



Sharrows – Shared Lane Markings Questions & Answers

What are sharrows?

Sharrows, or shared lane markings, are roadway stencils used to identify streets that are to be shared by vehicles and bicycles.

Where can sharrows be located in Newport Beach?

The California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways (CAMUTCD) provides specific guidelines for the placement of sharrows. The streets must have on-street, parallel parking and a speed limit of 35 mph or less. Also, sharrows are to be used only on roadways without marked bicycle lanes or shoulders. There are other guidelines, such as those for cities that have rush-hour lane restrictions, but those currently do not pertain to Newport Beach.

What is the purpose of adding sharrows to certain city streets?

According to the CAMUTCD, sharrows are used to:

- Reduce the chance of bicyclists colliding with open doors of parked vehicles on a shared roadway with on-street parallel parking. Also known as “getting doored.”
- Alert roadway users of the lateral location where bicyclists ride.

Where are sharrows placed in the roadway and why?

Sharrows must be placed at least 11 feet from the curb to help bicyclists clear the “door zone,” or the space that a car door occupies when a driver opens it. Bicyclists riding in the door zone risk being hit by an opening car door, could run into a door that suddenly opens in front of them, or could swerve into the path of a car while trying to avoid a car door. A bicyclist riding through the center of a sharrow will be 11 feet from the curb and clear of the parking lane and any opening car doors.

Sharrows are also intended to alert drivers of the presence of bicyclists in the roadway and encourage caution. A driver utilizing the right traffic lane may try to maneuver through the lane when a bicyclist is riding in the door zone. This can be dangerous, as cars will often come within inches of a bicyclist, potentially forcing the cyclist further into the door zone or causing an accident.

What does a Sharrow look like?



Where will the sharrows be located?

Sharrows will be placed along Bayside Drive, between El Paseo and Carnation, as part of a demonstration project. They will be on each side of the road and be spaced approximately 250 feet apart.