

Bike Lanes

Frequently-Asked Questions

Q: What is a bike lane?

It's a 5- to 6-foot wide, striped lane, marked with a large white bicycle on the pavement, and restricted to bicycle travel. On some streets, bike lanes appear along the left side of parked cars. On streets without parking, bike lanes run along the curb.

Q: Why bike lanes?

Bike lanes make most people feel safer about biking on city streets, which Mayor Daley wants. Bike lanes also cut down on weaving, making streets safer for everyone.

Q: On a street with a bike lane, do bicycle riders have to ride in the bike lane?

No. Bike riders can use the adjacent travel lanes if they're moving at the speed of traffic. Bike riders also use adjacent lanes to pass another vehicle or prepare for a turn.

Q: Do bike lanes cause traffic jams?

No. Bike lanes cut peak speeds, but most urban streets move traffic best when cars travel 25 to 35 miles per hour. Overall, travel times usually stay the same.

Q: What effects do bike lanes have on crashes?

First, bike lanes help calm traffic by cutting down on weaving. Second, they create a buffer zone at the edge of the traffic lane, which makes it easier for motorists to see pedestrians about to enter the street—and gives motorists more time to react. That means fewer crashes, especially those involving kids.

Q: What's the biggest problem with bike lanes?

Motorists park and drive in them. They probably don't realize that they're endangering bike riders by forcing the bikers to suddenly merge into moving car traffic.

Q: Why don't motorists know how to deal with bike lanes?

There hasn't been enough education of users and enforcement—and successful bike lanes need both. For education, Mayor Daley's Bicycling Ambassadors will work all summer to tell motorists: Please don't drive or park in bike lanes.

Q: What about the enforcement of bike lanes?

Motorists who violate bike lanes can be fined \$100 and have their cars towed. The city's already started working with police and parking enforcement aides to enforce the law.

Please don't park or drive in bike lanes!



**Sec. 9-40-060 of the
Municipal Code of Chicago
says:**

- If you park or drive in a bike lane you can be fined **\$100**
- Vehicles parked in a bike lane can be **TOWED**

Why?

Parking or driving in a bike lane endangers bicycle riders because it forces them into moving car traffic.



312/42-PEDAL
www.biketraffic.org/ambassador

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