

# Complete Streets for State Highways in Washington

## Glossary of Terms

**Active Transportation:** Forms of pedestrian mobility including walking or running, the use of a mobility assistive device such as a wheelchair, bicycling and cycling irrespective of the number of wheels, and the use of small personal devices such as foot scooters or skateboards. Active transportation includes both traditional and electric assist bicycles and other devices. Planning for active transportation must consider and address accommodation pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act and the distinct needs of each form of active transportation.

**All ages and abilities facility (“AAA facility”):** “A bicycle, pedestrian facility, or shared use path that allows users of all ages and abilities to safely and comfortably use the facility independently or, for children, with the same level of adult supervision as would be typical for a neighborhood sidewalk. Examples of AAA facilities include off-street trails and shared use paths, protected or separated bike lanes, and neighborhood greenways. Conventional bike lanes, buffered bike lanes, and shared lanes typically do not meet AAA facility expectations.

**Bicycle boulevard:** Streets with low motorized traffic volumes and speeds, designated and designed to give bicycle travel priority through the use of signs, pavement markings, and speed and volume management measures to discourage through trips by motor vehicles and through the creation of safe, convenient bicycle crossings of busy arterial streets.

Related terms: neighborhood greenways, bikeways

**Bicycle facility:** A facility intended for bicycle<sup>1</sup> travel which designates space for bicyclists distinct from motor vehicle traffic. A bicycle facility does not include shared lanes (including shared lanes with shared lane markings), sidewalks, or signed routes, but does include bicycle boulevards, trails, and shared-use paths.<sup>2</sup> As with pedestrian facilities, cycling facilities need to be designed for ADA compliance. Such facilities may also be used by people on micromobility devices.

**Bike lane:** A portion of a highway or street identified by signs and pavement markings as reserved for bicycle use.

**Buffered bicycle lane:** A bike lane with pavement markings delineating a buffer space between the bike lane and adjacent motor vehicle lane or parking lane. A buffered bike

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<sup>1</sup> Washington State law defines bicycles as two-wheeled or three-wheeled devices (RCW 46.04.071). The term “bicycle facility” is not intended to restrict the definition of cycling based on the number of wheels on the device.

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from FHWA Bikeway Selection Guide

lane does not include designed vertical elements in the buffer—refer to Separated Bicycle Lane.

**Complete streets:** An approach to planning, designing, building, operating, and maintaining streets that enables safe access along and across the street for all people, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities.

**Context sensitive solutions:** A collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders in providing a transportation facility that fits its setting. This approach leads to preserving and enhancing scenic, aesthetic, historic, community, and environmental resources, while improving or maintaining safety, mobility, accessibility, and infrastructure conditions.<sup>3</sup>

**Practical solutions:** Performance-based approach to transportation and organizational decision making. This data-driven approach uses tools, data analytics, performance measures, and stakeholder input to (1) seek lower-cost approaches and efficiencies in expanding and operating the multimodal transportation system to reduce travel demand and the need for building costly new infrastructure, (2) identify, evaluate, analyze, and manage risk to WSDOT’s strategic objectives, and (3) identify and implement agency efficiencies. WSDOT Executive Order E 1090.01.

**Separated bicycle lanes (SBL):** Bicycle facilities physically separated from motor vehicle traffic and distinct from the sidewalk. SBLs may be one-way or two-way, and may be at street level, sidewalk level, or at a level between street and sidewalk level. The physical separation includes a designed vertical element between the motor vehicle traffic and the bikeway; these vertical elements may include curb (including the curb of a raised PBL), concrete buffers, flexible delineators, planter boxes, etc. Physical separation identified only with pavement markings does not constitute a separated bike lane—refer to buffered bicycle lane.

**Shared lane or roadway:** A roadway that is open to both bicycle and motor vehicle travel. This may be a new or existing roadway/highway, a street with wide curb lanes, or a road with paved shoulders. In the State of Washington, as with most states, all vehicular lanes are shared lanes by definition unless bicycling is explicitly prohibited. The use of the term “shared lane” should not be confused with “shared lane marking” (see below).

**Shared lane marking or sharrow:** A clearly visible lane marking placed within shared lanes or bicycle boulevards to assist people on bicycles in determining the most appropriate lateral position to ride in a shared lane and to alert motor vehicle drivers and other bicyclists to the position that bicyclists are most likely to occupy within the traveled way.

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<sup>3</sup> Source: AASHTO Center for Environmental Excellence, <https://environment.transportation.org/education/practical-applications/context-sensitive-solutions/context-sensitive-solutions-overview/>

**Shared use path (SUP):** A facility physically separated from motorized vehicular traffic within the highway right-of-way or on an exclusive right of way with minimal crossflow by motor vehicles. Shared-use paths are primarily used by bicyclists and pedestrians, including joggers, skaters, and pedestrians with disabilities, including those who use nonmotorized or motorized wheeled mobility devices. With appropriate design considerations, equestrians may also be accommodated by a shared-use path facility. In certain locations with very high pedestrian and bicycle traffic, a shared use path may include modal separation between bicycle and pedestrian traffic.

**Traffic calming:** Design techniques that have been shown to reduce traffic speeds and unsafe maneuvers. These techniques can be stand-alone or used in combination. Examples include vertical deflection (e.g., speed humps, speed tables, raised crossings), horizontal shifts (e.g., chicanes, lateral lane tapers), and design elements that encourage a driver's perception of a lower speed facility (often referred to as "visual friction", these features include lane narrowing, curb extensions, median islands, specific pavement markings, etc.). This list of example traffic calming features is not exhaustive.

**Vulnerable user:** Under RCW 46.61, and as applied in this text, a "vulnerable user" of a public right-of-way means:

- A pedestrian, which includes people on foot or using wheelchairs;
- A person operating or riding any of the following on a public way:
  - A bicycle;
  - An electric-assisted bicycle;
  - An electric personal assistive mobility device;
  - A moped;
  - A motor-driven cycle;
  - A motorized foot scooter.

Note that the RCW identifies additional vulnerable users of the public right-of-way that are not included in the context of this text, including people riding animals, farm equipment, or motorcycles.

## GLOSSARY RESOURCES

- WSDOT Glossary: <https://wsdot.wa.gov/about/library-research-reports/wsdot-glossary-and-abbreviations-acronyms-list>
- Terms in development for Active Transportation: [Active Transportation Glossary](#)
- Final Draft Glossary Guide: [GlossaryGuideFinal9-30-2021 \(1\).pdf](#)
- [Active Transportation Plan 2021](#)