



National Association of City Transportation Officials

NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide

The purpose of the NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide (part of the Cities for Cycling initiative) is to provide cities with state-of-the-practice solutions that can help create complete streets that are safe and enjoyable for bicyclists.



Bike Lanes

CycleTracks

Intersections

Signals

Signs & Markings

The NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide is based on the experience of the best cycling cities in the world. The designs in this document were developed by cities for cities, since unique urban streets require innovative solutions. Most of these treatments are not directly referenced in the current versions of the AASHTO Guide to Bikeway Facilities or the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), although many of the elements are found within these documents. The Federal Highway Administration has recently posted information regarding [approval status](#) of various bicycle related treatments not covered in the MUTCD, including many of the treatments provided in the NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide. All of the NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide treatments are in use internationally and in many cities around the US.

To create the Guide, the authors have conducted an extensive worldwide literature search from design guidelines and real-life experience. They have worked closely with a panel of urban bikeway planning professionals from NACTO member cities, as well as traffic engineers, planners, and academics with deep experience in urban bikeway applications. A complete list of participating professionals is included in this brochure. Additional information has been gathered from numerous other cities worldwide.

The intent of the Guide is to offer substantive guidance for cities seeking to improve bicycle transportation in places where competing demands for the use of the right of way present unique challenges. Each of the treatments addressed in the Guide offers three levels of guidance:

- Required: elements for which there is a strong consensus that the treatment cannot be implemented without compromise.
- Recommended: elements for which there is a strong consensus of added value.
- Optional: elements that vary across cities and may add value depending on the situation.

In all cases, we encourage engineering judgment to ensure that the application makes sense for the context of each treatment, given the many complexities of urban streets.

Guide Status

This Guide has been created by a panel of professionals from NACTO member cities and a consulting team consisting of international experts in bikeway design along with the support of the NACTO Board of Directors. The NACTO Guide can be adopted by individual cities, counties, or states as either a stand-alone document or as a supplement to other guidance documents. The NACTO Guide will be updated regularly and have an extensive website that will include engineering drawings, three dimension renderings and images of the various design treatments, as well as a discussion area where professionals can exchange information and ideas on bikeway design.

How to Use the Guide

First and foremost, the NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide is intended to help practitioners make good decisions about urban bikeway design. The treatments outlined in the Guide are based on real-life experience in the world's most bicycle friendly cities and have been selected because of their utility in helping cities meet their goals related to bicycle transportation. Step one for most cities will be to start using the Guide in their daily transportation design work.

It is important to note that many urban situations are complex; treatments must be tailored to the individual situation. Good engineering judgment based on deep knowledge of bicycle transportation should be a part of bikeway design. Decisions should be thoroughly documented. To assist with this, the NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide links to companion reference material and studies.

*8-80 Cities invites all readers to visit the NACTO website (<http://nacto.org/cities-for-cycling/design-guide/>) to read each of the guidelines specific to **bike lanes, cycle tracks, intersections, signals and signs & markings**. NACTO's Urban Bikeway Design Guide is the first of its kind in North America and offers extremely valuable and tangible tools for designing effective bikeways. 8-80 Cities would like to congratulate NACTO on releasing the **Urban Bikeway Design Guide** and is confident that the guide will assist many cities in supporting sustainable transportation in urban areas.*