

Bike Lanes

Frequently Asked Questions

Bike lanes are now present on various streets in Thunder Bay. As our city adapts to this new traffic condition, there may be a few questions about what the bike lanes mean to both the motorist and the cyclist.

1. What is a bike lane?

A bike lane is a 1.5 m wide, striped, signed lane marked with a large white bicycle stencil on the pavement. The lane is marked with a large diamond followed by a bicycle symbol and is restricted to bicycle travel only. Pedestrians, roller blades, skateboards, and strollers are not permitted on bike lanes. On streets where there is on-street parking, bike lanes run to the left of parked vehicles. On streets without parking, bike lanes run alongside the curb.



2. Why do we need bike lanes?

Bike lanes make most people feel safer about biking on city streets. Motorists feel more comfortable knowing where on the roadway cyclists are expected to be traveling.

3. How do I use the bike lane?

Cyclists: travel in the middle of the designated bike lane in the same direction as traffic. When cycling beside parked cars, watch for doors opening. Cyclists are expected to follow the same rules of the road as other vehicles including obeying all traffic signs and lights.

Motorists: must not stand, park, or drive in a bike lane. You may cross over them if turning right onto a street or driveway. Always check for bikes when crossing the lane or making a right-hand turn.

4. How do I make a right turn through a bike lane?

Turning right at marked intersections: Signal your intention. Stay in the vehicular lane, drive up to the white intersection line. **Do not enter the Bike Lane to make a right turn.** Check for cyclists in your right mirrors and do a right-shoulder check. If there is a cyclist in the bike lane, give the cyclist the right-of-way to go through the intersection. If there is no cyclist or cyclist is far away from intersection, make your right turn staying as much as possible within the vehicle lane, and into the intersecting roadway vehicular lane.

Turning onto side streets or into driveways: Signal your intention. **Do not enter the Bike Lane to make a right turn.** Check for cyclists in your right mirrors and do a right-shoulder check. If there is a cyclist in the bike lane, use your best judgment whether you turning onto a side street will affect said cyclist. If it will, be courteous and wait for the cyclist to pass. If there is no danger to the cyclist, proceed into the side street with caution through the bike lane.

5. What should I do when the bike lane ends?

Cyclists should try to move in the straightest line possible to where you will ride on the other side of the intersection. Riding predictably allows motorists to give you your space on the roadway.

6. Where are the bike lanes in Thunder Bay?

At this time, bike lanes can be found on:

- Syndicate Ave.
- Walsh St.
- Court St.



7. Where can I find out more information about cycling in Thunder Bay?

- The City of Thunder Bay: www.ThunderBay.ca/activetransportation
- EcoSuperior Environmental Programs: www.ecosuperior.org
- Thunder Bay District Health Unit: <http://www.tbdhu.com/HealthyLiving/PhysicalActivity/>

Shared Lanes

Frequently Asked Questions

Shared Lanes are now present in the Thunder Bay roadway system. Shared lane pavement markings provide visual cues for motorists and cyclists, allowing them to safely align themselves within a shared travel lane.

1. What is a shared lane?

Shared lanes are like regular traffic lanes but built to a wider standard. Painted on these lanes are bike symbols and directional arrows designed to remind cyclists where they should ride when sharing a travel lane with other traffic.



2. Why do we need shared lanes?

Shared lanes improve safety by directing cyclists to move further away from parked cars. Shared lanes act as a reminder for motorists to look out for cyclists and give them visual cue as to how much space to give when passing a cyclist.

3. How do I use a shared lane?

Cyclists: Ride over the centre of the symbols as the markings are placed in the safest travel area of the roadway. Travel in the same direction as traffic following the same rules of the road as other vehicles. Cyclist are generally expected to travel as close to the curb as practicable but with parking, cyclists are expected to ride in the centre of the lane markings to prevent accidental 'dooring' from a parked vehicle.

Motorists: Drive carefully, knowing that you are sharing the road with cyclists. If cyclists are not present, drive in the travel lane as you normally would. If cyclists are present, simply slow down and pass with care. When passing, please be careful not to endanger yourself, the cyclist or oncoming traffic. If traffic is heavy, please be patient and wait for a suitable time to pass the cyclist.

4. How do I make a right turn through a shared lane?

The same rules apply if you were changing lanes or turning right at an intersection: Signal your intention. Check for cyclists in your right-hand mirrors and do a right-shoulder check. If there is a cyclist in the shared lane, use your best judgment whether you turning onto a side street will affect said cyclist. If it will, be courteous and wait for the cyclist to pass. If there is no danger to the cyclist, proceed cautiously through the shared lane. Do not make your right turn until you've checked for cyclists.

5. Why shared lanes instead of bike lanes?

Shared lanes are used on streets where bike lanes are not possible due to insufficient width of the roadway or significant parking concerns.

6. Why do Shared Lane markings sometimes appear in the middle of the Lane?

On lanes of traffic where on-street parking is allowed, the Shared Lane markings are placed in the middle of the lane to show the cyclist where they should ride when automobiles are parked on the road. The suggested travel path is the safest place for a cyclist to ride when there are parked automobiles. Without parked cars, the cyclist is expected to ride as far right as practicable.



7. Do cyclists have to ride over the shared lane markings?

No. The marking simply show where cyclists would be expected to ride under ordinary conditions. If turning left, passing other cyclists, or avoiding potholes, cyclists may position themselves away from the street markings.

8. Where are the shared lanes in Thunder Bay?

At this time, shared lanes can be found on:

- Fassina Street
- John Street

Bike and Shared lanes are part of the Active Transportation Plan. For more information visit www.Thunderbay.ca/activetransportation