues and managed access highway class. The alternatives include the following:

- Type of lane
- Left-side or right-side HOV lane
- Hours of operation
- Spot treatments
- Bus stops

When evaluating alternatives, consider a combination of alternatives to provide the optimum solution for the corridor. Also, incorporate flexibility into the design in order not to preclude potential changes in operation. Document the operational alternatives.

1410.02(4)(a) Type of Lane

Lanes can be transit-only or include all HOVs. Transit-only lanes are desirable where bus volumes are high with a high level of congestion. They increase the speed of transit vehicles through congested areas and improve the reliability of the transit service. Lanes that allow use by all HOVs are appropriate on corridors with high volumes of carpools and vanpools. They can collect carpools and vanpools in business and industrial areas and connect them to the freeway system.

1410.02(4)(b) Left-Side or Right-Side HOV Lane

Continuity of HOV lane location along a corridor is an important consideration when making the decision whether to locate an arterial street HOV lane on the left or right side of the street. Other issues include land use, trip patterns, transit vehicle service, safety, enforcement, and presence of parking.

The right side is desirable for arterial street HOV lanes on transit routes with frequent stops. It is the most convenient for passenger boarding at transit stops. It is also the most common location for HOV lanes on arterial streets. General-purpose traffic must cross the HOV lane to make a right turn at intersections and to access driveways. These turns across the HOV lane can create conflicts. Minimizing access points that create these conflict locations is recommended. Other issues to consider are on-street parking, stopping areas for delivery vehicles, and enforcement areas.

Left-side arterial street HOV lanes are less common than right-side lanes. HOV lanes on the left eliminate the potential conflicts with driveway access, on-street parking, and stopping areas for delivery vehicles. The result is fewer delays and higher speeds, making left-side arterial street HOV lanes appropriate for longer-distance trips. The disadvantages include the difficulty providing transit stops and the need to provide for left-turning general-purpose traffic.

1410.02(4)(c) Hours of Operation

An arterial street HOV lane can either operate as an HOV lane 24 hours a day or during peak hours only. Factors to consider in determining which to use include type of HOV lane, level of congestion, continuity, and enforcement.

HOV lanes operating 24 hours a day are desirable when congestion and HOV demand exists for extended periods throughout the day. The 24-hour operation provides benefits to users during off-peak periods, minimizes potential confusion, makes enforcement easier, and simplifies signing and striping. The disadvantages include negative public opinion if the lane is not used during off-peak periods, the need for full-time enforcement, and the loss of on-street parking.

Peak period HOV lanes are appropriate for arterial streets with HOV demand or congestion existing mainly during the peak period. Peak period HOV lanes provide HOV priority at the critical times of the day, lessen negative public perception of the HOV lane, and allow on-street parking or other shoulder uses at other times. The disadvantages include possible confusion to drivers, more difficult enforcement, increased signing, and the need to institute special operations to clear the shoulder or lane for the designated period.

1410.02(4)(d) Spot Treatments

An HOV spot treatment is used to give HOVs priority around a bottleneck. It can provide time savings, travel time reliability, and improved access to other facilities. Examples include a short HOV lane to provide access to a freeway on-ramp, one lane of a dual turn lane, a priority lane at ferry terminals, and priority at traffic signals.

Signal priority treatments that alter the sequence or duration of a traffic signal are techniques for providing preferential treatment for transit vehicles. The priority treatments can range from timing and phasing adjustments to signal preemption. Consider the overall impact on traffic. Preemption would normally not be an appropriate treatment where traffic signal timing and coordination are being utilized or where there are high traffic volumes on the cross streets.

1410.02(4)(e) Bus Stops

Normally, with arterial HOV lanes, there is not a shoulder suitable for a bus to use while stopped to load and unload passengers without blocking the lane. Therefore, bus stops are either in-lane or in a pullout. In-lane bus stops are the simplest type of bus stop. However, stopped buses will block the HOV lane; therefore, in-lane bus stops are only allowed in transit lanes. Bus pullouts provide an area for buses to stop without blocking the HOV lane. Disadvantages include higher cost, reduced width for the sidewalk or other roadside area, and possible difficulty reentering the HOV lane. (See [Chapter 1730](#) for additional information on bus stop location and design.)

1410.03 Operations

1410.03(1) Vehicle Occupancy Designation

Select the vehicle occupancy designation to provide the maximum movement of people in a corridor, provide free-flow HOV operations, reduce the empty lane perception, provide for the ability to accommodate future HOV growth within a corridor, and be consistent with the regional transportation plan and the policies adopted by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

Establish an initial occupancy designation. It is WSDOT policy to use the 2+ designation as the initial occupancy designation. Consider a 3+ occupancy designation if it is anticipated during initial operation that the volumes will be 1,500 vehicles per hour for a left-side HOV lane, or 1,200 vehicles per hour for a right-side HOV lane, or that a 45 mph operating speed cannot be maintained for more than 90% of the peak hour.

1410.03(2) Enforcement

Enforcement is necessary for the success of an HOV facility. Coordination with the Washington State Patrol (WSP) is critical when the operational characteristics and design alternatives are being established. This involvement ensures the project is enforceable and will receive their support.

Provide both enforcement areas and observation points for high-speed HOV lanes and ramp facilities.

Barrier-separated facilities, because of the limited access, are the easiest facilities to enforce. Shoulders provided to accommodate breakdowns may also be used for enforcement. Reversible facilities have ramps for the reverse direction that may be used for enforcement. Gaps in the barrier may be needed so emergency vehicles can access barrier-separated HOV lanes.

Buffer-separated and nonseparated HOV lanes allow violators to easily enter and exit the HOV lane. Provide strategically located enforcement areas and observation points.

Consider the impact on safety and visibility for the overall facility during the planning and design of enforcement areas and observation points. Where HOV facilities do not have enforcement areas, or where officers perceive that the enforcement areas are inadequate, enforcement on the facility will be difficult and less effective.

1410.03(3) Intelligent Transportation Systems

The objective of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), which is a subcategory of Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO) strategy, is to make more efficient use of our transportation network. This is done by collecting data, managing traffic, and relaying information to the motoring public.

It is important that an ITS system be incorporated into the HOV project and that the HOV facility fully utilize the ITS features available. This includes providing a strategy of incident management since vehicle breakdowns and crashes have a significant impact on the efficient operation of the HOV facilities. (For more information on ITS, see [Chapter 1050](#).)

1410.04 Design Criteria

1410.04(1) Design Procedures

Refer to chapters in the 1100 series for practical design guidance and procedures.

1410.04(2) Design Considerations

HOV lanes are designed to the same criteria as the facilities to which they are attached. Design nonseparated and buffer-separated HOV lanes to match the vertical alignment, horizontal alignment, and cross slope of the adjacent lane.

1410.04(3) Adding an HOV Lane

The options for adding an HOV lane are: reconstruction, restriping, combined reconstruction and restriping, and possibly lane conversion.

1410.04(3)(a) Reconstruction

Reconstruction involves creating roadway width. Additional right of way may be required.

1410.04(3)(b) Restriping

Restriping involves reallocating the existing paved roadway to create enough space to provide an additional HOV lane.

1410.04(3)(c) Combined Reconstruction and Restriping

Reconstruction and restriping can be combined to maximize use of the available right of way. For example, a new lane can be created through a combination of median reconstruction, shoulder reconstruction, and lane restriping. Handle each project on a case-by-case basis. Generally, consider the following reductions in order of preference:

- Reduction of the inside shoulder width, provided the enforcement and safety mitigation issues are addressed. (Give consideration to not precluding future HOV direct access ramps by over-reduction of the available median width.)
- Reduction of the interior general-purpose lane width to 11 feet.
- Reduction of the outside general-purpose lane width to 11 feet.
- Reduction of the HOV lane to 11 feet.
- Reduction of the outside shoulder width to 8 feet.

1410.04(3)(d) Lane Conversion

If lane width adjustments are made, thoroughly eradicate the old lane markings. It is desirable that longitudinal joints (new or existing) not conflict with tire track lines. If they do, consider overlaying the roadway before restriping.

1410.04(4) Design Criteria for Types of HOV Facilities

1410.04(4)(a) Separated Roadway HOV Facilities

The separated HOV facility can be single-lane or multilane and directional or reversible (see [Exhibit 1410-2](#)).

Lane Widths

For traveled way width (WR) on turning roadways, see [Exhibit 1410-1](#).

Shoulder Widths

The shoulder width requirements are as follows:

- The minimum width for the sum of the two shoulders is 12 feet for one-lane facilities and 14 feet for two-lane facilities.
- Provide a width of at least 10 feet for one of the shoulders for disabled vehicles. The minimum for the other shoulder is 2 feet for one-lane facilities and 4 feet for two-lane facilities.
- The wider shoulder may be on the left or the right. Maintain the wide shoulder on the same side throughout the facility.

Total Widths

To reduce the probability of blocking the HOV facility, make the total width (lane width plus paved shoulders) wide enough to allow an A BUS to pass a stalled A BUS.

For single-lane facilities, the traveled way widths (WR), given in [Exhibit 1410-1](#), plus the 12-foot total shoulder width will provide for this passing for radii (R) 100 feet or greater. For R of 75 feet, a total roadway width of 33 feet is needed, and for R of 50 feet, a total roadway width of 41 feet is needed to provide for the passing.

Exhibit 1410-1 Minimum Traveled Way Widths for Articulated Buses

R (ft) ^[1]	WR (ft)	
	1-Lane	2-Lane
3,001 to Tangent	13 ^[2]	24
3,000	14	24
2,000	14	25
1,000	15	26
500	15	27
300	15	28
200	16	29
150	17	31
100	18	34
75	19	37
50	22	45

Notes:

[1] Radius (R) is on the outside edge of traveled way on 1-lane and centerline on 2-lane roadways.

[2] May be reduced to 12 ft on tangent.

1410.04(4)(b) Nonseparated Freeway HOV Lanes

For both inside and outside HOV lanes, the minimum lane width is 12 feet and the minimum shoulder width is 10 feet (see [Exhibit 1410-2](#)).

When a left shoulder less than 10 feet wide is proposed for distances exceeding 1.5 miles, provide enforcement and observation areas at 1- to 2 mile intervals (see Section [1410.04\(7\)](#)).

Where left shoulders less than 8 feet wide are proposed for lengths of roadway exceeding 0.5 mile, provide safety refuge areas at 0.5- to 1-mile intervals. These can be in addition to or in conjunction with the enforcement areas.

Allow general-purpose traffic to cross HOV lanes at on- and off-ramps.

1410.04(4)(c) Buffer-Separated HOV Lanes

Design buffer-separated HOV lanes the same as for inside nonseparated HOV lanes, except for a buffer 2 to 4 feet in width or 10 feet or greater in width with pavement marking, with supplemental signing, to restrict crossing. For buffer-separated HOV lanes with a buffer at least 4 feet wide, the left shoulder may be reduced to 8 feet. Buffer widths between 4 and 10 feet are undesirable because they may appear to be wide enough for a refuge area, but they are too narrow. Provide gaps in the buffer to allow access to the HOV lane.

1410.04(4)(d) Arterial Street HOV Lanes

The minimum width for an arterial street HOV lane is 12 feet. Allow general-purpose traffic to cross the HOV lanes to turn at intersections and to access driveways (see [Exhibit 1410-2](#)).

For right-side HOV lanes adjacent to curbs, provide a 4-foot shoulder between the HOV lane and the face of curb. The shoulder may be reduced to 2 feet with justification.

For HOV lanes on the left, a 1-foot left shoulder between the HOV lane and the face of curb is required. When concrete barrier is adjacent to the HOV lane, the minimum shoulder is 2 feet.

1410.04(4)(e) HOV Ramp Meter Bypass

An HOV bypass may be created by widening an existing ramp, constructing a new ramp where right of way is available, or reallocating the existing pavement width (provided the shoulders are full depth). For ramps with a single general purpose lane and an HOV bypass, consider installing an overhead signal support to allow for the installation of an overhead sign (7.5 square feet maximum) and a ramp meter display for the HOV bypass. For ramps with two general-purpose lanes and an HOV bypass, provide an overhead signal support capable of supporting the installation of a sign (7.5 square feet maximum) and a ramp meter display for the HOV bypass.

Ramp meter bypass lanes may be located on the left or right of metered lanes. Typically, bypass lanes are located on the left side of the ramp. Consult with local transit agencies and the Region Transportation Operations Office for guidance on which side to place the HOV bypass.

Consider the existing conditions at each location when designing a ramp meter bypass. Design a single-lane ramp with a single metered lane and an HOV bypass as shown in [Exhibit 1410-4](#). Make the total width of the metered and bypass lanes equal to a 2-lane ramp (see [Chapter 1240](#) and [Chapter 1360](#)). Design a ramp with two metered lanes and an HOV bypass as shown in [Exhibit 1410-5](#). Make the width of the two metered lanes equal to a 2-lane ramp (see [Chapter 1240](#) and [Chapter 1360](#)) and the width of the bypass lane as shown in [Exhibit 1410-3](#). The design shown in [Exhibit 1410-5](#) requires that the ramp operate as a single-lane ramp when the meter is not in operation. Both [Exhibit 1410-4](#) and [Exhibit 1410-5](#) show an observation point/enforcement area. Document any other enforcement area designs in the design documentation package. An alternative is to provide a 10 foot outside shoulder from the stop bar to the main line.

1410.04(5) HOV Direct Access Ramps

HOV direct access ramps provide access between an HOV lane and another freeway, a local arterial street, a flyer stop, or a park & ride facility. Design HOV direct access ramps in accordance with [Chapter 1420](#).

1410.04(6) HOV Lane Termination

Locate the beginning and end of an HOV lane at logical points. Provide decision sight distance, signing, and pavement markings at the termination points.

The desirable method of terminating an inside HOV lane is to provide a straight through move for the HOV traffic, ending the HOV restriction and dropping a general-purpose lane on the right. However, analyze volumes for both the HOV lanes and general-purpose lanes, as well as the geometric conditions, to optimize the overall operational performance of the facility.

1410.04(7) Enforcement Areas

Enforcement of the inside HOV lane can be done with a minimum 10-foot inside shoulder. For continuous lengths of barrier exceeding 2 miles, a 12-foot shoulder is recommended for the whole length of the barrier.

For inside shoulders less than 10 feet, locate enforcement and observation areas at 1 to 2-mile intervals or based on the recommendations of the WSP. These areas can also serve as refuge areas for disabled vehicles (see [Exhibit 1410-6](#) and [Exhibit 1410-7](#)).

Provide observation points approximately 1,300 feet before enforcement areas. They can be designed to serve both patrol cars and motorcycles or motorcycles only. Coordinate with the WSP during the design stage to provide effective placement and utilization of the observation points. Median openings give motorcycle officers the added advantage of being able to quickly respond to emergencies in the opposing lanes (see [Exhibit 1410-7](#)). The ideal observation point places the motorcycle officer 3 feet above the HOV lane and outside the shoulder so the officer can look down into a vehicle.

Locate the enforcement area on the right side for queue bypasses and downstream from the stop bar so the officer can be an effective deterrent (see [Exhibit 1410-4](#) and [Exhibit 1410-5](#)).

An optional signal status indicator for enforcement may be placed at HOV lane installations that are metered. The indicator faces the enforcement area so that a WSP officer can determine whether vehicles are violating the ramp meter. The indicator allows the WSP officer to simultaneously enforce two areas: the ramp meter and the HOV lane. Consult with the WSP regarding use at all locations.

For additional information on enforcement signal heads, see the Traffic Manual regarding HOV metered bypasses.

1410.04(8) Signs and Pavement Markings

1410.04(8)(a) Signs

Provide post-mounted HOV preferential lane signs next to the HOV lane or overhead-mounted signs over the HOV lane. Make the sign wording clear and precise, stating which lane is restricted, the type of HOVs allowed, and the HOV vehicle occupancy designation for that section of road. The sign size, location, and spacing are dependent upon the conditions under which the sign is used. Roadside signs can also be used to convey other HOV information such as the HERO program, carpool information, telephone numbers, and violation fines. Some situations may call for the use of variable message signs.

Place overhead signs directly over the HOV lane to provide maximum visibility. Use a sequence of overhead signs at the beginning and end of freeway HOV facilities. Overhead signs can also be used in conjunction with roadside signs along the roadway.

1410.04(8)(b) Pavement Markings

Provide pavement markings that conform to the Traffic Manual and the Standard Plans.

1410.04(8)(c) Interchanges

In the vicinity of interchange on- and off-connections where merging or exiting traffic crosses an HOV lane, make provisions for general-purpose traffic using the HOV lane. These provisions include signing and striping that clearly show the changes in HOV versus general traffic restrictions. (See the Standard Plans for pavement markings and signing.)

1410.05 References

1410.05(1) Federal/State Laws and Codes

[Revised Code of Washington \(RCW\) 46.61.165](#), High-occupancy vehicle lanes

[RCW 47.52.025](#), Additional powers – Controlling use of limited access facilities

–High occupancy vehicle lanes

[Washington Administrative Code \(WAC\) 468-510-010](#), High occupancy vehicles (HOVs)

1410.05(2) Design Guidance

[Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways](#), USDOT, FHWA; as adopted and modified by Chapter 468-95 WAC “Manual on uniform traffic control devices for streets and highways” (MUTCD)

Standard Plans for Road, Bridge, and Municipal Construction ([Standard Plans](#)), M 21 01, WSDOT

[Traffic Manual](#), M 51-02, WSDOT

1410.05(3) Supporting Information

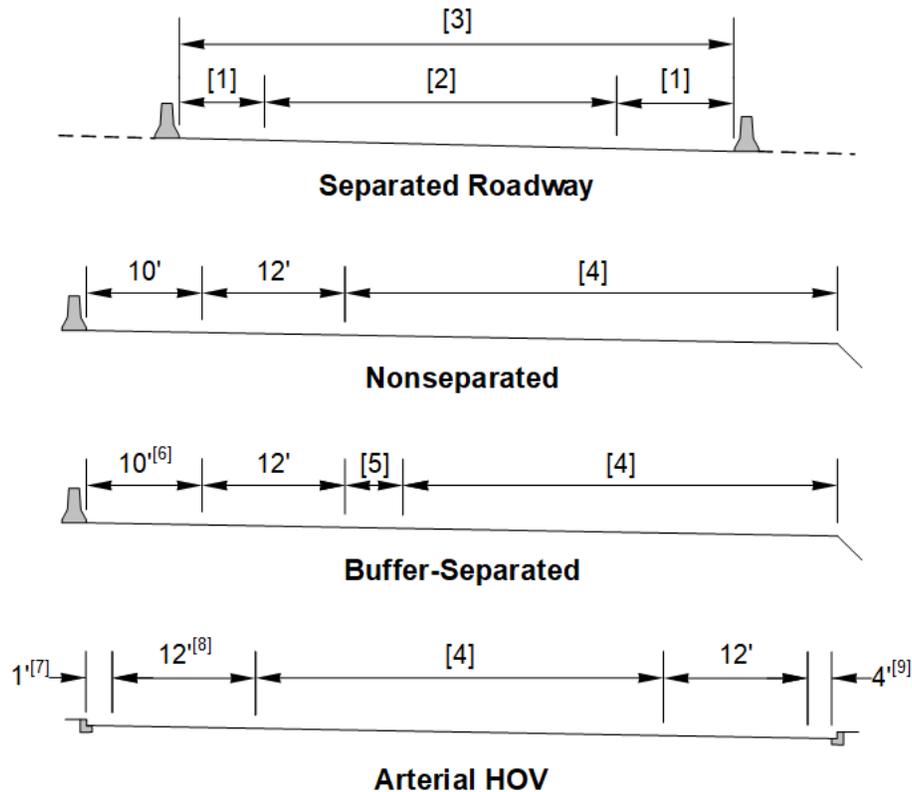
Design Features of High-Occupancy Vehicle Lanes, Institute of Traffic Engineers (ITE)

Guide for the Design of High-Occupancy Vehicle Facilities, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO)

High-Occupancy Vehicle Facilities, Parsons Brinkerhoff, Inc., 1990

HOV Systems Manual, NCHRP Report 414, 1998

Exhibit 1410-2 Typical HOV Lane Sections



Notes:

- [1] The sum of the two shoulders is 12 ft for one-lane and 14 ft for two-lane facilities. Provide one shoulder with a width of at least 10 ft for disabled vehicles. The wider shoulder may be on the left or the right. Maintain the wide shoulder on the same side throughout the facility (see Section [1410.04\(4\)\(a\)2](#)).
- [2] 12-ft minimum for single lane, 24-ft minimum for two lanes. Wider width is required on curves (see Section [1410.04\(4\)\(a\)1](#) and Exhibit 1410-1).
- [3] For total width requirements, see Section [1410.04\(4\)\(a\)3](#).
- [4] Width as required, and the number of lanes.
- [5] Buffer 2 to 4 ft or 10 ft or more.
- [6] When buffer width is 4 ft or more, may be reduced to 8 ft.
- [7] 2 ft when adjacent to concrete barrier.
- [8] Arterial HOV lanes on the left operate in the same direction as the adjacent general-purpose lane.
- [9] May be reduced to 2 ft with justification.

Exhibit 1410-3 Roadway Widths for Two-Lane Ramps with an HOV Lane

Radius of Two-Lane Ramp R (ft)	Design Width of Third Lane ^[1] W (ft)
1,000 to Tangent	12
999 to 500	13
499 to 250	14
249 to 200	15
199 to 150	16
149 to 100	17

Notes:

- [1] Apply additional width to two-lane ramp widths.
- [2] For turning roadway widths, see traveled way width for two-lane one-way turning roadways in [Chapter 1240](#).

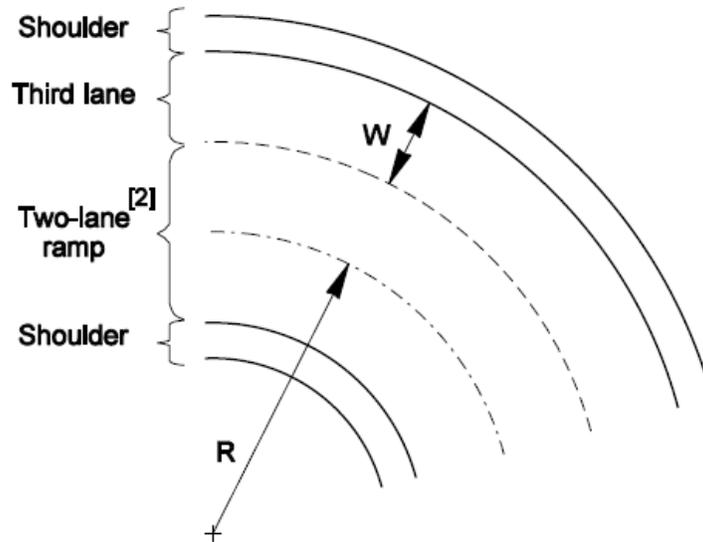
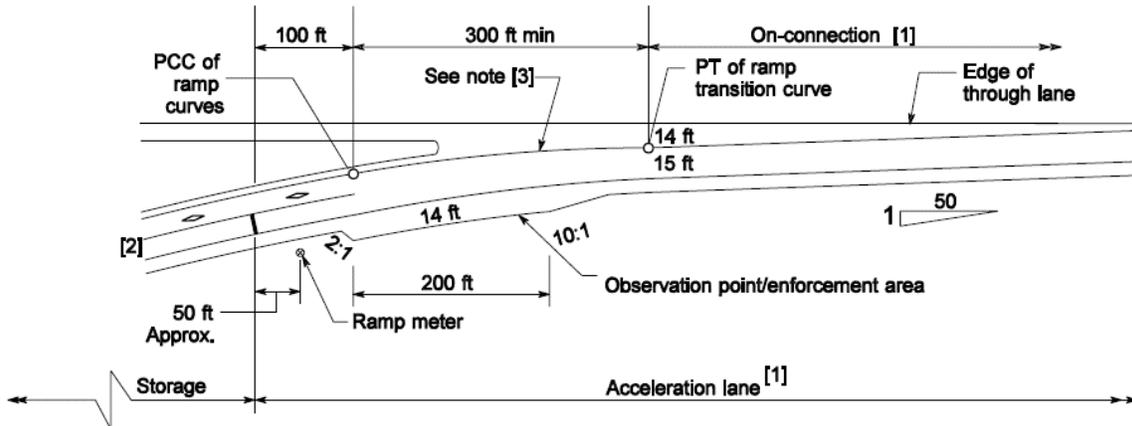


Exhibit 1410-4 Single-Lane Ramp Meter with HOV Bypass



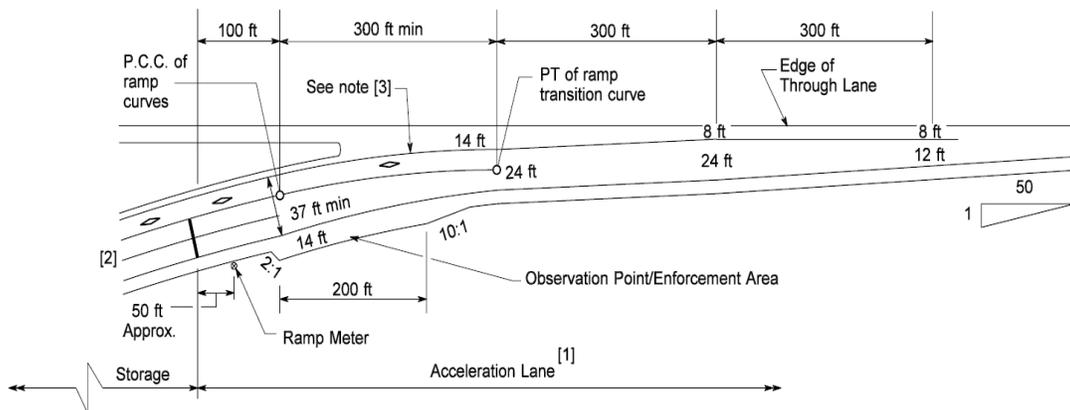
Notes:

- [1] For on-connection details and for acceleration lane length, see [Chapter 1360](#).
- [2] For ramp lane and shoulder widths for a 2-lane ramp, see [Chapter 1240](#) and [Chapter 1360](#).
- [3] A transition curve with a minimum radius of 3,000 ft is desirable. The minimum length is 300 ft. When the main line is on a curve to the left, the transition may vary from a 3,000 ft radius to tangent to the main line.

General:

For striping details, see the [Standard Plans](#).

Exhibit 1410-5 Two-Lane Ramp Meter with HOV Bypass



Notes:

- [1] For acceleration lane length, see [Chapter 1360](#).
- [2] For 2-lane ramp lane and shoulder widths, see [Chapter 1240](#) and [Chapter 1360](#). For 3rd lane width, see [Exhibit 1410-3](#).
- [3] A transition curve with a minimum radius of 3000 ft is desirable. The minimum length is 300 ft. When the main line is on a curve to the left, the transition may vary from a 3000 ft radius to tangent to the main line.

General:

For striping details, see the [Standard Plans](#).

Exhibit 1410-6 Enforcement Area: One Direction Only

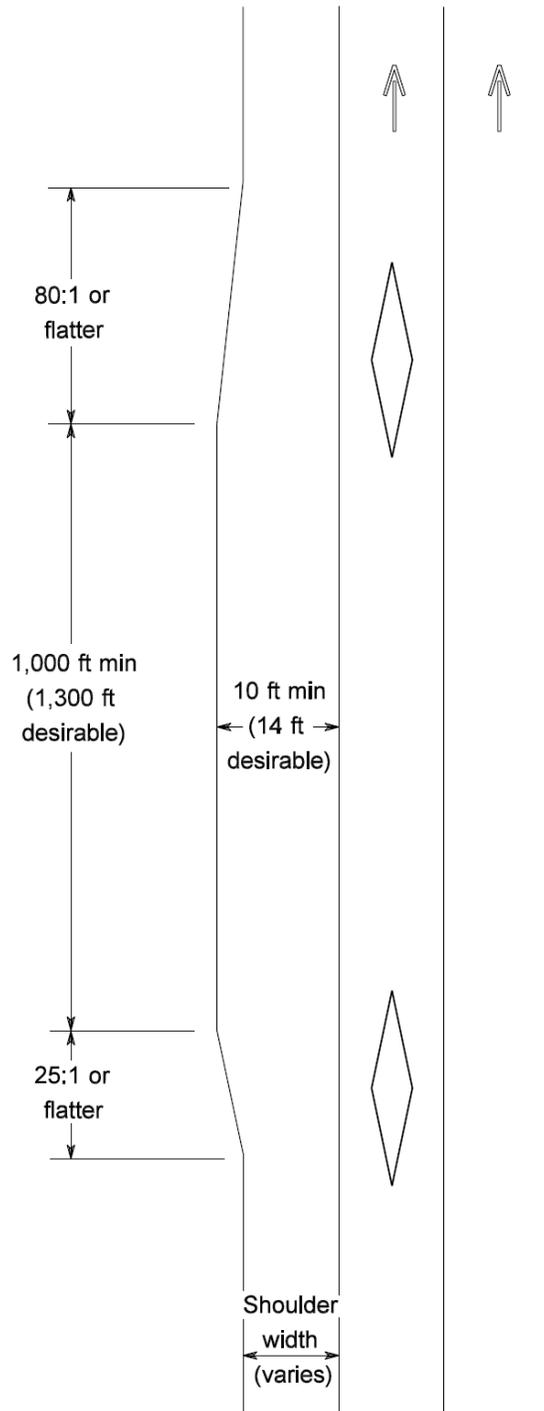
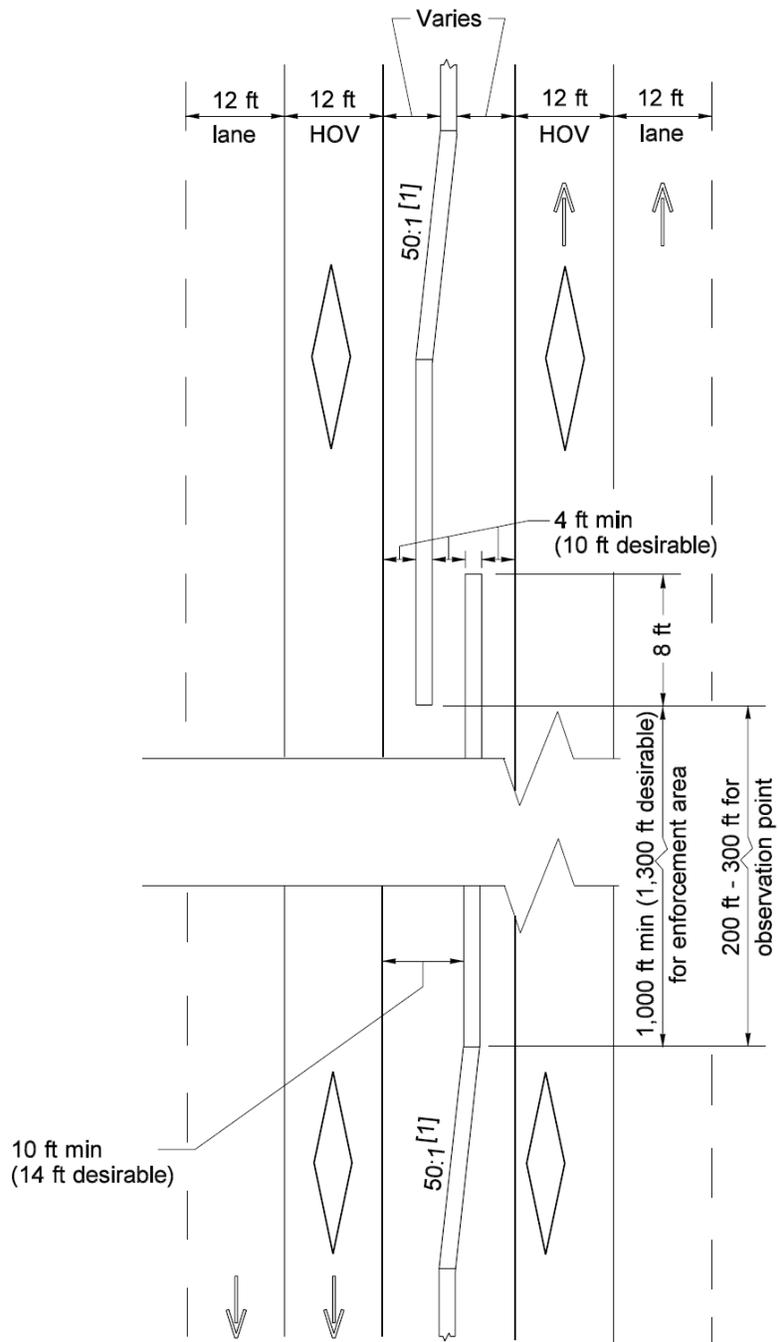


Exhibit 1410-7 Enforcement Area: Median



Note:

[1] For median width transition, see [Chapter 1210](#).

