

Definition of Bicycle Facilities

MORPC worked with local member governments to have its bicycle facility definitions more closely aligned with federal guidance. The following list shows the MORPC preferred terms; alternative names are shown in italics. We encourage local governments to use these terms to increase uniformity and assist with educational outreach efforts. Consistency in performance measurements also helps in reporting and grant applications. Further guidance can be found in the [AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities](#) and the [Ohio Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices](#). In cases where the facility does not meet the recommended minimum, MORPC would refer to AASHTO for guidance on the required minimum.

Bicycle Facility

A general term denoting improvements and provisions to accommodate or encourage bicycling, including parking and storage facilities, and shared roadways not specifically defined for bicycle use.

Bike Lane

A bike lane is a portion of roadway that has been designated for preferential or exclusive use by bicyclists by pavement markings and, if used, signs. It is intended for one-way travel, usually in the same direction as the adjacent traffic lane, unless designed as a contra-flow lane. Buffered bike lanes are bike lanes with additional pavement striping in between the bike lane and the travel lane.

- **Recommended minimum width: 5 feet**
- Considered an official bicycle facility for MORPC metrics.

Multi-Use Path (MUP) (*alternative names could include bike path / path / shared use path / trail*)

A multi-use path is a bikeway physically separated from motor vehicle traffic by an open space or barrier and either within the highway right-of-way or within an independent right-of-way. MUPs may also be used by pedestrians, skaters, wheelchair users, joggers, and other non-motorized users. MUPs are typically designed for two-way travel and are paved. Central Ohio Greenways trails are multi-use paths that generally follow greenways or waterways. MUPs do not have to follow a greenway or waterway, they can also be adjacent to a roadway.

- **Recommended minimum width: 10 feet**
- Considered an official bicycle facility for MORPC metrics.

Sharrow (*alternative names include shared lane markings / marked shared lanes / signed shared roadway*)

A sharrow is a pavement marking symbol that indicates an appropriate bicycle positioning in a roadway used by motor vehicles and bicycles. Sharrows may be placed at the edge of the travel lane or at the center of the travel lane, depending on factors like on-street parking, width of travel lane, or posted speed.

- **Recommended minimum occurrence: every 250 feet. Roadways with speed limits of 35 mph or less.**
- Considered an official bicycle facility for MORPC metrics.

Paved Shoulder

A paved shoulder is the part of the roadway that is adjacent and contiguous to the regular travel lanes. This portion of the roadway can be used by bicyclists. It can also accommodate stopped vehicles, emergency use, and pedestrians. Paved shoulders can be an appropriate bicycle facility along roadways that do not have curb and gutter but have open drainage. It is encouraged to consider upgrading paved shoulders to other bicycle facilities during roadway reconstruction activities or whenever land use or other changes occur.

- **Recommended minimum width: 4 feet. Larger widths recommended for speeds greater than 50 mph.**
- A roadway with paved shoulders on roads that do not have curb and gutter is considered an official bicycle facility for MORPC metrics.
- Paved shoulders on roadways with urban cross-sections (curb and gutter) will not count towards the MORPC metrics; however, MORPC will continue to track paved shoulders as part of their inventory and planning efforts and make it available online for public information.

Bike Boulevard (alternative name: *Neighborhood Greenways*)

A bike boulevard is a street segment, or series of contiguous street segments, that has been modified to accommodate through bicycle traffic and minimize through motor traffic. Oftentimes, but not necessarily, traffic calming features are utilized.

- **Recommended for roadways with posted speeds of 25 mph or less and with traffic volumes less than 3,000 vehicles per day.**
- Considered an official bicycle facility for MORPC metrics.

Cycle track (alternative name: *barrier-separated bike lanes / protected bike lanes*)

A cycle track is a bikeway physically separated from pedestrians and motor vehicle traffic by a barrier. Cycle tracks may only be used by bicyclists and can be designed for one-way or two-way travel. Common barriers include bollards, curbs, or medians.

- **Cycle track width and type of barrier depend on the context of the area and if it is one vs. two-way.**
- Considered an official bicycle facility for MORPC metrics.
- This facility is not currently in the AASHTO Bicycle Guide, however guidance for it can be found in the [National Association of City Transportation Officials \(NACTO\) Urban Bikeway Design Guide](#)

Other Helpful Definitions

Bicycle Route

A bicycle route is a roadway or bikeway designated by the jurisdiction having authority, either with a unique route designation or with bike route signs, along which bicycle guide signs may provide directional and distance information. Bike route signs and other wayfinding signage can help bicyclists navigate to various destinations.

- Bicycle routes that only have signage (not pavement markings) will not count towards the MORPC metrics.
- However, MORPC will continue to track bicycle routes as part of their inventory and planning efforts and make it available online for public information.

Shared Roadway

A shared roadway is a roadway that is open to both bicycle and motor vehicle travel.

- Most roadways in Central Ohio are shared roadways. Freeways and other roads where bicycle use is prohibited are not shared roadways.
- Unless it has an official bicycle facility, this type of roadway will not count towards the MORPC metrics.

Resources

Further guidance for defining and designing bicycle facilities can be found in the following documents:

- [AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities](#) (Fourth Edition, 2012)
- [Ohio Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices](#) (2005 Edition, Revision 2, 2011)
- [National Association of City Transportation Officials \(NACTO\) Urban Bikeway Design Guide](#) (Second Edition, 2012)
- Hard copies of these manuals can be reviewed in person at MORPC upon request.