

Chapter 7. Definitions

At-grade crossing – A junction where bicycle path or sidewalk users cross a roadway over the same surface as motor vehicle traffic, as opposed to a grade-separated crossing where users cross over or under the roadway using a bridge or tunnel.

Bicycle Boulevard - See Bicycle Friendly Street

Bicycle facilities - A general term used to describe all types of bicycle-related infrastructure including linear bikeways and other provisions to accommodate or encourage bicycling, including bicycle racks and lockers, bikeways, and showers at employment destinations.

Bicycle Lane - A striped lane for one-way bicycle travel on a street or highway. Caltrans refers to this facility as a Class II bikeway.

Bicycle Level of Service (BLOS) – Indication of bicyclist comfort level for specific roadway geometries and traffic conditions. Roadways with a better (lower) score are more attractive (and usually safer) for bicyclists.

Bicycle Path – A paved pathway separated from motorized vehicular traffic by an open space or barrier and either within the highway right-of-way or within an independent alignment. Bicycle paths may be used by bicyclists, skaters, wheelchair users, joggers, and other non-motorized users. Caltrans refers to this facility as a Class I Bikeway which “Provides a completely separated right of way for the exclusive use of bicycles and pedestrians with crossflow of motorists minimized.”

Bicycle Friendly Street (BFS) - Streets which give bicyclists better access due to limited motor vehicle through traffic, lower speeds, and various design elements, to enhance bicycle safety and enjoyment.

Bicycle Route - A shared roadway specifically identified for use by bicyclists, providing a superior route based on traffic volumes and speeds, street width, directness, and/or cross-street priority, denoted by signs only. Caltrans refers to this facility as a Class III Bikeway – “Provides for shared use with pedestrian or motor vehicle traffic.”

Bikeway – A generic term for any road, street, path or way that in some manner is specifically designed for bicycle travel, regardless of whether such facilities are designated for the exclusive use of bicycles or are to be shared with other transportation modes.

Caltrans - California Department of Transportation

CA MUTCD – The CALTRANS Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, which designates standards for signage and pavement markings.

Class I Bikeway – CALTRANS HDM designation. See “bicycle path”.

Class II Bikeway - CALTRANS HDM designation. See “bicycle lane”.

Class III Bikeway - CALTRANS HDM designation. See “bicycle route”.

Clearance, lateral – Width required for safe passage of bicycle path users as measured on a horizontal plane.

Clearance, vertical – Height required for safe passage of bicycle path users as measured on a vertical plane.

CROW Manual – Bicycle facility and design manual from the Netherlands.

CTCDC – The California Traffic Control Devices Committee establishes standards and designs included in CA MUTCD.

Directional or wayfinding signs – Signs typically placed at road and bicycle path junctions (decision points) to guide bicycle path users toward a destination or experience.

Geometry - The vertical and horizontal characteristics of a transportation facility, typically defined in terms of gradient, degrees, and super elevation.

Grade-separated crossing – A bridge or tunnel allowing bicycle path users to cross a major roadway without conflict.

HDM – Caltrans Highway Design Manual for the design of transportation facilities including streets and bikeways.

Level of service (LOS) - Term for the measurement of how well automobile traffic “flows” on a roadway system or how well an intersection functions.

Loop detector - A device placed in the pavement at intersections to detect a vehicle or bicycle and trigger a signal to turn green.

Medians – Area in the center of the roadway that separates directional traffic. Medians may be level with the surrounding roadway or “raised” using curb and gutter. Medians may include landscaping, concrete, striping or any combination thereof.

Multi-use path – See “shared pathway”

MUTCD – Federal Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, which designates standards for signage and pavement markings.

Paved shoulder – The outer edge of the roadway beyond the outer stripe edge that provides a place for bicyclists when it is wide enough (4-5 feet), free of debris, and does not contain rumble strips or other obstructions.

Pavement marking – Any marking on the surface of the pavement that gives directions to motorists and other road users in the proper use of the road. The MUTCD determines the standard marking in California for state and local use.

Refuge islands – Corner raised triangles or medians which may be used by bicyclists at intersections or mid-block for assistance with crossing wide streets.

Right-of-way (ROW) - The right of one vehicle, bicycle, to proceed in a lawful manner in preference to another vehicle, bicycle, or pedestrian. Also, the strip of property over which a transportation facility or other facility is built.

Shared pathway - A path that permits more than one type of user, such as a path designated for use by both pedestrians and bicyclists.

Shared roadway - A roadway where bicyclists and motor vehicles share the same space with no striped bicycle lane. Any roadway where bicycles are not prohibited by law (i.e. interstate highways or freeways) is a shared roadway.

Sight distance - The distance a person can see along an unobstructed line of sight.

Traffic calming - Changes in street alignment, installation of barriers, and other physical measures employed to reduce traffic speeds and/or cut-through traffic volumes in the interest of street safety, livability, and other public purposes.

Traffic control devices - Signs, signals, or pavement markings whether permanent or temporary, placed on or adjacent to a travelway by authority of a public body having jurisdiction to regulate, warn, or guide traffic. CA MUTCD/MUTCD designates standards.

Traffic volume - The number of vehicles that pass a specific point for a specific amount of time (hour, day, year).

Utilitarian trips – Trips that are not for recreational purposes, such as running errands.

Wide curb lane – A 14 foot (or greater) wide outside lane adjacent to the curb of a roadway, that provides space for bicyclists to ride next to (to the right of) motor vehicles. Also referred to as a “wide outside lane”. If adjacent to parking, 22 feet in width may also be considered a wide curb lane.

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