

## **CHAPTER 8: ACCOMMODATING BICYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS THROUGH WORK ZONES**

Maryland public policy states that best engineering practices regarding the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians shall be employed in all phases of transportation planning, including highway design, construction, reconstruction, and repair as well as expansion and improvement of other transportation facilities.

In an effort to maintain accessibility for both bicyclists and pedestrians, the SHA has developed the following guidelines for providing space for cyclists and walkers through work zones. This is especially important where the adjacent land use supports bicycling and walking such as residential, commercial, education, and employment centers as well as transit stations. Closing or detouring a roadway for construction impacts more bicyclists and walkers in urban areas, however there are typically more options available in these areas to provide alternate routes. In rural areas there may not be a large population of bicyclists or walkers, however, because of the open space and separation between communities, closing or detouring a roadway may increase a person's route significantly. Consequently, all projects should be reviewed and evaluated on a case by case basis to determine what impact construction might have on bicycle and pedestrian access.

The requirements for providing bicycle and pedestrian access through work zones should be applied during the planning, design, construction and maintenance phases of all projects where applicable and to the maximum extent feasible. All proposed road closings or detours should be reviewed with SHA's Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator. For additional information and guidance, refer to Part 6 of the Maryland MUTCD (2006).

### **8.1 Bicycle Access**

A four (4) foot minimum, five (5) foot preferred width should be maintained through work zones to accommodate bicycles. Care should be taken to ensure that obstacles such as bridge abutments, equipment, construction materials, traffic control devices, etc. do not encroach into the bicycle space.

Where the posted speed limit is 50 mph or lower and a minimum 4 foot shoulder width can not be maintained, bicycles will typically be required to share the road with motorists. In this case, the right-most lane should be made as wide as feasible to minimize friction between the two user groups. Installing "Share the Road" signs (a combination of W11-1 and W16-1) may also be considered.

Bicycles are prohibited in Maryland from operating in the travel lane when the posted speed limit exceeds 50 mph. Consequently, it is imperative to maintain a minimum 4 foot shoulder space for bicycle access in areas where the posted speed limit exceeds 50 mph. Where a minimum 4 foot wide shoulder can not be maintained during construction, the roadway should be designated with the appropriate signing as being prohibited to bicyclists. In some cases it may be appropriate for cyclists to seek their own alternate route to bypass construction. In other cases it may be necessary for the SHA to designate (with appropriate signing) a reasonable alternate route for cyclists to bypass construction. All proposed road closings and proposed detours should be reviewed with SHA's Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator.

For projects of short length (1/4 mile) and/or short duration (24 hours) and where the posted speed limit is 50 mph or less, bicycles may be required to share the road with motorized vehicles.

No accommodations will be considered for bicycle access through work zones on roadways where bicycles are designated by signing as being prohibited. This includes all interstate highways and some controlled access highways. For specific information regarding what roadway are prohibited to bicycle access, consult SHA Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator.

## **8.2 Pedestrian Access**

The removal of a pedestrian route, even for a short time, may severely limit or totally preclude pedestrian access to employment centers, schools, commercial establishments, etc. Consequently it is imperative that impacts to existing pedestrian routes be minimized. If an existing pedestrian route is blocked by construction, alteration, maintenance or other temporary conditions, an alternate route should be provided to maintain the continuity of movement. The existing facility should be replaced with a reasonably safe, convenient and accessible pathway that replicates as much as possible the desirable characteristics of the existing pedestrian facility or route. (An existing pedestrian route may be a sidewalk, a roadway shoulder or another facility that is recognized as being used by pedestrians.)

Completely closing a sidewalk for construction and rerouting pedestrians to the other side of the street should only be done as a last resort. To the maximum extent feasible, the alternate pedestrian route should be provided on the same side of the street as the disrupted route. The alternate route shall be appropriately delineated with directional signs, markings, channelization devices and barricades. The alternate route shall provide access to existing or temporary transit stops. The alternate route shall comply with SHA's *Accessibility Policy & Guidelines for Pedestrian Facilities along State Highways*.