



SHARED ROADWAY MARKINGS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

For the health of our citizens, to improve our environment and to save transportation costs, the City of Indianapolis is encouraging more people to get out of their cars and start riding their bikes. To further that effort, Indianapolis continues to extend bike lanes and trails in more areas of the city each year.

In a community that is safe, convenient and pleasant for bicycling, more people choose to bicycle for recreation and transportation. This helps improve fitness, health and air quality and creates a greater sense of community.

WHAT DO THE MARKINGS OF A BIKE WITH TWO ARROWS ABOVE IT ON THE STREETS MEAN?

These are Shared Roadway, or “Sharrow,” bicycle markings, which are intended to help bicyclists position themselves away from parked cars, to avoid being struck by suddenly opened car doors and to alert other road users to expect bicyclists to occupy travel lanes. These markings will also be used in situations where it may not be obvious where bicyclists should be riding, such as at intersections with multiple turn lanes.



ON SOME STREETS, BICYCLISTS RIDING OVER THIS MARKING WILL TAKE THE ENTIRE LANE. AREN'T THEY SUPPOSED TO MOVE TO THE RIGHT?

Not always. Bicyclists are to stay to the right except to pass other bicyclists or vehicles, to prepare to make a left turn or when necessary to avoid conditions that make it unsafe to continue along the right, including fixed or moving objects, surface hazards or substandard width lanes too narrow for a bicycle and vehicle to travel side by side. Moving to the left in the lane to avoid car doors, for instance, even if it means taking the entire lane, is permitted.

WHY DO I NEED TO LOOK BEHIND ME BEFORE OPENING MY CAR DOOR WHEN PARKED NEAR A BIKE LANE? CAN'T THE BICYCLISTS LOOK INTO PARKED CARS AS THEY RIDE TO SEE IF SOMEONE IS ABOUT TO OPEN THE DOOR?

Bicyclists, like all road users, need to constantly scan the entire roadway for safety. Checking every car for a driver is difficult to do while paying attention to the road. Also, it is often impossible to see drivers due to large parked vehicles blocking the view of other parked vehicles, tinted windows, headrests, etc. Motorists should check their side view mirror or look back prior to opening their door. It is the driver's responsibility should any collision occur.

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Mayor Ballard launched SustainIndy and created the Office of Sustainability in October 2008. SustainIndy is a bold and innovative enterprise aimed at delivering long-term cost savings to the City, building the local economy, improving our quality of life and enhancing our environmental and public health. Its efforts are designed to aggressively move Indianapolis forward in making it one of the most sustainable cities in the Midwest.



IF I SEE THESE MARKINGS IN A LANE, IS THE LANE ONLY FOR BIKES?



No. This marking is used for travel lanes that are shared by bicyclists and motorists. Shared lanes are different than bike lanes which are set aside for bicyclists and are marked by a solid white line.

IF I DON'T SEE THESE MARKINGS, IS IT FAIR TO ASSUME THAT THE ROADWAY ISN'T A SHARED LANE AND BICYCLISTS SHOULD NOT BE THERE?



No. Bicyclists can ride on any street in Indianapolis except for limited access freeways with signs explicitly prohibiting it. A person riding a bicycle upon a roadway has all the rights and duties that are applicable to a person who drives a vehicle.

ARE THESE MARKINGS GOING TO BE ON EVERY STREET THAT DOES NOT HAVE A BIKE LANE?



No. These markings are used primarily on streets designated as part of the Indianapolis' bikeways networks. Additional sharrows may be considered on a case by case basis.

I NEVER USED TO SEE THESE MARKINGS. WHY ARE THEY BEING USED NOW?



Prior to 2005, there was no official marking to use on streets with shared lanes. Now we have a marking for areas on the road where traditional bike lanes are not applicable, or possible, due to roadway restrictions.

WHY ARE THE SHARROWS ON SHELBY STREET IN THE LEFT LANE, INSTEAD OF THE RIGHT?



The original plan called for traditional bike lanes all the way down Shelby Street along the curb. During a public meeting before the project, neighbors and business owners between Raymond Street and Troy Avenue expressed concern with eliminating the parking that would have been necessary to accommodate the bike lanes. As a compromise, the city decided to use sharrows in that area and to keep the four lanes of traffic (two in each direction), which allows parking at specified times of the day. The City marked the middle most travel lane with sharrows to accommodate the parking lane during part of the day. This does not mean that the bicyclist has to use this middle lane when there are not any cars parked in the curbside lane.



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