



5.0 SIGNING GUIDELINES

This chapter provides direction in terms of signing for the Sault Ste. Marie Cycling Route. The following describes the function and format of the various types of signs that should be implemented as part of the cycling route network.

5.1 SIGNING FUNCTION

Signs along the Sault Ste. Marie Cycling Route should communicate various kinds of information to the bicycle route user. Recommended signing has been organized according to the following six functions:

- Bicycle Route Designation signs
- Way-Finding signs
- Regulatory signs
- Warning signs
- Information signs
- Interpretative signs

Bicycle Route Designation signs should be used to “brand” or identify routes that constitute the Sault Ste. Marie Cycling Route Network. The rectangular green and white Bicycle Route sign, shown in Figure 5.1, may be designed in various sizes depending on its intended application. Unlike signs for exclusive cycling lanes, bicycle route signs do not have a regulatory function, nor are they officially recognized, enforceable or required by municipalities. Notwithstanding, installation of Bicycle Route signs help identify the cycling route network and inform motorists of the presence of cyclists on the roadway. Designation signs may be mounted alone or with other signs, such as “Share the Road” signs, at logical, highly visible locations on both on and off-road network route segments.

Figure 5.1: Bicycle Route Marker Sign (IB-23)



Source: Bicycle Route Traffic Control Guidelines, Transportation Association of Canada (TAC), 1998

Way-Finding signs may include the network logo or “brand” and communicate other information to bicycle route users such as directional arrows and distances in kilometres to major attractions and settlement areas. Way-finding signs should be mounted on standard sign poles and located on all legs of an intersection or off-road trail junction, as well as at cycling network gateways.



Way finding sign



Way-finding signs should also be integrated with the updated Sault Ste. Marie Cycling Map for clarity and to provide a consistent look. One innovation adopted by other cities including Chicago, Denver and Toronto is a route number signing strategy. This involves installing numbered bike route signs in the field and then publishing a cycling map with the route numbers clearly indicated. This provides an excellent navigation tool and should be considered for the City of Sault Ste. Marie. It is recommended that the City consider a pilot project in 2007 / 2008 on an existing route to test the proposed way-finding strategy.

Regulatory signs are intended to control particular aspects of travel and use along the road or off-road bicycle route. Signing restricting or requiring specific behaviour is not legally enforceable unless it is associated with a provincial law or municipal by-law. Where applicable, it is recommended that authorities discreetly include the by-law number on signs to reinforce their regulatory function.

For on-road trail routes, the standard Rb-169 *Bicycle Route* sign (60 cm x 60 cm) may be applied; for off-road trail routes that do not permit motorized vehicles, the standard Rb-69 *Bicycle Route* sign (45 cm x 45 cm) may be applied (see Figure 5.2). The Bicycle Route sign is officially recognized and approved by the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) for use on MTO highways, though it is not required for municipalities and has no legal status under the Highway Traffic Act.

Figure 5.2: Bicycle Route Sign Rb-169 / 69



Source: Ontario Traffic Manual (OTM) Book 5, Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO), 2000



Bicycle route signs along St. Laurent Boulevard, Ottawa

Regulatory “Reserved Bicycle Lane” signs should be posted along exclusive cycling lanes. The Reserved Bicycle Lane sign informs motorists that a specific lane on the road is designated for exclusive bicycle use. The signs should be mounted either directly overhead (Rb-84) or ground-mounted adjacent (Rb-84A) to the cycling lane (see Figures 5.3 and 5.4). A minimum of one sign should be installed between each intersection. Where there is public access to the cycling lane, additional signs may be mounted.

Figure 5.3: Reserved Bicycle Lane Sign Rb-84



Source: OTM Book 5, MTO, 2000

Figure 5.4: Reserved Bicycle Lane Rb-84A



Source: OTM Book 5, MTO, 2000



Prior to the end of the cycling lane, the Reserved Bicycle Lane sign in conjunction with the “Ends” sign (RB-85t) should be installed (see Figure 5.5). In a similar fashion, the “Begins” sign (Rb-84t) may be installed in addition to Reserved Bicycle Lane signs (see Figure 5.6).

Figure 5.5: Reserved Lane ENDS Tab Sign Rb-85t



Source: OTM Book 5, MTO, 2000

Figure 5.6: Reserved Lane BEGINS Tab Sign Rb-84t

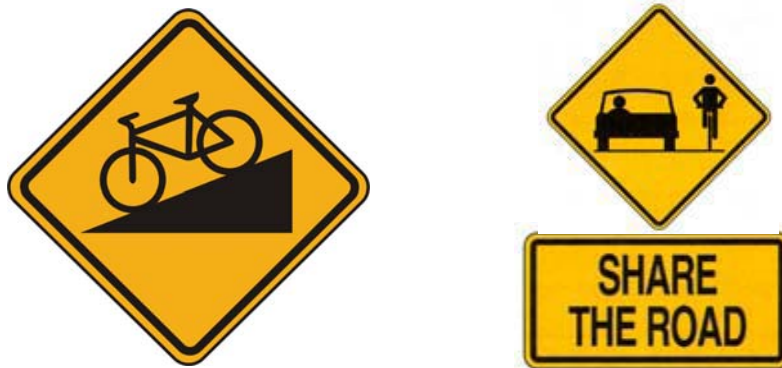


Source: OTM Book 5, MTO, 2000

Signs for exclusive cycling lanes should be designated by a regulatory by-law for permanent use. Wherever possible these signs should be mounted above the lane rather than simply beside the roadway. Reserved Bicycle Lane signs should be installed in conjunction with corresponding pavement markings.

Warning signs are used to highlight bicycle route conditions that may pose a potential safety or convenience concern to bicycle route users. Examples are steep slopes, share the road, railway crossings and pavement changes. As illustrated in Figure 5.7, these signs are diamond in shape, with a black legend on a yellow background.

Figure 5.7: Warning Signs



Source: Bicycle Route Traffic Control Guidelines, TAC, 1998

Information signs provide general information about the use and identity of the bicycle route, as well as adjacent features and special attractions. Signs can communicate a single point of information on a standard sign, or a number of points on a large format signboard. Signs at trailheads, access points and gateways may communicate a range of information which may include maps. They can also provide additional information to encourage trail users to explore local attractions and opportunities, and engage with the surrounding community. The preferred (as opposed to the regulated) use of the bicycle route is communicated through “use symbols” where the separation of trail users has been accommodated.



Interpretative signs provide specific information about points of ecological, historical, cultural and general interest, as well as current land uses along the bicycle route. They represent a broad range of possible sign formats and applications, depending on the interpretative program and complexity of information to be communicated. Typically interpretive signs and features are mounted well away from the trail travel surface, allowing users to pull off the trail to appreciate the sign.

5.2 SIGNING FORMATS

Signs associated with the cycling network should be economical, adaptable, durable and identifiable. To accomplish these objectives while unifying the design and graphic image of the bicycle route, recommended signing can be organized according to the following three formats:

- Standard signs
- Large signboards
- Special applications

The following descriptions introduce the three formats.

Standard signs are aluminum plate blanks with a reflective sheeting surface. The dimensional size of standard signs varies. Recommended signage is generally the same size as typical roadway signs for on-road sections of the network. For off-road sections, where the travel speed of the typical trail user is slower, standard signs are slightly smaller. Simple shapes, bold graphics and concise text typify the sign message. Standard signs are mounted on or immediately adjacent to the bicycle route on existing posts wherever possible, or on new posts as required.

Large signboards are composite structures generally constructed with a wood or metal frame and a replaceable, updateable message area. Large signboards are associated with trailheads, access points and gateways. Large signboards should be visible from the cycling route, yet located so that users can pull off the route to appreciate the significant amount of detail and information on the sign. Large signboards are mounted near the bicycle route, but never immediately adjacent to the travel surface.

Special applications include pavement markings (lines and symbols on the trail surface), as well as unique signage formats associated with information and interpretative signs. Typically interpretative signs and features are mounted away from the travel surface of the pathway, allowing users to pull off to appreciate the sign.

Guidelines:

- 5.1: *Develop a formal logo for the City of Sault Ste. Marie Cycling Route Network.*
- 5.2: *Develop and implement a formal on and off-road Cycling Network Signing Plan to support the existing and proposed Sault Ste. Marie Cycling Route Network.*
- 5.3: *Develop a way-finding signing strategy for the City of Sault Ste. Marie bicycle route network. This strategy will include signs with directional arrows, route numbers and distance in kilometres to major destination areas. A pilot project will be implemented during 2007 / 2008. Review and evaluation of the pilot project will inform whether the way-finding signing should be integrated with the Sault Ste. Marie Cycling Map to assist cyclists in navigating the City.*