



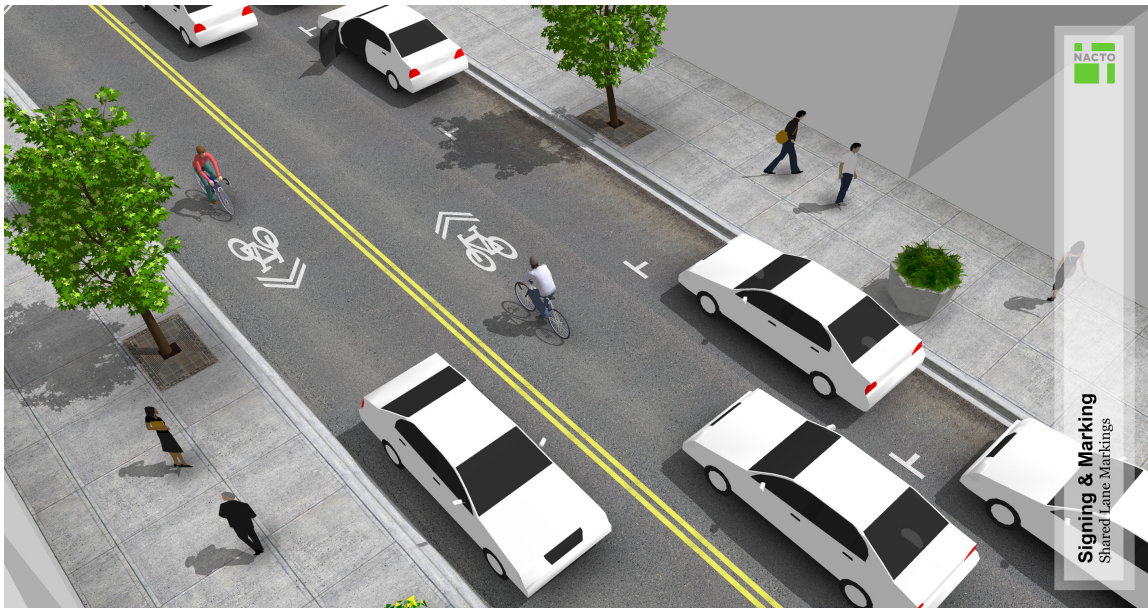
SHARED LANE MARKINGS ("SHARROWS")

FACT SHEET

September 26, 2011

What are shared lane markings* or "sharrows"?

Sharrows are road markings used to indicate a shared lane environment for bicycles and automobiles. Among other benefits shared lane markings reinforce the legitimacy of bicycle traffic on the street and recommend proper bicyclist positioning. The shared lane marking is not a facility type; it is a pavement marking with a variety of uses to support a complete bikeway network.



Shared Lane Marking benefits

- Helps bicyclists position themselves safely in lanes too narrow for a motor vehicle and a bicycle to comfortably travel side by side within the same traffic lane.
- Alerts motor vehicle drivers to the potential presence of bicyclists.
- Alerts road users of the lateral position bicyclists are likely to occupy within the street.
- Indicates a proper path for bicyclists through difficult or potentially hazardous situations such as railroad tracks.
- Advertises the presence of bikeway routes to all users.

*The information contained in this fact sheet was obtained from the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Bikeway Design Guide, April 2011 edition.

- Provides a wayfinding element along bike routes.
- Increases the distance between bicyclists and parked cars, keeping bicyclists out of the “door zone”.
- Encourages safe passing by motorists.
- Requires no additional street space.
- Reduces the incidence of sidewalk riding.
- Reduces the incidence of wrong-way bicycling.

Typical Applications

As shared lane markings are a relatively new bikeway marking in American cities, guidance on application will continue to evolve over time. Shared lane markings should not be considered a substitute for bike lanes, cycle tracks, or other separation treatments where these types of facilities are otherwise warranted or space permits. Shared lane markings can be used as a standard element in the development of bicycle boulevards to identify streets as bikeways and to provide wayfinding along the route.

Desirable shared lane marking applications:

- To indicate a shared lane situation where the speed differential between bicyclist and motorist travel speeds is very low.
- As a reasonable alternative to a bike lane.
- To strengthen connections in a bikeway network.
- To clarify bicyclist movement and positioning in challenging environments.
- Generally, not appropriate on streets that have a speed limit above 35 mph.

Maintenance

- Frequent, visible placement of markings is essential.
- Lateral placement is critical to encourage riders to avoid the “door zone”.
- The shared lane marking may be placed in the center of the lane between wheel treads to minimize wear.