

**A.6. Signage and Markings**

**A.6.1. Shared Lane Marking/Signage**



Blacksburg

**Description**

Shared Lane Markings (SLMs), or “Sharrows,” are road markings used to indicate a shared lane environment for bicycles and automobiles. Among other benefits Sharrows reinforce the legitimacy of bicycle traffic on the street and recommend proper bicyclist positioning. The shared lane marking is not a facility type but a pavement marking with a variety of uses to support a complete bikeway network. Shared lane signage is recommended as an alternative to SLMs.

**Benefits (NACTO, 2011)**

- 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 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.
- Provides a way-finding 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 and wrong-way bicycling.

**Typical Applications (NACTO, 2011)**

- 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

**Guidance and Concerns**

The shared lane marking in use within the United States is the bike-and-chevron “Sharrow,” illustrated in MUTCD figure 9C-9 below. Shared lane markings shall not be used on shoulders, in designated bicycle lanes, or to designate bicycle detection at signalized intersections. The MUTCD outlines guidance for shared lane markings in section 9C.07. Additional educational information is vital to proper implementation for shared lane markings as many auto users are unfamiliar with this usage.