BICYCLE FACILITIES

MOST PROTECTED

1. Shared Use Paths or Trails
   Physically separated facilities like shared-use paths for bicyclists and pedestrians encourage more walking and bicycling. These facilities are often found along waterways, abandoned or active railroad and utility right-of-way, limited access highways, or through parks and open space areas. Along high-speed, high-volume highways, paths and trails can be safer and more desirable than sidewalks or bike lanes. Paths and trails immediately adjacent to roadways may cross numerous interacting roads and driveways that create hazards and other problems for path users. Creating safe and accessible intersections between paths and the road network is one of the most important aspects of design. For additional detail, see AASHTO’s Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, Section 5 Design of Shared Use Paths and MUTCD Urban Bicycle Design Guide. See also WSDOT Design Manual, Chapter 15/1.

2. Protected Bike Lanes: At Grade, Protected with Flexible Bollards or Other Separation
   A protected bike lane, sometimes called a cycle track or separated bike lane, is a type of preferential lane as defined by the MUTCD (See Federal Highway Administration (2009), Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, Section 2G.01). Protected bike lanes are bike facilities that use a variety of methods for physical protection from passing traffic. By dedicating and protecting space for the cyclist, these facilities reduce risk of “dooring” compared to a conventional bike lane and eliminate the risk of a fallen bicyclist being run over by a motor vehicle. In situations where on-street parking is allowed, protected bike lanes are located to the curb side of the parking (in contrast to conventional bike lanes). Bollards, or posts can be installed along a bike lane to make the separation clear to cyclists and drivers, and increase cyclist’s sense of security. Bollards can range from flexible posts to more rigid posts. See NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide for additional design detail and MUTCD Section 38B.24 for signage and marking requirements.

3. Conventional Bike Lanes
   Bike lanes designate an exclusive space for bicyclists through the use of pavement markings and signage and are primarily installed to increase the mobility of bicyclists in congested areas. They are best applied where motor vehicle speeds are lower. The bike lane is located directly adjacent to motor vehicle travel lanes and flows in the same direction as motor vehicle traffic. Bike lanes are typically located to the right side of the street, between the adjacent travel lane and curb, road edge, or parking lane. See AASHTO’s Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, Chapter 4 Design of On-Road Facilities and WSDOT Design Manual, Chapter 15D.09 Bicycle Lane Design for additional detail.

LEAST PROTECTED

4. Bike Lanes
   Bike lanes are conventional bicycle lanes that are painted with a designated buffer space, frequently using painted markings, separating the bicycle lane from the adjacent motor vehicle travel lane and/or parking lane as defined by MUTCD Section 3D-01. See MUTCD Sections 3D-02 and 3B.24 for signage and marking requirements. See also MUTCD Urban Bikeway Design Guide for additional design detail.

5. Bike Boulevards or Neighborhood Greenways
   Bicycle boulevards are streets with low motorized traffic volumes and speeds, designated and designed to give bicyclist travel priority. Bicycle boulevards use signs, pavement markings, and speed and volume management measures to discourage through trips by motorists and create safe, convenient bicycle crossings of busy arterial streets. On boulevards, shared lane markings, or “sharrows,” are preferred road markings used to indicate a shared lane for bicyclists and motor vehicles. Among other benefits shared lane markings provide direction and reinforce the legitimacy of bicycle traffic on the street and recommended proper bicyclist positioning. The Shared Lane Marking is the bike-mark and “sharrow.” Illustrated in MUTCD figure 9C-9 and cannot be used on shoulders, in designated bicycle lanes, or to designate bicycle detection at signalized intersections. (MUTCD 9C-07).