

Sharrows

What is it?

Shared lane pavement markings (“sharrows”) are bicycle pavement markings placed on streets popular with bicyclists but too narrow for conventional bike lanes. Unlike bicycle lanes, sharrows do not designate a particular part of the street for the exclusive use of bicyclists. They are simply used as a marking tool to guide bicyclists to the best place to ride and help motorists expect to see and share the lane with bicyclists.

Why are they used?

Sharrows can be helpful on streets where there is insufficient space to add bicycle lanes. Sharrows help cyclists position themselves within the lane safely to avoid being squeezed off the road or hit by suddenly opened car doors.

If a cyclist is riding too close to the curb and a motorist attempts to pass the cyclist too closely, the cyclist could crash into the curb and fall off their bike.

If a cyclist is riding too close to parked cars, and somebody were to open a car door, the cyclist could possibly get injured, especially if there was passing automobile traffic. By riding through the center of the sharrow, the cyclist positions themselves a safe distance from the curb or parked cars.

Sharrows are generally installed 11 feet from the curb, or approximately 4 feet from parked cars. Placement on the street surface is intended to indicate where bicyclists should ride to avoid traveling within the door zone of parked cars. It also alerts motorists to share the road with bicyclists and conveys that the street is a preferred bike route.

It is intended to improve positioning of bicyclists on roadways with significant bicycle usage and parked vehicles where curb lanes are too narrow for motorists and bicyclists to travel side by side within the lane.

It encourages bicycling in the correct direction, discourages bicycling on sidewalks, and studies show a decrease in motor vehicle/bicycle conflicts by informing motorists where to expect cyclists.

What do sharrows mean for motorists and bicyclists?

Motorists

- Expect to see bicyclists on the street
- Remember to give bicyclists three feet of space when passing
- Follow the rules of the road as if there were no sharrows

Bicyclists

- Use the sharrows to guide where you ride within the lane
- Remember not to ride too close to parked cars
- Follow the rules of the road as if there were no sharrows

For more information about “sharrows” and the City of Glendale Bicycle Transportation Plan, click [Bicycle Master Plan Update](#)