

SHARED USE PATHS

Shared use paths are facilities physically separated from motorized vehicular traffic by an open space (buffer) or barrier and either within the highway right of way or within an independent right of way.* Users are non-motorized and may include bicyclists, inline skaters, roller skaters, wheelchair users (both non-motorized and motorized) and pedestrians including walkers, runners, and people with baby strollers and people walking dogs. Shared use paths are most commonly designed for two-way travel, and the following guidance assumes a two-way facility is planned unless otherwise stated. When paths are planned, it is desirable to provide paths on both sides of the roadway to decrease the likelihood of children crossing the road. Pavement design for shared use paths are recommended by the Materials Division.

Care should be taken not to use shared use path and trail interchangeably because they have distinctly different design guidelines.

- Separation Between Shared Use Paths and Roadways

Shoulder and Ditch Typical Section:

When two directional shared use paths are located adjacent to a roadway, wide separation between a shared use path and the adjacent highway is desirable to demonstrate to both the bicyclist and the motorist that the path functions as an independent facility for bicyclists and others. On shoulder and ditch typical sections shared use paths should be placed behind the ditch in a manner that will be compatible with the roadway if the roadway is converted to a curb and/or curb and gutter typical section. When this is not possible and the distance between the outside edge of the graded shoulder and the shared use path is less than 5 feet, a suitable physical barrier is recommended. A suitable physical barrier is defined as dense shrubbery, railing or chain link fence. Such barriers serve both to prevent path users from making unwanted movements between the path and the highway shoulder and to reinforce the concept that the path is an independent facility. Where used, the barrier should be a minimum of 42 inches high (54 inches on structures), to prevent bicyclists from toppling over it. A barrier between a shared use path and adjacent highway should not impair sight distance at intersections, and should be designed to not be a hazard to motorists or bicyclist.

Curb and/or Curb and Gutter Typical Sections:

For curb and/or curb and gutter streets, the separation between from face of the curb to the edge of the shared use path shall be a minimum of 8 feet in order to meet the minimum lateral offset distance to install signs for the roadway and the shared use path in accordance with MUTCD Part 2 and part 9. If signs are required on the outside of the shared use path due to horizontal and vertical grade changes then a minimum of 6.5' of right of way from the edge of the path shall be provided. If signs are not required, a minimum 3' of right of way shall be provided. See Figure A-5-4.

* Rev. 1/13