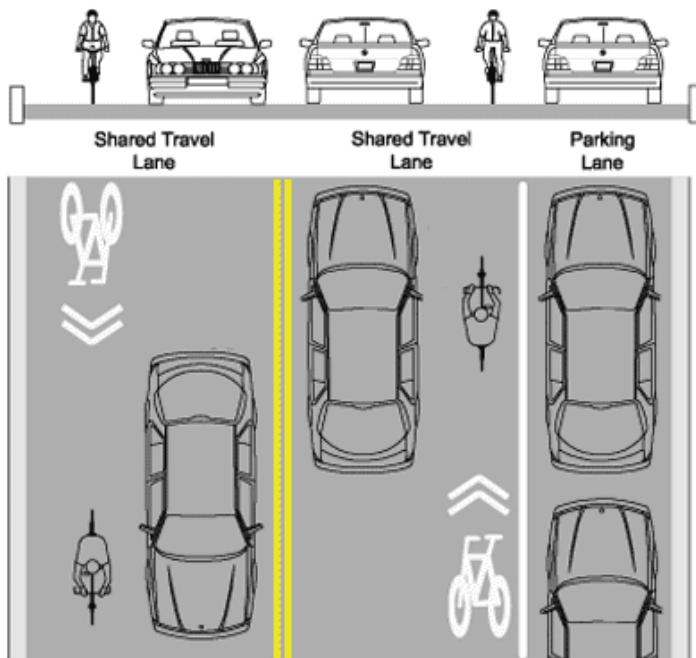


Shared Lane Pavement Markings ‘Sharrows’ In Eau Claire



You may have seen them on Vine Street, Hamilton Avenue, or other Eau Claire streets, but what are these new pavement markings?

This bicycle and two white chevron pavement marking as shown to the left, is known as a sharrow, or a shared lane pavement marking. The sharrow pavement markings are being placed in the travel lane on Eau Claire streets and on streets across the country to provide improved bicycling conditions.

What is the purpose of the sharrow pavement markings on the street?

The shared lane pavement markings, sharrows, are present to:

- Remind motorists that they should expect to see and share the road with bicyclists
- Remind motorists to slow down when passing bicyclists and pass only when safe, giving at least three feet of clearance when passing
- Remind bicyclists of where they should ride in the travel lane, through the center of the sharrow
- Remind bicyclists not to travel too close to parked vehicles and to watch for door openings
- Remind motorists and cyclists to be aware of surroundings

Overall, the purpose of the sharrow is to create an improved condition for the bicycling public on busier streets, and to encourage more bicycling.

Where are sharrows being placed?

Sharrows are being placed on streets in the travel lane. Where on-street parking is provided, the sharrow is placed to help position the bicyclist away from the parked vehicles, avoiding the possibility of hitting a suddenly opened vehicle door.

Sharrows can be found on a variety of streets, accommodating a variety of bicycle users. They may be on busier streets where we would prefer to have bike lanes but do not have the space for these, or they can be used on lower volume streets where we are encouraging bicycle traffic.

Overall, the sharrows are being implemented to reflect the objectives outlined in the City of Eau Claire Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan which has been incorporated into the Eau Claire Comprehensive Plan.

How are sharrows different from markings found in a bike lane?

A bike lane is a dedicated area for a bicyclist to travel. Motorists are not allowed to park, stop or drive in a bicycle lane. Bike lanes are painted using a solid white line with only a bicycle symbol.

In comparison, sharrows are used in lanes that are shared by motorists and bicyclists, and as noted above, used when there is not sufficient street width to accommodate a bike lane. A solid white line is not used to provide a dedicated biking area, instead a bicycle with two white chevrons is used to identify a shared space, indicating where bicyclists should ride and where motorists should expect to see bicyclists.