



# National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices

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**Item No.: 18B-BIK-02**  
**BTC version v0.8**

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## NCUTCD Proposal for Changes to the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices

**TECHNICAL COMMITTEE:** Bicycle Technical Committee

**ITEM NUMBER:** 18B-BIK-02

**TOPIC:** Bicycle Passing Clearance Sign

**ORIGIN OF REQUEST:** NCUTCD Bicycle Technical Committee  
Mike Cynecki (BTC TF Chair)  
R/W TF Members -Tim Haagsma, Robert Seyfried, Charles Mayer

**AFFECTED SECTIONS OF MUTCD:** Sections 9B.06a

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### DEVELOPMENT HISTORY:

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- Concurrence by Regulatory Warning Sign Technical Committee: 06/20/2018
- Approved by Bicycle Technical Committee: 06/20/2018
- Approved by NCUTCD Council: MM/DD/YYYY

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*This is a proposal for recommended changes to the MUTCD that has been developed by a technical committee of the NCUTCD. The NCUTCD is distributing it to its sponsoring organizations for review and comment. Sponsor comments will be considered in revising the proposal prior to NCUTCD Council consideration. This proposal does not represent a revision of the MUTCD and does not constitute official MUTCD standards, guidance, or options. If approved by the NCUTCD Council, the recommended changes will be submitted to FHWA for consideration for inclusion in a future MUTCD revision. The MUTCD can be revised only through the federal rulemaking process.*

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### SUMMARY:

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This proposal adds a new Section 9B.06a Bicycle Passing Clearance Sign, and a new sign to Figure 9B-2, which was tested in the 2017 Traffic Control Devices Pooled Fund Study (TCD PFS), with further testing by Dr. Ron Van Houten (member of the Bicycle Technical Committee) during Spring 2018. The sign would be used on roadways where bicycles are allowed to operate, with the exact wording matching the state passing law.

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### DISCUSSION

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The Bicycle Passing Clearance sign is intended to remind motorists of the minimum clearance that a motorist must provide when passing a bicycle according to state law. Twenty-eight states and the District of Columbia have passed laws requiring some specified minimum clearance to

34 pass a bicycle. The sign may be installed along roadways where bicyclists are legally allowed to  
35 operate, and where motorists may be passing cyclists too closely, based on engineering  
36 judgement.

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38 The 2017 TCD PFS studied various alternatives for the Bicycle Passing Clearance sign.  
39 Alternative 3 showing a bicycle symbol at the top of the sign with “MOTORISTS SHALL GIVE  
40 3 FT CLEARANCE” scored highest for comprehension, legibility, and ranking. In the Spring of  
41 2018, Dr. Ron Van Houten tested a variation of Alternative 3 which placed the bicycle symbol  
42 within the text and approximately in the center of the sign. The test was conducted using the  
43 same protocols and context as the PFS and found there was no decrease in comprehension and  
44 legibility. This variation of Alternate 3 tested better than the version in the FHWA PFS TCD.  
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46 The sign included in this proposal is for that variation of the PFS Alternative 3 to place the  
47 bicycle symbol within the text of the word message, such that the sign reads as a complete  
48 sentence – “MOTORISTS SHALL GIVE BICYCLES (symbol) 3 FT CLEARANCE”. This is  
49 consistent with similar signs in the MUTCD such as the R1-6 series.

## 50 51 **RECOMMENDED MUTCD CHANGES**

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53 The following present the proposed changes to the current MUTCD within the context of the  
54 current MUTCD language. Proposed additions to the MUTCD are shown in blue underline and  
55 proposed deletions from the MUTCD are shown in ~~red strikethrough~~. Changes previously  
56 approved by NCUTCD Council (but not yet adopted by FHWA) are shown in green double  
57 underline for additions and ~~green double strikethrough~~ for deletions. In some cases, background  
58 comments may be provided with the MUTCD text. These comments are indicated by  
59 highlighted light blue in brackets.

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## 62 **CHAPTER 9B SIGNS**

### 63 64 **Section 9C.06a Bicycle Passing Clearance Sign (R4-xx)**

#### 65 Option:

66 01 Where the law requires a motorist overtaking a bicycle to pass with some specified  
67 clearance, the Bicycle Passing Clearance (R4-xx) sign may be used along roadways where  
68 bicyclists operate to remind motorists of the required (minimum) passing clearance.

69 02 The legend STATE LAW may be added within a header panel above the Bicycle Passing  
70 Clearance (R4-xx) sign in accordance with Section 2A.15.

#### 71 Standard:

72 03 The Bicycle Passing Clearance (R4-xx) sign shall indicate the passing clearance  
73 distance required by law.

#### 74 Guidance:

75 04 The Bicycle Passing Clearance (R4-xx) sign should not be used on roadways with separated  
76 bicycle lanes.

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80 The following new sign is added to Figure 9B-2  
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87 \* Clearance distance varies as per applicable state law.

88 \*\* Header panel is optional.

R4-xx\*  
24" x 36"