

Colton, Diane (DOT)

From: Barnes, Melissa (DOT)
Sent: Tuesday, September 20, 2016 1:46 PM
To: Anderson, Janelle (DOT); Lott, Heather (DOT); Johnson, Kenneth (DOT)
Subject: FW: Questions

FYI on the buffer vs. double solid white line issue. I reached out to the FHWA for clarification and received the following.

From: Stein, William (FHWA) [mailto:william.stein@dot.gov]
Sent: Thursday, September 08, 2016 2:09 PM
To: Barnes, Melissa (DOT)
Cc: Anderson, Janelle (DOT)
Subject: Questions

Melissa—I think both of your questions are addressed in the e-mail chain below.

Dave Kirschner (MUTCD Team) addressed the MUTCD question immediately below.

Candace Groudine (Office of Civil Rights) has some thoughts on the ADA issue with separated bike lanes.

Let me know if we can provide anything further.

From: Kirschner, David (FHWA)
Sent: Thursday, September 08, 2016 2:00 PM
To: Friedman, Bruce (FHWA); Groudine, Candace (FHWA)
Cc: Sylvester, Kevin (FHWA); Stein, William (FHWA); Walker, Mary (FHWA)
Subject: RE: Questions

Hi all –

The MUTCD does not provide a specification for line widths or line styles. Line types and line styles are typically set by State and local agencies. The MUTCD defines a double line only as “two parallel lines separated by a discernible space.” The buffer space in a buffered lane marking is similarly undefined. It’s up to the engineer to use their judgement to create a design that clearly communicates whether a line is intended to be a double line or a buffered space. If asked to provide a starting point, typically the space between two lines in a double line is equal to the width of each individual line. I would say that to create a buffered space, the space between the two lines should be at least twice the width of each line. This does come down to local standards and engineering judgement though.

To the second part of Question 2, there is no specific prohibition in the MUTCD on converting a shoulder into a buffer-separated preferential lane, which is effectively what would happen in the proposed scenario. It’s of course a much larger question than the traffic control devices angle though. I would counsel the engineer to check AASHTO and other relevant guidance on whether the shoulder is important in the specific case for more user groups than just bicyclists (as you noted) and thus would be important to retain as a shoulder versus an exclusive bike lane. There are many roads that are quite bike-friendly by providing a good shoulder. More important than marking the shoulder differently for bicyclists would be to provide a continuous shoulder (not interrupted by drainage or narrowing), to provide gaps between rumble strips if they are present, and to sweep the shoulder regularly so the surface is safe.

I hope this helps, and please feel free to contact me with any further questions or concerns.

Thanks –

Dave

Dave Kirschner, P.E.

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From: Friedman, Bruce (FHWA)
Sent: Thursday, September 01, 2016 3:30 PM
To: Groudine, Candace (FHWA); Kirschner, David (FHWA)
Cc: Sylvester, Kevin (FHWA); Stein, William (FHWA); Walker, Mary (FHWA)
Subject: RE: Questions

Candace,

Dave Kirschner is the member of the MUTCD team (<http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/team.htm>) who has responsibilities for both Part 3 (markings) and Part 9 (bikes), so he would be in the best position to answer Question #2 in Melissa's original message.

Dave,

Please respond directly to Candace and Mary after you return to the office next week.

Thanks,

Bruce

Bruce E. Friedman, P.E.

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From: Groudine, Candace (FHWA)
Sent: Thursday, September 01, 2016 3:19 PM
To: Friedman, Bruce (FHWA)
Cc: Walker, Mary (FHWA)
Subject: FW: Questions

Hi Bruce. Could you take a look at question #2 below and provide an answer, and copy me on whatever information you're able to send Melissa and Mary? Many Thanks.

Mary—Bruce is the lead MUTCD subject matter expert for FHWA at headquarters.

Also, with respect to the first question on complaints about separated bike lanes: I've received a few calls from individuals in different parts of the country who were concerned about plans that their communities had that called for removing on-street parking in front of their homes and other homes in their neighborhood and replace the parking areas with separated bike lanes. To our knowledge here at headquarters, none of these individuals (i.e., the ones who called me) has filed a complaint with the relevant public entity. Unfortunately, I don't know how many other individuals there are around the country who have similar concerns and who are calling their State DOTs.

I think my ADA SME colleagues at FHWA would probably agree with me when I say that I expect such concerns to increase dramatically over the next few years as more separated bike lanes are installed, and, that there will undoubtedly be a number of complaints emerging from such concerns.

Candace

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From: Walker, Mary (FHWA)
Sent: Wednesday, August 31, 2016 3:40 PM
To: Groudine, Candace (FHWA)
Subject: FW: Questions

Hi Candace,

Please see the below email from Melissa Barnes. Can you please provide us with any information you have on this.

Thanks,
Mary

From: Stein, William (FHWA)
Sent: Tuesday, August 30, 2016 3:05 PM
To: Barnes, Melissa (DOT); Walker, Mary (FHWA)
Cc: Anderson, Janelle (DOT)
Subject: RE: Questions

Mary—could you run Melissa’s question by our ADA people at HQ. We have not received any complaints in MN but I don’t know how many of these we have at this point (although there is a SBL under construction on Jackson Street, right in front of our office).

Melissa—I forwarded your 2nd question to Dave Kirschner on the MUTCD Team, as I also have not run into buffered bike lanes on a shoulder. I’ve only seen them in more urban areas like Park-Portland in Minneapolis. I’ll see if he has any thoughts.

From: Barnes, Melissa (DOT) [<mailto:Melissa.Barnes@state.mn.us>]
Sent: Monday, August 29, 2016 10:58 AM
To: Stein, William (FHWA)
Cc: Anderson, Janelle (DOT)
Subject: Questions

Will –

I have two unrelated questions for you.

1. Are there any other states who are dealing with complaints about ADA and separated bike lanes? Particularly parking protected separated bike lanes? They can be especially challenging for those in wheelchairs. We also have a lot of concern about intersection design as well as a detectable strip between what I would consider a vehicle lane (the bike lane) and the walk for raised SBLs. The FHWA guidebook doesn’t get too into detail at intersections or with ADA.
2. Double solid white lines. Please see the attached email for pictures of what I’m talking about. The FHWA ped/bike website (http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/guidance/mutcd/) says that buffer-separated bicycle lanes are allowed through the MUTCD. I’m assuming the guidelines would follow section 3D.2 on Preferential Lanes. My question is two-fold. What is the width of a buffer space that would change the definition of a double solid white line from prohibited to discouraged from changing lanes (see figures 3D-2 and 3D-3)? And does the MUTCD allow the installation of a buffer-separated double solid white line on the shoulder of a roadway? Section 3B.06 doesn’t specify either way.

I don’t like the idea of bicycle symbols on a shoulder where there are no separate ped facilities, defining it as a bike lane, which makes pedestrians walk in a bike lane. Any shoulder facility we would install where there were no sidewalks would be just the double solid white lines, with a buffer, to define a space intended for pedestrians, bicycles, and as a shoulder space.

Let me know if you need any clarifications for what I’m asking.

Melissa Barnes, PE, PTOE
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