

# MOTORISTS

## *Use Care around Bike Lanes*

### HOW DO I DRIVE NEXT TO A BIKE LANE?

It is illegal for motorists to drive or park in bike lanes, except in instances where you need to turn, enter or leave the roadway, or park in a lane adjacent to the bike lane.

*Always expect to see a bicyclist in the bike lane, and yield before crossing over the bike lane.*

When overtaking a bicyclist in a bike lane, give at least 3' clearance. If it is not possible to do so without moving into another lane of traffic, travel behind the bicyclist until it is safe to pass with enough clearance.

### DO BICYCLISTS HAVE TO USE THE BIKE LANE?

No – there is no law which requires bicyclists to use a bike lane.

Bicyclists may need to use adjacent lanes to pass another bicyclist, to avoid being too close to parked cars (if opening car doors could obstruct their path), to avoid obstructions or slippery conditions, or to prepare for a turn. Whenever bicyclists enter or exit a bike lane, they should signal and yield to motorists already in an adjacent travel lane.

### WHAT ELSE?

While bicyclists should follow all traffic laws and ride predictably, motorists should always be prepared for a bicyclist to make an error.

Motorists should slow down and be prepared to stop in the presence of bicyclists.

Motorists are required by law to check for adjacent traffic when opening car doors. If you park next to a bike lane, be sure to check your mirror for bicyclers *before* opening your door.



*“Any person operating a motor vehicle [...] shall not drive in the bicycle lane except to park where parking is permitted, to enter or leave the highway, or to prepare to turn. [...]”*

*Whenever it is necessary for the driver of a motor vehicle to cross a bicycle lane adjacent to the driver's lane of travel to make a turn, the driver shall drive the motor vehicle into the bicycle lane prior to making the turn, and shall make the turn, yielding the right-of-way to any vehicles approaching . . .”*

*“The operator of a motor vehicle overtaking a bicycle or individual proceeding in the same direction on the roadway shall leave a safe distance, but in no case less than three feet clearance, when passing the bicycle or individual and shall maintain clearance until safely past the overtaken bicycle or individual.”*

*- Minnesota Statutes 169.18 and 169.19*

# BIKE LANES

## *An introduction to bike lanes for bicyclists and motorists*



### *Motorists, Bicyclists, & Pedestrians Working Together for Safer Streets*

Minneapolis Public Works  
Traffic & Parking Services

350 S 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Room 203  
Minneapolis, MN 55415  
Phone (612) 333-2450  
[www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/bicycles](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/bicycles)



## WHAT IS A BIKE LANE?

A bike lane is a striped, signed lane marked with a large white bicycle stencil on the pavement. They are typically 5 feet wide. The lane is restricted to bicycle travel with certain exceptions (detailed in this brochure). On streets where there is on-street parking, bike lanes run parallel to parked vehicles. On streets without parking, bike lanes run alongside the curb.

## WHY BIKE LANES?

The City of Minneapolis is encouraging travelers to use the bicycle for more trips. Bicycling helps to make Minneapolis a more sustainable community through improved health and air quality, as well as reduced costs and reliance on fossil fuels. Bike lanes make it easier for bicycles and motor vehicles to share the road, by providing separate lanes of travel. Bike lanes also allow bicyclists to safely pass motor vehicles during periods of heavy traffic.

# BICYCLISTS

*Bike Lanes Are for You*

## HOW DO I USE A BIKE LANE?

Always travel in the same direction as traffic, unless the pavement markings in a bike lane allow you to travel against traffic. There is no law that requires you to ride in a bike lane. You should use adjacent lanes to pass another bicyclist, to avoid being too close to parked cars (if opening car doors could obstruct your path), to avoid obstructions or slippery conditions, or to

prepare for a turn. Whenever you enter or exit a bike lane, make sure to signal and yield to vehicles or bicycles already in adjacent travel lanes.

*Minneapolis has 44 miles of streets with bike lanes and plans to add approximately 25 additional miles in 2010.*

## WHO HAS THE RIGHT OF WAY AT INTERSECTIONS?

Right-of-way traffic rules apply to bicyclists using a bike lane at intersections. Bicyclists should follow all rules that motorists follow.

Turning motorists should enter the bike lane as they approach an intersection, yielding first to thru-bicyclists. Bicyclists should expect motorists to be entering this conflict area. Typically this is marked with dashed pavement markings and/or signs.

While motorists should yield when preparing for a turn, bicyclists should always expect a motorist to make an error. Bicyclists can slow down and be prepared to stop, and in a worst-case scenario, be prepared to turn with the motorist.



*“Every person operating a bicycle shall have all the rights and duties applicable to the driver of any other vehicle by this chapter, except in respect to those provisions in this chapter relating expressly to bicycles and in respect to those provisions of this chapter which by their nature cannot reasonably be applied to bicycles.”*

*- Minnesota Statute 169.222*

## HOW DO I USE LEFT SIDE BIKE LANES?

Use left side bike lanes the same way you would use right side bike lanes. You are not required to use left side bike lanes, particularly if they are not compatible with your destination.

Left side bike lanes have advantages, including the absence of buses crossing the bike lanes to board and drop off passengers, and fewer car doors opening (because the majority of motor vehicles have single occupants using the driver’s side door).

The main disadvantage of left side bike lanes is their unique placement, which motorists and bicyclists do not always expect. Always be observant in a left side bike lane and expect motorists to make mistakes.

Questions about bicycling in Minneapolis? Call 311 or visit [www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/bicycles](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/bicycles).

Español llame al 311, Soomaali wac 311, Hmoob hu 311