

Promoting a Culture of Courtesy and Safety

Ride Leader Training



Becoming a Ride Leader

- ▶ *You are in service of your group. Expect to sacrifice “your” ride.*
- ▶ Safety and well being of ALL riders is your priority.
- ▶ Be prepared. Know your route...know the risks.
- ▶ Behavior modification will be required...and *some feathers will be ruffled.*
- ▶ Safety information must be clarified, explained and qualified.
- ▶ We'll all benefit from good ride leaders....cyclists, motor vehicles, safety officials.
- ▶ Our reputation as cyclists (and a cycling organization) will be enhanced as well.

Ride Essentials

- ▶ *Know your route. Use mapping, Ride w/GPS, etc.*
- ▶ Provide the route to riders. This allows anybody to find their way home.
- ▶ *Be welcoming to new riders. Make sure they know ride details, avg speed, max speeds, etc.*
- ▶ *Get a head count before departing. Tell at least two other people. Check this count routinely.*
- ▶ *Assess your group before the ride and after 5 miles.*
- ▶ Lead by example. This includes courtesy to motorists, traffic control, etc.
- ▶ You may need to abrogate your “right to the road” in the interest of safety.
- ▶ Be prepared for a crash. They will occur. You need to be prepared.
- ▶ The least capable rider in your group is your highest priority.

A Culture Safety and Courtesy

- ▶ As we improve our **Culture of Courtesy** on the road....safety will follow.
- ▶ The discussion of on-road safety and courtesy should be a priority topic for all rides.
- ▶ Safety information must be clarified, explained and qualified.
- ▶ ***If riders argue with your safety directives, do not hesitate to ask them to leave the ride!***
- ▶ Ride like we know what we are doing...it's not difficult.
- ▶ Our reputation as cyclists (and as a cycling organization) will be enhanced as well.

How can we tie Safety and Courtesy Together?

- ▶ Safety and on-road courtesy are very closely related.
- ▶ When we become more courteous on the road-we can eliminate many potential hazards.
- ▶ We share the road....*let's not dominate it.*
- ▶ Realize the threat, and the limitations of our “right” to the road..
 - ▶ Exercise our right to the roadway but *with common sense and courtesy*....avoid interactions with motor vehicles that elevate risk whenever possible.
- ▶ Are we communicating with local safety officials regarding our riding habits?
 - ▶ We should....they have a few things to say.

Specific Safety Priority #1

- ▶ Traffic control. **Obey it !!!**
 - ▶ This single element will increase safety and dramatically elevate our image within the on-road community.
 - ▶ It starts and stops with **RIDE LEADERS....SET THE EXAMPLE....ENFORCE THE RULES.**
- ▶ The **NUMBER ONE** complaint by local safety authorities.
- ▶ It's a basic courtesy....and a **LEGAL OBLIGATION.**
- ▶ Correction and discipline.
 - ▶ Let's establish a pre-ride expectations and implement communication/correction during rides.

Specific Safety Priority #2

- ▶ On road positioning and managing motor vehicle traffic (Ride “Right”).
 - ▶ *Do not unnecessarily impede or delay approaching motor vehicles.*
 - ▶ *Ride with an awareness of on-road hazards and approaching vehicular traffic.*
 - ▶ *Comply with AFRAP (As Far Right as is Practicable).*
- ▶ The **NUMBER TWO** complaint by local safety authorities.
- ▶ It's a basic courtesy....and again, a **LEGAL OBLIGATION**.
- ▶ The Ohio Revised Code....have you read it?
 - ▶ Let's take a poll.....

Specific Safety Priority #3

- ▶ Be Aware
 - ▶ *Leave the earbuds at home.*
 - ▶ *Ride with an awareness of your limitations as a cyclist.*
 - ▶ *Cooperate and do not “compete” with motor vehicles.*
 - ▶ *Don’t be a “Blob”.*
- ▶ The **NUMBER THREE** complaint by local safety authorities.
- ▶ So what's a **Blob**?

The "Blob"

- ▶ **The roving *Blob***...A moving group of cyclists spread over the entire travel lane, completely **unaware** of a vehicle behind (or approaching) them.
- ▶ **The stationary *Blob***...A group of cyclists at traffic control **unaware** of a vehicle behind them (or attempting to turn in).
- ▶ Did we mention the word "**unaware**"?
- ▶ Be aware of on-road conditions, our position relative to moving vehicles, and how we can avoid or minimize interactions.
- ▶ **Share** the road....***don't dominate it!***



Our Obligations on the Road

Ohio Revised Code § 4511.55. Operating bicycles and motorcycles on roadway.

(A) Every person operating a bicycle upon a roadway **shall ride as near to the right side of the roadway as practicable** obeying all traffic rules applicable to vehicles and exercising due care when passing a standing vehicle or one proceeding in the same direction.

(B) Persons riding bicycles or motorcycles upon a roadway shall ride not more than two abreast in a single lane, except on paths or parts of roadways set aside for the exclusive use of bicycles or motorcycles.

(C) This section **does not require a person operating a bicycle to ride at the edge of the roadway when it is unreasonable or unsafe to do so.** Conditions *that may require* riding away from the edge of the roadway include when necessary to avoid fixed or moving objects, parked or moving vehicles, surface hazards, or if it otherwise is unsafe or impracticable to do so, including if the lane is too narrow for the bicycle and an overtaking vehicle to travel safely side by side within the lane.

Let's get it “*Right*” from the *Ohio Bicycle Federation*

“§ 4511.55. Comment: Section 4511.55(A) is very often misquoted to say that cyclists are required to ride as *near as possible* to the curb. The new paragraph (C) should help reduce this confusion.

There are many conditions where it is much safer to ride *near the middle of the lane*. It is not practicable (practice-able) to ride on the far right when passing or turning left; or when avoiding objects, parked cars, moving vehicles, pedestrians, animals, surface or other hazards; or when the travel lane is too narrow for a bicycle and another vehicle to pass safely side by side within the lane.

Many motorists are reluctant to cross a lane line when passing a bicycle. A cyclist who "hugs the curb" unintentionally invites motorists to pass with unsafe clearance. Riding *near the middle of a narrow lane* helps overtaking motorists realize that they must use the next lane to pass.”

Other Positioning Basics

- ▶ **Stopping at traffic control or for regroup**s...do not impede motor vehicle traffic. Get right or off the road (better) and let motor vehicles proceed. Don't gather in the roadway...don't be a "Blob".
 - ▶ It's not an place to discuss Shimano vs. SRAM, compare the size of your cassettes, etc. etc.
 - ▶ Pick a highly visible location, or better yet **get off the road to wait** (parking lot, driveway, etc.).
- ▶ **Blind hills and curves**....never ride in the oncoming traffic lane. Organization needs to occur well before the hill or turn. Paceline leaders need to know how to handle these situations (most don't).
- ▶ **Climbing hills**...don't impede traffic behind or fellow cyclists. Slower riders needs to get right. Never force a cyclist to pass you over the "yellow line".
 - ▶ This is an example of where we become quite vulnerable. The speed differential relative to motor vehicles is at a maximum, escape routes are typically limited, and control of our bikes is compromised. Know what is behind you and stay center-right even after you pass a slower cyclist.

Other Positioning Basics-Vehicles Behind

- ▶ **Vehicles behind**...Call it out, **single up**, and be courteous. Get the vehicle passed as quickly and safely as possible.
 - ▶ *A vehicle in front of us can do little harm....a vehicle (or vehicles) we are impeding or preventing from passing can do substantial harm....make on road decisions based on this principle.*
 - ▶ *You will not defeat the Laws of Physics or Fatality Statistics...more on that later.*
 - ▶ *Don't be **"the rider"** that prevents a vehicle from safely passing the group. You are endangering riders in the group, and displaying discourteous ride manners.*
- ▶ *So what do the people "in the know" have to say about this?*

The Ohio Bicycle Federation

“Section 4511.55(B) allows riding two abreast. However, cyclists should avoid unnecessary delay to other traffic.

Please be courteous and "single up" when other drivers wish to pass if such passing is safe and reasonable.”

Street Smarts, the Definitive Cycling Guidebook

“Side-by-side bicyclists occupy a whole lane. On a multilane road with light traffic, cars can pass in the next lane. On a narrow road or with heavier traffic, be courteous! Don't make drivers wait for you.

Pull into a single line well before cars reach you. It takes only one thoughtless rider out to the left of the group to endanger the whole group.

Call out, "Car back" to let the group know it's time to single up.”

The Ohio Bike Lawyer (Steve Magas)

“Section 4511.55(B) allows riding two abreast. As a matter of courtesy, not law, I believe cyclists should avoid unnecessary delay to other traffic.

Please be courteous and “single up” when other drivers wish to pass if such passing is safe and reasonable.

By doing so, you cause the meter measuring Public Opinion to slide ever so slightly in our favor!”

The Pennsylvania *Bicycle Driver Manual*

“Riding two abreast is legal in Pennsylvania and most other states. It is okay on a straight, flat road. There, drivers can see you from behind, and you can usually see or hear them approach. Side-by-side bicyclists occupy a whole lane. On a multi-lane road with light traffic, cars can pass you in the next lane.

On a narrow road or with heavier traffic, be courteous! Do not make drivers wait for you.

Pull into a single line well before cars reach you. It takes only one thought less rider out to the left of the group to endanger the whole group.

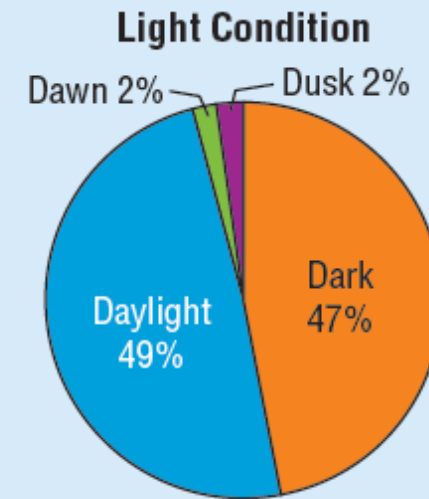
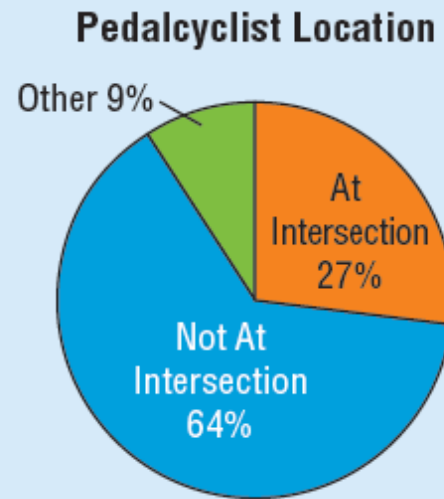
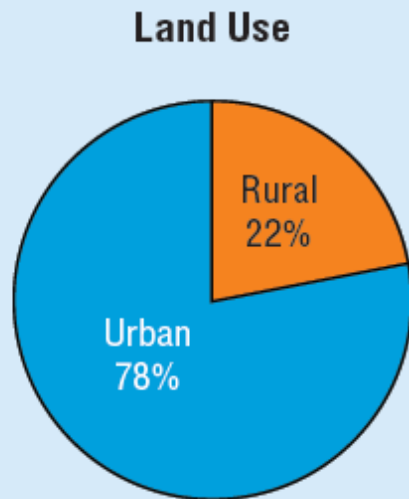
Call out, "Car back" to let the group know it is time to single up.”

Common “Opinions” Heard on Group Rides.

- ▶ *“I ride far left to be more visible to approaching traffic”*...please recall where the recommended position is.... *near the middle of the lane*....not riding on the “yellow line”. Recall when riding as a group...your visibility is already enhanced....don’t be the “lone rider” who insists on riding far left and impedes traffic.
- ▶ *“I am responsible for my own safety....I’ll ride where I want”*.... You have every opportunity to express this sentiment riding by yourself. When with a group, follow the instructions of the ride leader and exercise your individual opinions and habits on your solo rides.
- ▶ *“I am allowed to ride two abreast...cars will have to wait”*....Yes you have this legal right. However, you are also obligated to not impede traffic behind (motor vehicles AND fellow cyclists). When we are delaying traffic or fellow cyclists, single up and be courteous to your group, ride leader and the motorists with whom we share the road.

You will not Defeat the Laws of Physics and Fatality Statistics

Percentage of Pedalcyclist Fatalities in Relation to Land Use, Pedalcyclist Location, Light Condition, and Season and Time of Day, 2019



Source: National Center for Statistics and Analysis. (October 2021. Bicyclists and other cyclists: 2019 data. (Traffic Safety Facts. Report No. DOT HS 812 382). Washington, DC: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

You will not Defeat the Laws of Physics and Fatality Statistics

Pedalcyclists Killed in Single-Vehicle Crashes Where the First Harmful Event Was Collision With a Pedalcyclist, by Vehicle Type and Initial Point of Impact on Vehicle, 2019

Vehicle Type	Initial Point of Impact on Vehicle										Total	
	Front		Right Side		Left Side		Rear		Other/Unknown			
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Passenger Car	277	89.9%	15	4.9%	9	2.9%	1	0.3%	6	1.9%	308	100.0%
Light Truck*	303	87.8%	15	4.3%	13	3.8%	3	0.9%	11	3.2%	345	100.0%
— SUV	143	91.7%	5	3.2%	5	3.2%	1	0.6%	2	1.3%	156	100.0%
— Pickup	117	83.0%	10	7.1%	5	3.5%	2	1.4%	7	5.0%	141	100.0%
— Van	41	91.1%	0	0.0%	3	6.7%	0	0.0%	1	2.2%	45	100.0%
Large Truck	48	54.5%	17	19.3%	5	5.7%	11	12.5%	7	8.0%	88	100.0%
Bus	6	50.0%	3	25.0%	2	16.7%	0	0.0%	1	8.3%	12	100.0%
Other/ Unknown Vehicle	28	54.9%	2	3.9%	0	0.0%	1	2.0%	20	39.2%	51	100.0%
Total	662	82.3%	52	6.5%	29	3.6%	16	2.0%	45	5.6%	804	100.0%

Source: FARS 2019 ARF

*Includes other/unknown light-truck vehicle types.

You will not Defeat the Laws of Physics and Fatality Statistics

“For example, the most common collision type in our Every Bicyclist Counts data is a rear end collision. Approximately 40% of fatalities in our data with reported collision types were rear end collisions.”

This is higher than what was found in the 2010 FARS release that included PBCAT-based crash types (27% of fatal crashes with reported collision types), although the crash type “motorist overtaking bicyclist” was the most common collision type in that data as well.”

Source: Bicyclist Safety Must be a Priority, Findings from a year of fatality tracking and the urgent need for better data, May 2014



TABLE 1

COLLISION TYPE	#	%*
REAR END	194	40%
CYCLIST SIDE/CAR FRONT	51	11%
T-HIT	46	10%
HEAD ON	40	8%
NONE	33	7%
RIGHT HOOK	30	6%
DRIVER FAILURE TO YIELD	29	6%
OTHER	22	5%
SIDESWIPE	17	4%
CYCLIST FAILURE TO YIELD	10	2%
LEFT CROSS	6	1%
LEFT HOOK	4	1%
UNKNOWN	146	N/A

* %=481

Source: League of American Bicyclists, Every Bicyclist Counts

You will not Defeat the Laws of Physics and Fatality Statistics

*“In general, fatal collisions are more common at **intersection** or intersection-related locations in **urban areas** than in rural areas.*

*Fatal collisions are 3.7 more times more likely to occur at a **non intersection**-related location in **rural areas** than at intersection-related locations.”*

Source: Bicyclist Safety Must be a Priority, Findings from a year of fatality tracking and the urgent need for better data, May 2014



ROAD TYPE	Non-Intersection	Intersection-related
Rural-Arterial	63	15
Rural-Collector	49	9
Rural-Local	53	21
Urban-Arterial	149	150
Urban-Collector	29	19
Urban-Local	59	62
TOTAL	402	276

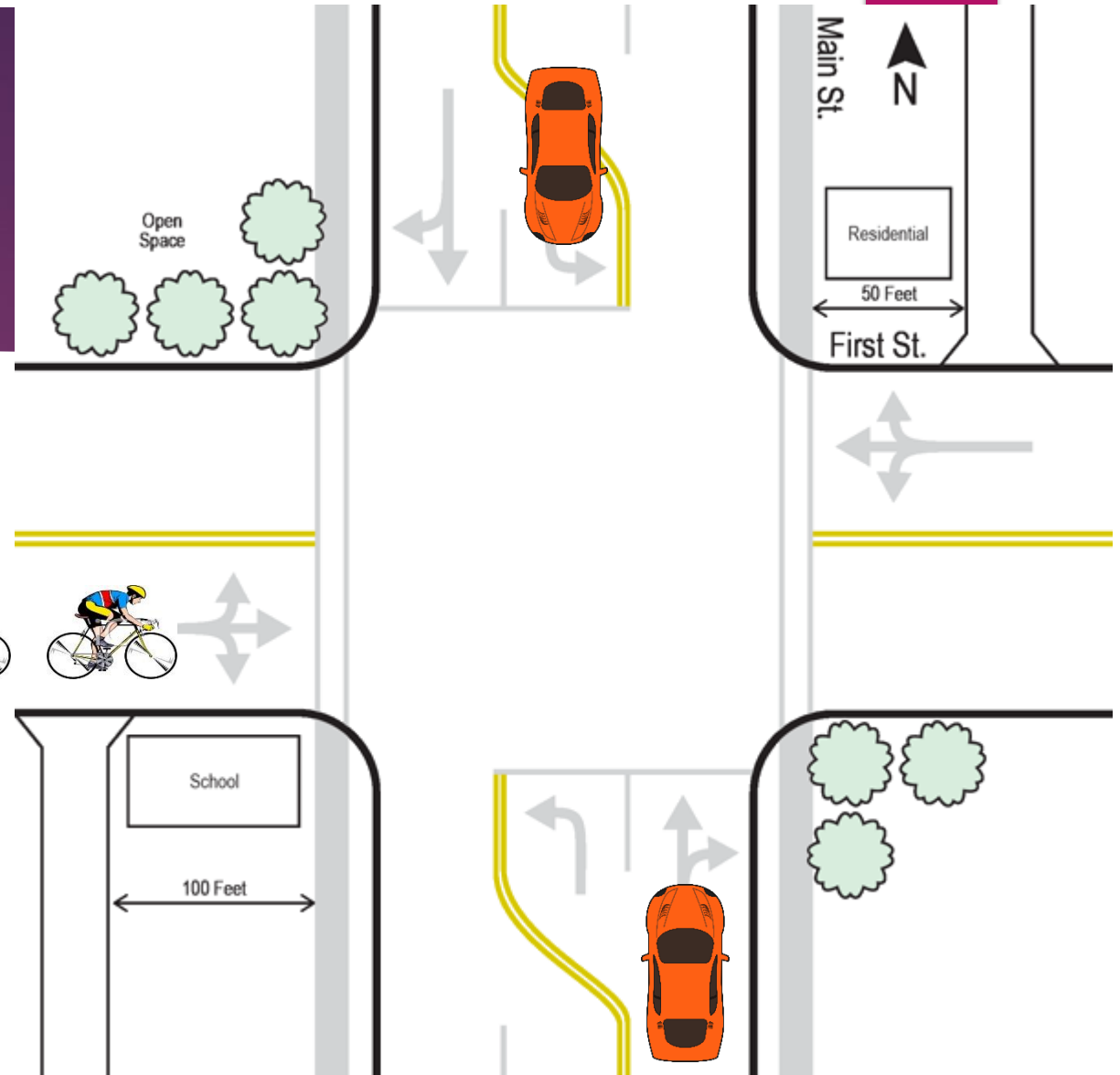
Source: NHTSA Fatality Analysis Reporting System 2012

You will not Defeat the Laws of Physics and Fatality Statistics

- ▶ The concept of “**forcing**” a motor vehicle to do something via your riding skills or position on the road needs to be dismissed.
- ▶ A 200 lb. unprotected, wholly exposed “pedal powered vehicle” will never “**force**” a 2,000 lb motorized vehicle to do anything. ***Accept that fact.***
- ▶ At times, ***our legal rights on the road must take a back seat to the laws of physics and the concept of risk.***
- ▶ When it is practical, safe and courteous to do so, position yourself (or your group) so cyclists are ***never at risk of contacting the front end of a vehicle.***

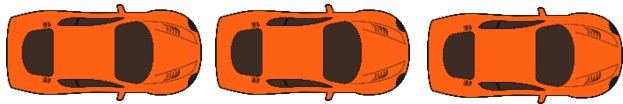
Examples: On Road Decisions

- ▶ How can we avoid a position in front of the motor vehicles?
- ▶ Road conditions ahead?
- ▶ Single lane?
- ▶ Hill climb?
- ▶ Heavy traffic?

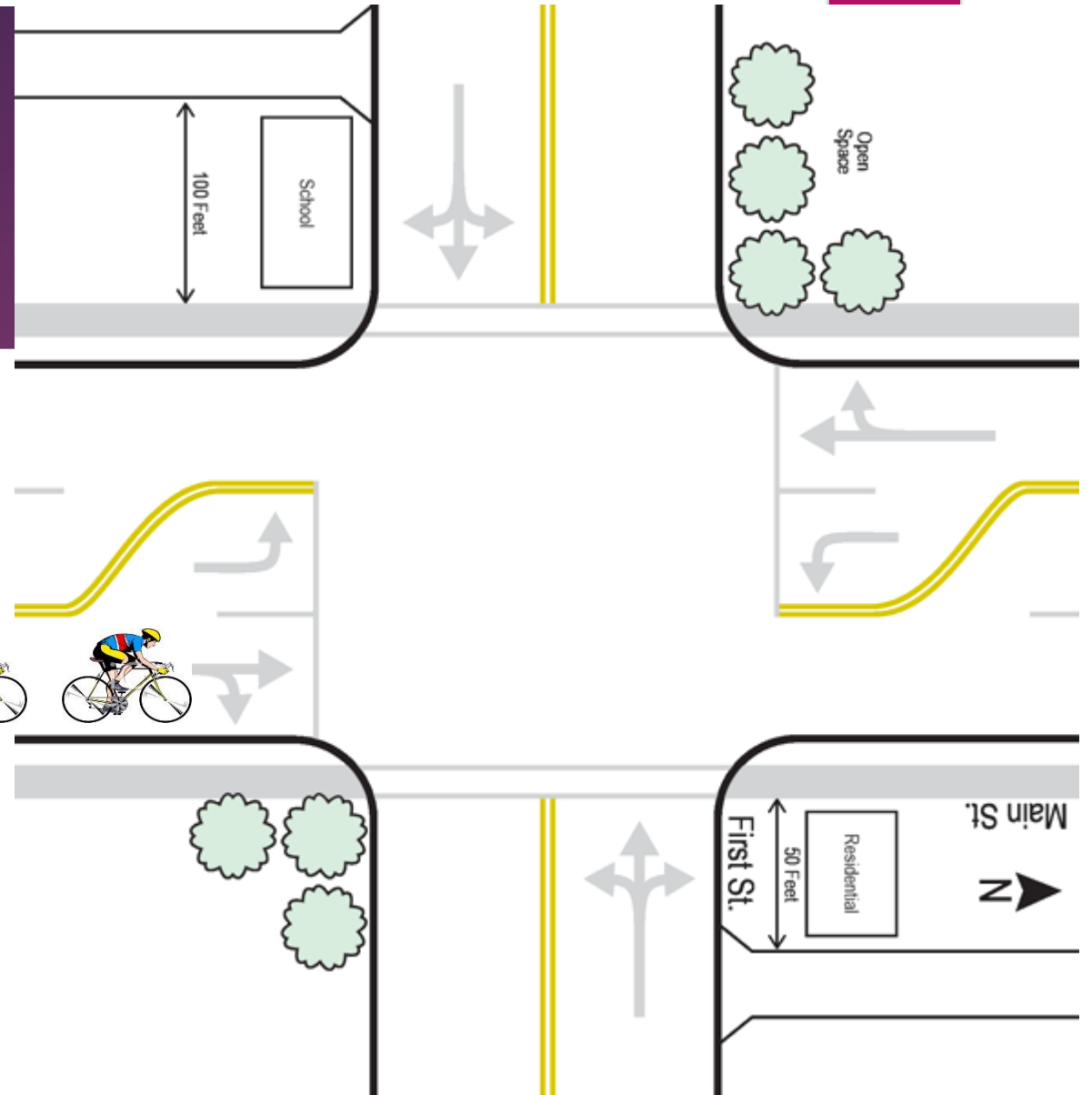


Examples: On Road Decisions

- ▶ How can we avoid a position in front of the motor vehicles?
- ▶ Road conditions ahead?



- ▶ Single lane?
- ▶ Hill climb?
- ▶ Heavy traffic?



Roundabouts

- ▶ Know the rules.
- ▶ Slow your approach.
- ▶ Traffic *in the roundabout has the right of way*.
- ▶ Long groups of cyclists must manage carefully.
- ▶ Paceline leaders play an extraordinary role in the safety of the group.



Do You Know What is Behind You?

- ▶ Mirrors....essential for on-road safety and an integral part of being a courteous and safe cyclist.
- ▶ Mandatory for all CCC ride leaders?
- ▶ Recommended by CCC as appropriate ride equipment?
- ▶ Why don't we use them? Let's all be honest here....
 - ▶ Is a motor vehicle behind you (*are you located in front of a motor vehicle*)?
 - ▶ Can you safely avoid a road hazard?
 - ▶ Are you impeding a motor vehicle or other cyclists?
 - ▶ Can you make a left turn safely?

Communication

▶ Be Aware, Communicate and Cooperate

- ▶ *On your wheel.*
- ▶ *Car back.*
- ▶ *Hand signals....lets' be consistent in signaling right turns.*
- ▶ *Hand signals....pass them along.*
- ▶ *You're clear.*
- ▶ *On your left.*
- ▶ *Gap the line (paceline leaders).*

▶ Paceline leaders

- ▶ *You have an implicit responsibility for those riding behind you...you are the eyes and ears for the group.*
- ▶ *Know your capabilities....do not exceed them.*
- ▶ *Comply with traffic control.*
- ▶ *Know the route !!!*
- ▶ *Make safety a priority.*
- ▶ *Keep the group together.*