

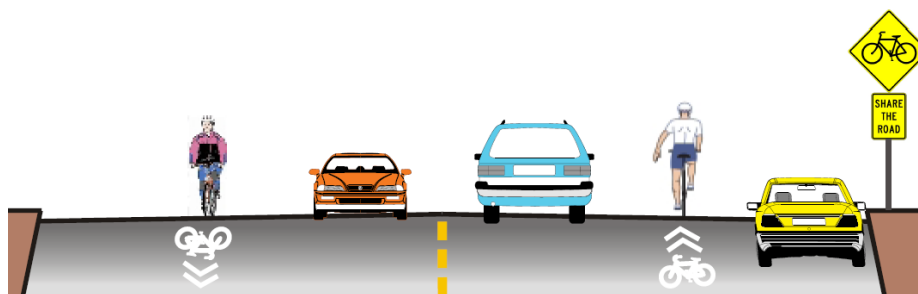
Bicycle Safety and Bicycle-Motorist Cooperation

Just as songbirds return during the spring, people on bicycles take to the streets during spring's long, warm days. Bicycle sales rose sharply last year following rocketing gas prices. Many people are interested in bicycling for their health, some to simply save money on commuting, and some bike to reduce their environmental impact. For some a bicycle is the best vehicle they can afford and is their principal mode of transportation. People riding bikes locally are riding for all of those reasons, and we can expect that bicycle transportation will increase locally.

The co-operation of cars and bikes on city streets is challenging in even the most bike-friendly cities. Friction between motorists and bicyclists, including collisions, often result from the defiance of traffic laws. The safety of all road corridor users is primarily in the hands of vehicle operators. The following are some important considerations for the safety of all road users.

To stay safe while riding city streets, bicyclists should:

- Obey all traffic laws. Stop at red lights and stop signs, just like motorists.
- Ride with traffic, in the right side of the lane. Ride as far to the right as possible when a lane can safely be shared side-by-side with a car. You can occupy the full lane when the lane is too narrow to share with a vehicle.
- Ride over the center of shared-lane markings (or “sharrows”) unless there is adequate space to ride farther to the right and still share the lane with a vehicle. This may occur where space for parked cars exists, but no parked cars are present (see diagram below).
- Signal turns and stops. Always look back and check for traffic, then signal before you make a turn or change lanes in traffic.
- Ride predictably: ride in a straight line; don't weave between parked cars; ride straight through intersections (don't weave into crosswalks).
- Stay about four feet away from parked cars to avoid opening doors.
- Be visible. Wear reflective items or bright colors. Use lights - both in front and back - when it's dark. Local bike shops also carry inexpensive reflective tape for your bike.



Cyclists should normally ride over the center of shared-lane markings (“sharrows”). Please read more about this above.

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Motorists will help make biking safer by driving courteously and understanding that:

- Bicyclists are road users that have the same legal rights and responsibilities as drivers of other vehicles.
- Bicyclists are only required to ride as far right in the lane as possible when the lane can be safely shared side-by-side with a car. Cyclists may occupy the full lane when the lane is too narrow to share with a vehicle, when changing lanes to turn left, when unsafe road conditions are present, and when passing another vehicle.
- When turning, you are required to yield to bicycles as you would any vehicle.
- Honking your horn at a nearby cyclist can startle the cyclist and could cause an accident.
- When passing a cyclist, provide a gap of three feet or more for optimum safety.
- Litter can create hazards for cyclists.

When we all drive safely and are considerate of others, sharing the road is easy .