SEPARATED BIKE LANE
PLANNING & DESIGN GUIDE 2015
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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It is my sincere pleasure to present the Massachusetts Department of Transportation's Separated Bike Lane Planning & Design Guide. MassDOT is committed to providing Massachusetts residents and visitors with a variety of safe and convenient transportation choices; for us, incorporating facilities that encourage walking and bicycling trips into projects is no longer the exception but the rule. Many people—including me—are reluctant to bicycle adjacent to busy roadways alongside fast-moving traffic. That’s where separated bicycle facilities come in. Separated bike lanes are a key ingredient in the development of safe, comfortable and connected bicycle networks that will attract bicyclists of all ages and abilities.

This pioneering Guide will significantly advance bicycle facility design in the Commonwealth and, we hope, set new precedents for design in the United States. This Guide gives planners and engineers the tools to create facilities that will appeal to a broad range of potential bicyclists. As more separated bicycle facilities are built, people who would otherwise be unwilling to bicycle will hopefully choose to turn a short drive into a bike trip to work or school, to do an errand or visit friends.

I particularly want to thank the experts and advocates both inside and outside MassDOT whose expertise and willingness to share that knowledge made this Guide possible. Because of their hard work, this is the first statewide guide to provide specific guidance on planning, design and operations for separated bike lanes. It includes innovative safety features, such as the ‘protected intersection’ which minimizes conflicts between road users and improves visibility between people bicycling and driving. The Guide provides the tools and design flexibility that will enable both MassDOT and our partners in cities and towns throughout the Commonwealth to create protected intersections and other separated bike lane treatments as part of Complete Streets and other sustainable transportation initiatives.

This Guide builds on years of work at MassDOT to make our statewide transportation system more sustainable, encourage residents to make more use of transit, walking and biking options, and promote construction of Complete Streets that are safe and convenient for motorists, pedestrians, cyclists and transit riders alike. Our 2006 Project Development & Design Guide ensured that the safety and mobility of bicyclists and pedestrians would be considered equally throughout all phases of project development and design. In 2010, the GreenDOT Policy Initiative outlined key sustainability goals such as tripling bicycle, walking and transit trips by 2030. And the Healthy Transportation Policy Directive issued in 2013 committed MassDOT to ensuring that new projects increase and encourage bicycle, walking and transit trips. The Separated Bike Lane Planning & Design Guide represents the next—but not the last—step in MassDOT’s continuing commitment to Complete Streets, sustainable transportation, and creating more safe and convenient transportation options for our residents.

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The Massachusetts Department of Transportation would like to acknowledge the people who contributed to the successful development of this Guide. Through their combined efforts and expertise, we were able to provide a responsive, comprehensive, contemporary Guide that will ultimately help to make Massachusetts a better place to be with safe multimodal choices for transportation.

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