



apbp

June 14, 2010

John Horsley  
Executive Director  
American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials  
444 North Capitol Street N.W., Suite 249  
Washington, DC 20001

Re: Comments on the AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities

Dear Mr. Horsley:

We are writing because we are aware that AASHTO is reviewing comments on the new Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, which are likely to be quite diverse. The Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals provides expertise for sustainable transportation and is the only professional membership organization for the discipline of pedestrian and bicycle transportation. APBP members – employees of all levels of government, consulting firms and non-profits – work in the engineering, planning, landscape architecture, police, safety, health and promotion fields and specialize in improving conditions for bicycling and walking.

One of the most widely-held and referenced resources for our members is the American Association of State Transportation Officials' Guide to the Development for Bicycle Facilities. Since its last publication in 1999, this document has heavily influenced the design of bicycle facilities throughout the United States. APBP's members eagerly await the adoption and publication of the new guide, as the profession's knowledge and understanding of effective bikeway design has evolved in the last ten years. Our Board recognizes the untold amounts of effort and energy that contributed to the draft Guide, and we extend our appreciation to all the contributors (many of whom we are proud to claim as members) for undertaking this critically important effort.

As a document that must hold its value and relevance for another ten years, the forthcoming guide must expand on the next generation of bikeway designs that are presently in practice across the United States. While the Guide must be grounded in research, it must also include the latest and best observations and guidance on innovative designs. We hope that the Guide will highlight the need for funded research, but we recognize that some level of guidance is appropriate as the research catches up to the state of the practice.

As AASHTO considers the following for inclusion in the Guide, APBP supports the inclusion of new and enhanced discussion of the following facilities:

- Buffered Bike Lanes
- Contra-flow bike lanes
- Left-side bike lanes

- Bike lanes with reverse angled parking
- Bike lanes at freeway interchanges
- Bike lanes at roundabout approaches
- Bike Boulevards
- Shared Lane Markings in a variety of settings
- Climbing bike lanes
- Signalized intersections designed to meet bicyclists' needs
- Two way paths adjacent to roads (under certain conditions)
- Path/roadway intersections

Each of these facilities is already in use in the United States and further information will ensure better design. In addition, bicycle professionals and advocates often keep tabs on the latest facilities being installed in various areas of the country, and seek to bring these facilities to their local areas. Without good national guidance, it's likely that some of these "imitations" won't be implemented in the best possible manner.

Sidepaths are not new to the Guide; both the existing Guide and the current draft include important cautionary notes regarding paths adjacent to roadways. The draft includes welcome additional information, specifically concerning design treatments where parallel paths intersect roadways. During the nationwide pre-Guide survey, practitioners expressed the need to provide more direction to designers on pathway design adjacent to roads. There are many agencies throughout the U.S. that are considering paths adjacent to roads. Guidance is imperative to ensure that these facilities are chosen only for the proper context and then designed well.

As the organization representing pedestrian and bicycle professionals throughout the U.S., APBP's position is that the current draft of the AASHTO Guide provides the appropriate level of detail for this topic based on the somewhat limited available research on the issue. While continuing to contain appropriate cautionary statements regarding shared use paths adjacent to roadways, the Guide should present the challenges associated with intersections of parallel paths and roadways and detail the toolbox of potential countermeasures. Guidance on the design of intersections of parallel paths and roadways is an important topic to include in the Guide.

Sincerely yours,



Kit Keller, JD  
Executive Director



Seleta Reynolds, AICP  
President, APBP Board

cc: Ken Kobetsky  
Jim McDonnell