
WIDE OUTSIDE LANES



Wide outside lanes allow motorists to more safely pass slower moving bicyclists without changing lanes. Wide outside lanes are intended for bicyclists with traffic-handling skills.

DEFINITION

A wide outside lane (or wide curb lane) refers to the through lane closest to the curb and gutter of a roadway. Dedicated right turn only lanes are not used for wide outside lanes.

Two ways to obtain widened outside lanes are:

1. Differential striping on an existing road: when existing multi-lane roadways are being re-surfaced, the inside lane can be narrowed to provide extra space for widening the outside lane; bicyclists and motorists can more safely operate in the same lane. This type of treatment is a non-construction alternative.
2. Widened outside lanes as a part of roadway improvement projects; new roadways can have additional width provided in the outside (or curb) lane as a part of the overall roadway construction project.

WHEN TO CONSIDER THIS TYPE OF FACILITY

A widened outside lane is an effective way to accommodate bicyclists riding in the same lane with motor vehicles. With a wide outside lane, motorists do not have to change lanes to pass a bicyclist. The additional width in the outside lane also improves sight distance and provides more room for vehicles to turn onto the roadway. Therefore, on roadways with bicycle traffic, widening the outside lane can improve the capacity of that roadway. Also, by widening the outside lane by a few extra feet both motorists and bicyclists have more space in which to maneuver.

- This facility type is generally considered for use in urban, suburban, and occasionally rural conditions on roadways where there is curb and gutter.
- Wide outside lanes can be applied to several different roadway cross sections.

PRINCIPAL PLANNING CONCERNS WITH WIDE OUTSIDE LANES

- Motor vehicle traffic should not be more than 60 percent of the route's capacity (Level of Service [LOS] C) in the base and design year. This criterion may not always be met. However, since cyclists may still use the facility, wide outside lanes make it safer.
- Truck traffic should not exceed 5 percent of the total motor vehicles traffic in the base and design year.

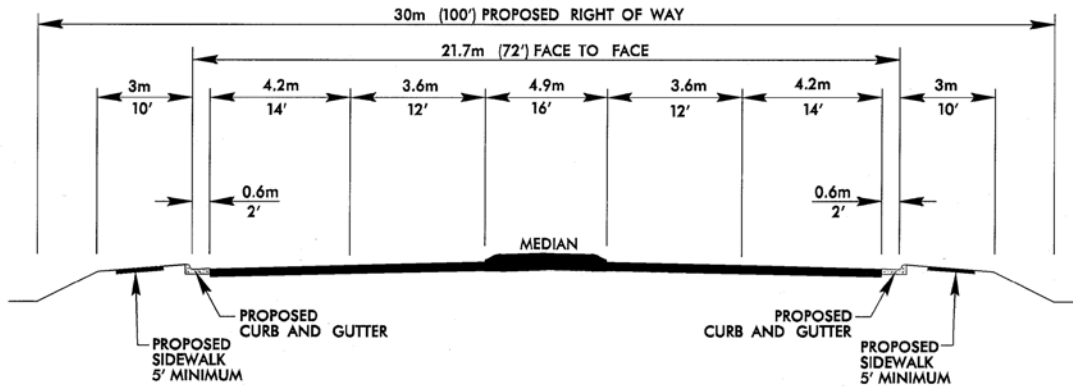
PLANNING AND DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

On new arterial or collector roadways the standard motor vehicle lane width is 3.6m (12 ft). The AASHTO standard lane width to accommodate both motorists and bicyclists should be 4.2m (14 ft). If an existing multi-lane roadway with standard 3.6m lanes cannot be widened to accommodate 4.2m outside lanes, then the inside lanes can be narrowed to 3.3m (11 ft.), thus providing extra width for 3.9m (13 ft) wide outside lanes.

WIDE CURB LANES

4-LANE MEDIAN DIVIDED TYPICAL SECTION

With Wide Outside Lanes



5-LANE TYPICAL SECTION

With Wide Outside Lanes

