

Planning & Design For Cyclists

SHARE AND SHARE ALIKE - PART 1

For some time now, CAN has been actively promoting "share the road" campaigns, aimed at encouraging motorists to interact more courteously and safely with cyclists on the roads (of course we also expect cyclists to play their part!). And now it looks like the LTSA will develop some education and promotional material in this area as part of its pedestrian/cyclist safety framework.



In the US, a number of places have tried to reinforce this concept through signage. In fact their national manual for signs and other traffic control devices allows for a "SHARE THE ROAD" plate to be attached underneath the standard yellow diamond cyclist warning sign. But many locations have come up with their own variants (some for warning and some for information), as illustrated by the accompanying photos.



All this begs the question: should we look to develop similar signs for local use? The key aim would be to remind motorists that cyclists use the roadway too and are legitimate road users. Such information becomes particularly important along narrow road sections, where cyclists will have to be in the same traffic lane (in fact, some traffic calmed areas are deliberately designed this way).

The introduction of any new sign needs to be fully considered, as the over-proliferation of signs may cause the effectiveness of other signs to be decreased. Possibly, motorists may even think that they do not need to share the road with cyclists in places where the signs are not posted! The idea is worth thinking about though; where could you see such a sign being of great value?

As an aside, the symbolic signs shown above remind me of a related question that I heard recently. Have a look at the various "vulnerable road user" warning signs below. Which is the odd one out?



*Answer: the cyclist sign is the only one not showing a **person**. We want motorists to make sure they don't hit the cyclist, not their cycle!*

Some Relevant Reading

- (US) Federal Highway Administration 2003, *Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices*. Includes a whole section (Part 9) on traffic signs and markings for bicycles.
Web: <<http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/kno-2003.htm>>
- ITE (Institute of Transportation Engineers), Pedestrian & Bicycle Council 2002, *Innovative Bicycle Treatments*. Contains many unique and interesting treatments tried around the world to provide acceptable solutions for cyclists, including the above signs. Can be purchased from the ITE Bookstore, Web: <<http://www.ite.org/bookstore/index.asp>>
- Searching the Internet for "*share the road*" and "*sign*" will yield a host of campaigns and programmes based around variations of these signs.

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