

Why “Edge Lane Road” is a better name

Alternative names for this treatment are “Advisory Bike Lane” and “Advisory Shoulder”. Following are the reasons the “Edge Lane Road” name is a better choice:

- The name "advisory bike lane" creates a legal conflict. Most, if not all, states have laws defining bike lanes as facilities that exclude motor vehicles. This creates a conflict between existing laws and desired driver behavior.
- The terms “bike lane” and “shoulder” are terms-of-art. Per the MUTCD and state law, neither bike lanes nor shoulders are intended for vehicular travel. These definitions are important in technical, regulatory, and legal settings. Edge lane (road) is a new term and avoids the baggage of other terms.
- The essence of the treatment is not the type of vulnerable road user it supports; its essence is the space created by the edge lanes and the shared use behavior required of all road users.
- The “advisory” names imply the edge lanes have an existence independent of the entire road and that they can be added to any road. This has resulted in "advisory bike lanes" being added to roads with centerlines - a configuration worse than sharrows. ELRs only work as an inseparable whole. The treatment is a shared street, not individual lanes for VRUs.
- This treatment has the potential to reduce single-vehicle, roadway-departure crashes on rural, 2-lane roads even if they never see a vulnerable road user (see <https://www.advisorybikelanes.com/rural-edge-lane-roads.html>). “Advisory Bike Lane” is not an appropriate name for this use.
- “Edge lane road” is already used in other countries. Danish guidance uses this name and residents of other countries are familiar with the terminology.
- Some folks use "Advisory Bike Lane" when bikes are the intended benefactors and "Advisory Shoulder" when pedestrians are supported. What do we call existing facilities that support both? What name is used when the treatment supports equestrians, wheelchairs, or horse-drawn buggies?
- Are you referring to the lanes or the entire road? The “advisory” names are used interchangeably to refer to the entire road and to the edge lanes – this can be confusing. “Edge lanes” refer to the outside lanes and “edge lane road” refers to the entire road.