

Revision of the Guideline for Creating a Safe and Pleasant Environment for Bicycle Use

Yasushi Kimura, Researcher
Shusei Yasui, Researcher
Shinsuke Setoshita, Head
Road Division, Road Traffic Department

Naoyuki Kawamoto, Researcher
Hiroki Onishi, Guest Research Engineer

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1. Introduction

Since the release of the Guidelines for Creating a Safe and Pleasant Environment for Bicycle Use (hereinafter referred to as “guideline”) in November 2012 by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism’s Road Bureau and the National Police Agency’s Traffic Bureau, the development of bicycle lanes is in progress across the country. On the other hand, only some local governments have established the bicycle network project as basic policy for the development of bicycle lanes in the region, and the promotion of the development of bicycle lanes is continuously required. Under these circumstances, the committee concerning the promotion of the creation of a safe and pleasant environment for bicycle use made proposals toward the promotion of the development of bicycle lanes in March 2016, and the guidelines were revised in July 2016 based on the contents of the proposals.

NILIM was involved in the revision of the guidelines by conducting studies based on an on-the-premise experiment concerning the standardization of the specifications of road marks that clearly specify bicycle lanes.

2. Points of the Revision of the Guideline

(1) Early progress of the development of bicycle network project

As the reason why progress in the development of a bicycle network plan is prohibited, local governments have the opinion that it is hard to establish the project for the entire city. Therefore, the revised guidelines specify the concept of identifying the areas where the project is established on a priority basis to establish the bicycle network project in a phased manner so that it will be easier for local governments to undertake the establishment of the bicycle network project.

(2) Early securement of safe bicycle lanes

As the basic forms for developing bicycle lanes, the original guidelines show three forms—cycle road, lane dedicated for bicycles, and mixture of bicycles and cars on the driveway (hereinafter referred to as “mixture in driveway”)—and one of them is selected according to traffic conditions. However, the revised guidelines show the concept of enabling flexible responses to the selection of the development form for the purpose of early securement of safe bicycle lanes (refer to Figure 1).

In addition, concerning road signs showing bicycle

lanes, there were concerns in the past that it was difficult to convey accurate information on the passing method to both bicycle users and drivers because the method of marking varied depending on the region, such as different designs among regions. Therefore, the revised guidelines show standard specifications for road signs (refer to Figure 2).

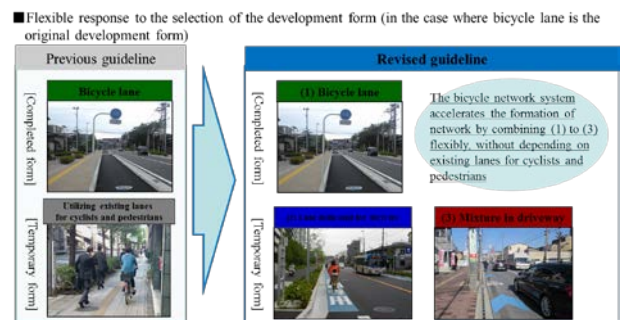


Figure 1 Flexible response to the selection of development form (in the case where a bicycle lane is the completed form)

Standardization of the specifications for road marks (Idea)

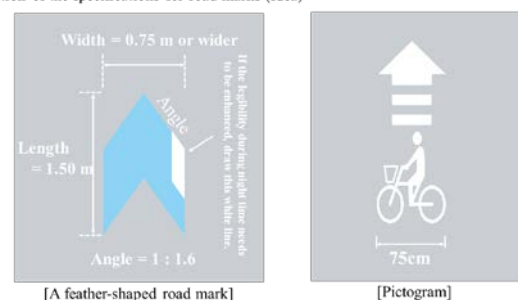


Figure 2 Standardization of the specifications for road marks (Mixture in driveway)

3. Conclusion

Since the guidelines just describe the standard approach, various measures could be taken based on actual local circumstances and by making the best use of inventiveness. NILIM will also work to conduct technical studies based on the case examples in such regions and new findings.