

9.2 Bicycle Routes

Designations for bicycle routes within the Commonwealth include state lettered routes, local or regionally named routes, or U.S. numbered bicycle routes. The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) and PennDOT Publication 13 provide guidance on signing for bicycle routes.

BicyclePA Routes

The Pennsylvania Pedalcycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (PPAC) and PennDOT jointly developed various cross-state designated bicycle routes that are referenced as “BicyclePA Routes.” These state bicycle route alignments include on road segments as well as off road (trails) to facilitate travel for cyclists. Each route has a unique, non-numeric identification (route designation).

When erecting signs for these routes, every turn is to have a BicyclePA Route Marker Turn Assembly (M1-8A-2) in advance of or at the turn, and a confirmation BicyclePA Route Marker (M1-8A-1) after the turn in each direction of travel. Also, install the M1-8A-1 markers at distances of approximately 3 to 5 miles along the route, including beyond major intersections, so that bicyclists approaching the route will recognize that they have intersected it.

Other Bicycle Route Designations within State Highway Right-of-Way

The purpose of this policy is to provide a standard practice for designating bicycle routes in state highway right-of-way in Pennsylvania. This policy:

1. Outlines the process to request approval to use state highway right-of-way for bicycle route signs and pavement markings.
2. Provides guidance on bicycle route signage and pavement marking plans.

A bicycle route designates a facility (or collection of facilities) that links origins and destinations that have been improved or are considered preferable for bicycle travel. A bicycle route can use a combination of state and local roads as well as off-road facilities to give directional guidance to bicyclists and include a system of wayfinding and route signs and pavement markings. A request for a bicycle route can come from a Local Authority or other Applicant.

A bicycle route can use D11-1 Bike Route signs found in the Handbook of Approved Signs (Publication 236) or custom designed M1-8A type signs in accordance with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). Custom M1-8A sign layouts must be approved by the Signing and Pavement Markings Unit in the Bureau of Operations as part of the review of the overall signing and pavement marking plan submission.

When erecting signs for bicycle routes, every turn is to have a D11-1 or M1-8A sign with M Series turn marker in advance of or at the turn and a confirmation Bike Route Marker D11-1 or M1-8A type sign after the turn in each direction of travel. Also, the D11-1 or M1-8A markers shall be located at distances of approximately 3 to 5 miles along the route, including beyond major intersections (two or more major roadways, typically signal-controlled), so that bicyclists approaching the route will recognize that they have intersected it.

If the Applicant for the proposed bicycle route is an entity other than a Local Authority and the bicycle route uses both state and local roads, a letter of support from each municipality where the bicycle route is proposed shall be submitted to PennDOT as part of a signing and pavement marking plan submission.

PennDOT approval is required for any Local Authority other than a city of the first or second class to install and maintain bicycle route signing and pavement markings within state highway right-of-way. Cities of the first and second class should coordinate signed bicycle routes with their designated PennDOT Engineering District prior to signing and pavement marking installation.

The following agreement applies to bicycle route signing and pavement markings in state highway right-of-way:

Highway Use Agreement Right of Entry for Directional Bicycle Route Signage and Pavement Markings – Bicycle Route Applicants who are not Local Authorities must execute an Agreement to permit entry into PennDOT right-of-way for the purposes of installing and maintaining the signing and pavement markings associated with the bicycle route.

Bicycle Route Approval Process:

1. The Local Authority or Applicant identifies the proposed bicycle route.
2. The Local Authority or Applicant prepares a signing and pavement marking plan including the following:
 - Seal and signature of the Professional Engineer who has direction and control of the engineering aspects of the plan unless waived by the local PennDOT District Executive.
 - Index Map (if there are multiple sheets)
 - State and Local Route Identification
 - Existing bicycle routes and facilities
 - Municipal Name and Boundary
 - North Arrow
 - Locations of all proposed signs and pavement markings (if applicable)
 - Sign fabrication details and notes
 - Designate the sign post standard and reference Pub 111 and MUTCD (as applicable)
 - Pavement marking details and notes (if applicable)
3. The Local Authority or Applicant submits the signing and pavement marking plan to the local PennDOT District Traffic Engineer (DTE).
4. PennDOT's DTE (or DTE designee) and District Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator will review the signing and pavement marking plan to ensure there are no safety concerns or prohibitions to bicyclists. The DTE or DTE designee will approve, suggest modifications, or deny the signing and pavement marking plan via written correspondence.

Local Authorities (other than Cities of the First or Second Class):

5. After PennDOT approval of the signing and pavement marking plan, the Local Authority can install the bicycle route signage per the approved signing and pavement marking plan.

6. After construction is complete and traffic control devices are installed, the Local Authority is responsible for maintaining the traffic control devices in the approved signing and pavement marking plan.

Applicants Other than Local Authorities:

5. The PennDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator provides the Highway Use Agreement Right of Entry for Directional Bicycle Route Signage and Pavement Markings template to the Applicant for signature(s).
6. The Applicant returns the signed agreement to the District Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator and the agreement is submitted to PennDOT Office of Chief Counsel for final execution.
7. After PennDOT approval of the agreement, the Applicant shall provide applicable permits, security and certificate of insurance as required by the agreement before a Notice to Proceed (NTP) is issued by PennDOT to install the bicycle route signing and pavement markings per the approved plan and executed agreement.
8. After construction is complete and traffic control devices are installed, maintenance responsibilities are outlined in the agreement.