



River Road Bicycling Riding Advisory

April 13, 2009

Introduction

River Road also known as State Route 251 is a winding 2-lane rural state highway located in South Western Davidson County. A recent audit by the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) has determined the 7.5 mile roadway has a severe crash rating that exceeds the statewide average severe crash rate. The audit determined that several upgrades and safety improvements need to be made to make the road safer for automobile and or bicycle traffic.

State Bicycling Law and Advisory Warning

All State of Tennessee laws pertaining to cycling must be obeyed when riding bicycles in Nashville-Davidson County (including all sections of River Road). Cyclist should **AVOID** riding on River Road unless absolutely necessary until safety improvements are made.

Among several state laws to **ALWAYS** follow when riding bicycles include:

55-8-175 Riding on roadways and bicycle paths.

*(a) (1) Any person operating a bicycle upon a roadway at less than the normal speed of traffic at the time and place and under the conditions then existing shall **ride as close as practicable to the right-hand curb** or edge of the roadway, **except under any of the following situations:***

(A) When overtaking and passing another vehicle proceeding in the same direction;

(B) When preparing for a left turn at an intersection or into a private road or driveway; or

(C) When reasonably necessary to avoid conditions including, but not limited to, fixed or moving objects, parked or moving vehicles, pedestrians, animals, surface hazards, or substandard width lanes that make it unsafe to continue along the right-hand curb or edge. For purposes of this section, "substandard width lane" means a lane that is too narrow for a bicycle and another vehicle to travel safely side by side within the lane. (a standard width lane is elsewhere defined as 12')

(2) This subsection does not apply to a certified police cyclist engaged in the lawful performance of duty relating to traffic control.

*(b) (1) Persons riding bicycles upon a roadway shall **not ride more than two (2) abreast** except on paths or parts of roadways set aside for the*

*exclusive use of bicycles. **Persons riding two (2) abreast shall not impede the normal and reasonable movement of traffic** and, on a laned roadway, shall ride within a single lane.*

(2) This subsection does not apply to a certified police cyclist engaged in the lawful performance of duty relating to traffic control or in pursuit of an actual or suspected violator of the law.

55-8-123. Driving on roadways laned for traffic.

(This applies to bikes also).

*(4)(A) Where passing is unsafe because of traffic in the opposite direction or other conditions, **a slow-moving vehicle**, including a passenger vehicle, **behind which five (5) or more vehicles** are formed in line, **shall turn or pull off the roadway** wherever sufficient area exists to do so safely, in order to permit vehicles following it to proceed. As used in this subdivision (4), a slow-moving vehicle is one which is proceeding at a rate of speed which is ten (10) miles per hour or more below the lawful maximum speed for that particular roadway at that time.*

(B) Any person failing to conform with the provisions of subdivision (4)(A) shall receive a warning citation on first offense and be liable for a fine of twenty dollars (\$20.00) on second offense, and fifty dollars (\$50.00) on third and subsequent offenses.

Alternate Routes

Cyclist should utilize other West Nashville rural roads until improvements are completed on River Road. Alternate roadways in the area for cycling recreation and transportation include: Ashland City Hwy, Old Charlotte Pike, and Highway 70.

Proposed Safety Improvements

The TDOT audit of River Road proposed several safety improvements including new signage, improved striping, guardrails, and maintenance of traffic. TDOT will also explore the possibility of other recommended improvements such as minimum 4 feet wide shoulders or bike lanes.

Metro Nashville Police will patrol River Road and citations will be issued to users not following laws above and general laws of the road.

If there are any questions about this bicycle-riding warning advisory please email Metro.BPAC@nashville.gov. Thank you for your attention to this issue.

Sincerely,

Nashville Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee