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The cyclist sharing the road with you might be a co-worker. The Metro Cycling Club took a lunch-time ride June 27 to visit James Rojas' three-dimensional model of Downtown Los Angeles at Citicorp Plaza. Club riders pictured here are, from left, Tony Jusay, Doreen Morrissey, Lynne Goldsmith, Jennifer Gill, Cory Zelmer, Nate Baird and James Rojas. *Photo by Lupe Vela*

Tips Encourage Drivers and Cyclists to Share the Road

- With bicycle sales climbing, sharing the road grows more important

By NATHAN BAIRD and LYNNE GOLDSMITH

(August 6, 2008) While we may be encouraged to "share the road," bicyclists and drivers often find themselves competing for the same space, and many of our automobile-oriented roadways seem to include bicycles as an afterthought.

Safe travel requires, however, that drivers and cyclists both remember we all have a right to the streets, regardless of our mode of transportation.

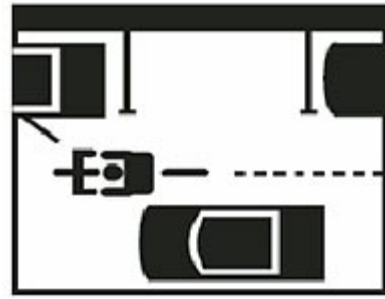
Here are some tips to more safely share the road:

When You're Driving

- Remember any vehicle collision with a bicyclist is likely to cause serious injury or death. Be cautious and alert. While your car may sometimes feel like a personal sanctuary, it's not the place to fix your hair, read the paper, add creamer to your cup of coffee or make phone calls.
- Consider that bicyclists will sometimes need to take up the lane in

front of you. If there's another lane, and it's safe to do so, feel free to pass them on the left. While cyclists are directed to stay as far to the right as is safe, they may need to avoid hazards or obstacles you may not see in your automobile:

- Avoiding open car doors
- Avoiding potholes, debris and street disrepair



- A vehicle passing too close to a cyclist can knock her or him dangerously off balance from the draft caused by the vehicle or just the noise of an accelerating engine. So allow bicyclists at least 3 to 5 feet of space when you pass. The larger your vehicle, the more room you should allow.
- Remember that bicyclists may need to change lanes to make a left turn. Watch for the rider's hand signal and read his or her body language. As does a car, a rider may have to wait for other cars in other lanes before he or she can turn.
- Check for bicyclists before you open your car door.
- Expect that some bicyclists are untrained in riding correctly.
- Be wary as you enter and leave driveways, as you make turns and as you approach an intersection. Uneducated bicyclists can enter harm's way very quickly. Being legally right is small consolation when a life is lost.

Properly positioned for a left turn, James Rojas prepares to turn from E. Commercial St. to N. Vignes Street during a Metro Cycling Club lunch-time expedition.

*Photo by
Tony Jusay*



When You're Cycling

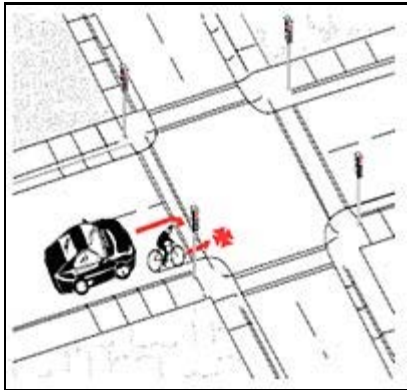
- Stay as far to the right as is safe. Take up a full lane under the following conditions:

When passing

- When preparing to make a left turn
 - When avoiding road hazards
 - When avoiding a right-turn lane
- Make eye contact with drivers. Communicate with hand signals when you need to move. Is the driver aware of you? Are you in her blind spot? Remember to wave to attract a driver's attention.
 - Do not ride against traffic.
 - If you feel uncomfortable with traffic and it is legal to do so in your city, you might ride on a sidewalk. If you do, slow down, and be ready to stop at every driveway and intersection you cross. Remember that to many drivers and pedestrians, your approach is invisible. Pedestrians, of course, have the right-of-way on the sidewalk.
 - Wear a helmet and reflective materials. At night, use a bright, white front light, as well as red rear lights.
 - Try to use side streets, including neighborhood streets, during heavy commute times.
 - Traffic laws apply to cyclists as well as drivers. It's in your best interest for all road users to obey all current traffic laws, including red lights and stop signs.
 - Use the left lane to make a left turn, or get off your bike and use the crosswalk as a pedestrian.
 - When going for a group ride, take up just one lane. At intersections with stop signs, the leader of the group should come to a complete stop, as well as wait for the group to come to a stop, before proceeding through the intersection.

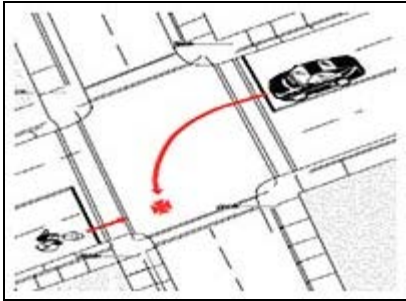
Common Conflict Points

- **The Right Hook**



In a right-hook accident, a driver makes a right turn into a cyclist. This is why a cyclist intending to travel straight through an intersection, wants to be in the middle of the lane. If there is a right-turn pocket, the cyclist wants to be to the left of that lane.

- **Failing To Yield**



In a failing-to-yield accident, a driver makes a left turn into a cyclist traveling straight through an intersection. This is why an approaching cyclist should make eye contact with any motorist, even signaling one's intention to travel straight.