

U.S. Bicycle Route System

The U.S. Bicycle Route System is a network of bicycle routes of national and regional significance selected by the State Departments of Transportation (DOTs), and designated and cataloged by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO).

Background

The designation of U.S. Bicycle Routes (USBR) began in the 1970s with USBR 1 through North Carolina and Virginia, and USBR 76 through Virginia, Kentucky, and Illinois. In 2004, to help facilitate the continued development of a coordinated system, the AASHTO Standing Committee on Highways established the Task Force on U.S. Bicycle Routes. The members of this Task Force have developed a draft National Corridor Plan with input from State DOTs, AASHTO committees, cyclists, bicycling and trail organizations, and many others. State bike plans and state suitability maps were utilized to ensure that the National Corridor Plan incorporates as many existing bicycle routes and corridors as possible.

In October 2008, the AASHTO Board of Directors and the Standing Committee on Highways passed a resolution to endorse the concept of the proposed U.S. Bicycle Routes Corridor Plan.

Choosing and Designating U.S. Bicycle Routes

The Corridor Plan developed by the Task Force consists of 50-mile-wide corridors that suggest where a route could be developed. The proposed corridors link key destinations, urban centers, and take into account the natural landscape. States and localities utilize the Plan as a guide for coordinating routes within the state and across state lines. The Plan is a living document; therefore, the corridors can be adapted, extended and added as necessary.

State DOTs work in coordination with local jurisdictions to establish the best feasible USBR. Route maintenance and signing depends upon agency agreements. A route could use a state highway for one segment, travel along a county road, and then use an independent pathway maintained by a park district or recreational agency.

State DOTs can establish a USBR by submitting an application to the AASHTO Special Committee on U.S. Route Numbering. The draft application is currently being reviewed. When it becomes available it will be posted at <http://cms.transportation.org/?siteid=68>. The Corridor Plan includes numbered designations that the Special Committee on U.S. Route Numbering will use to assign route numbers. It is up to each State DOT to determine how to manage the route through mapping and/or signing.

For More Information

Adventure Cycling Association's (ACA) non-profit mission is to inspire people of all ages to travel by bicycle. With over 38,000 mapped miles of bicycle routes, ACA is committed to seeing a national bike route system established. As a member of the AASHTO Task Force, ACA has provided staff assistance since 2005. For an in-depth overview, visit www.adventurecycling.org/usbrs

Task Force Members

Chair

Richard Moeur, Arizona

Subcommittee on Traffic Engineering

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Ed Fischer, Oregon
Tim Crouch, Iowa
Open Position: TBD

Joint Tech. Committee on Nonmotorized Transportation

Tom Dodds, South Carolina
David Bachman, Pennsylvania

Technical Committee on Geometric Design

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