

Belmont Community Path Advisory Committee (CPAC)

Route Evaluation Definitions

2013-06-13; revised 2013-07-10; accepted 2013-07-23

This document provides basic, high-level definitions of three types of bicycle and pedestrian accommodations used in Massachusetts. The three types of accommodations discussed are Shared-Use Paths, Raised Cycles Tracks, and Bicycle Lanes. These definitions are general descriptions, using basic design principles and best-practices. The set of assumptions listed in this document will be used to help the CPAC evaluate potential Community Path route segments in a consistent fashion.

(1) Off Road, Shared-Use Path (similar to the Brighton Street - Alewife bicycle path)

Assumptions:

- Minimum 12-foot wide paved surface, additional minimum 1' shoulder (grass) on each side
- Two way traffic on path, separated by dotted line
- If beside a rail – assume at least a 6 foot high heavy metal fence separating rails from path
- If behind a resident's house – assume a fence or some form of buffer between the path and the resident's home. The buffer may be enhanced landscaping, vegetation, or may be physical fence. But assume some physical buffer.
- ADA Compliant; i.e., hard, all-weather surface and grade <8.3% (1/12)
- Emergency Responder accessible (width permits access by police car, fire trucks, ambulance, etc.)

(2) Raised Cycle Track (similar to the raised path on Concord Ave in Cambridge, beside Fresh Pond Parkway)

Assumptions

- Adjacent to motor-vehicle roadway

- Two paths – one for walkers, one for bikers
- 6-7 feet wide for each path (allows room to pass)
- Single direction traffic on cycling path
- Separated from road by raised curb to protect users from cars
- May involve relocating catch basins to maintain proper drainage for roadway and raised path (c.f., Cambridge implementation)
- Guideline recommends prohibiting on-street parking within 30 feet of a path roadway or driveway intersection (per Cambridge implementation) <http://nacto.org/cities-for-cycling/design-guide/cycle-tracks/raised-cycle-tracks/>

For reference, State law prohibits on-street parking within 18 feet of intersections (driveways excluded)

- Parking allowed if separated by median – per NACTO guidelines (See Raised cycle Tracks) but still need to maintain 20-foot sight triangles at intersections <http://nacto.org/cities-for-cycling/design-guide/>
- ADA Compliant and Emergency Responder accessible

(3) On-Road Bicycle Lane (Similar to existing bike lanes on Concord Ave in Belmont)

Assumptions

- Lane is 5-6 feet wide (allows room to pass)
- Cyclists not required to ride in bicycle lane; may use full lane for safety purposes
- Involves sharing the roadway with the cars, trucks, and buses
- Single direction traffic on bike lane
- No separation from road traffic
- Not safe option for pedestrians; Sidewalk required to accommodate pedestrians; Not for ADA use
- MA State Law permits use of bicycle lanes by motorized bikes, mopeds, etc.
- Emergency Responder accessible