



February 20, 2025

Virginia Department of Transportation  
Traffic Engineering Division  
1401 East Broad Street  
Richmond, VA 23219

**Subject: VDOT's Request for Public Comment on Options and Guidance proposed by the FHWA's 11th Edition of the MUTCD**

Dear Mr. Robert Cochrane,

I am writing on behalf of the Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA) and its more than 5,000 members across Northern Virginia and the Washington metropolitan area to voice our full support for the latest bicycle facilities and traffic control devices approved in the 2023 Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) and to respectfully urge the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to update and expansively incorporate ALL elements into its policy and design guidance materials.

This update is vital to advancing safe and modern infrastructure for bicyclists across Virginia. Whether VDOT adopts the MUTCD via a supplement or creates an integrated state MUTCD document (as it seems likely to do), what matters most is for the Commonwealth to maintain (or exceed) the national standards and best practices set forth in the FHWA MUTCD and elsewhere including the recently-updated American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities.

The revised FHWA MUTCD (and AASHTO) guidelines introduce and codify numerous innovative design elements that meaningfully enhance cyclist safety and accessibility, including:

- Protected bicycle lanes (separated by physical barriers);
- Dedicated bicycle signal faces and bicycle-specific traffic signal timing;
- Painted bike facilities and bike boxes (advanced stop lines for bicyclists at intersections);

- Contraflow bicycle lanes (enabling two-way bicycling on one-way streets);
- Shared lane markings (sharrows) with updated placement standards; and
- Mid-block crossings and pedestrian hybrid beacons with bicycle accommodations; and
- Contextual guidance on speed limit setting with a de-emphasis of the 85th percentile in non-freeway or rural highway settings.

Adopting these and other provisions will align Virginia with federal standards, improve safety for vulnerable road users, and support the state's goals of mitigating traffic congestion and promoting active transportation and travel alternatives. Additionally, updated guidance will empower local agencies to better design infrastructure that meets the needs of the growing bicycling community while ensuring continued eligibility for federal funding opportunities.

WABA stands ready to assist in this multifaceted effort. We offer our expertise and participation in any planned external stakeholder engagement settings and collaborative drafting processes. We are eager to provide case studies of successful implementations from across the state and country, to aid in prioritizing the highest-impact updates, and to assist VDOT's efforts to educate lawmakers and staff for any eventual required changes to Virginia Code.

Thank you for your commitment to safe and sustainable transportation. We look forward to continued engagement in this process. Please feel free to contact me at [kevin.obrien@waba.org](mailto:kevin.obrien@waba.org).

Sincerely,  
Kevin O'Brien  
Virginia Organizer | Washington Area Bicyclist Association