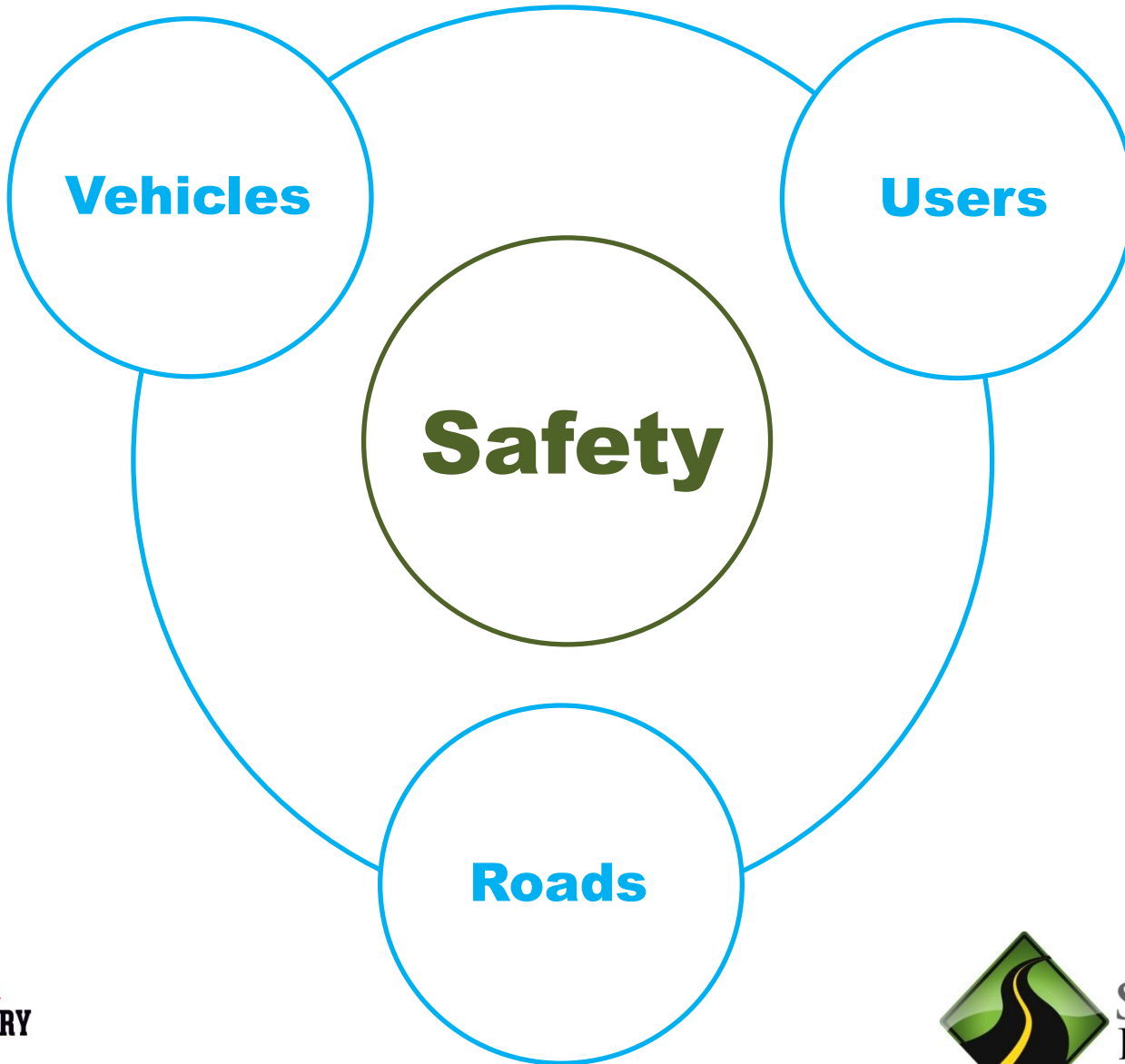


Cycling and The Highway Traffic Act

Ontario Cycling Association – Club
Presidents Day

Sasha Gollish, P.Eng., M.Eng., LEEDap





Cycling and the Law



The Highway Traffic Act

- Written by the Ministry of Transportation's Road Safety Group
- Just like guidelines and specifications for roadways, the HTA was written for motor vehicles; the bicycle was an afterthought
- Guiding Principle = **Safety**



What Sections of the Law Apply to Cyclists?

HTA 144/136 - Traffic signals and signs

stop for red lights and stop signs and comply with all other signs.

HTA 153 - One-ways streets

ride in the designated direction on one-way streets.

HTA 142 - Signalling a turn

before turning, look behind you and signal your turn. Cyclists can use their right arm to signal a right turn.

HTA 140(1) 144(29) - Crosswalks

yield or stop for pedestrians at crosswalks.

HTA 140(6)/144(29) - No riding in crosswalks

walk your bike when crossing at a crosswalk.



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What Sections of the Law Apply to Cyclists?

HTA 166 - Streetcars

stop two metres behind streetcar doors and wait until passengers have boarded or departed and reached the curb. **HTA 175 (12) - Stopped school buses**

stop for stopped school buses when the upper alternating red lights are flashing. Set fine: \$400.00

HTA 62(17) - Lights

a bike must have a white front light and a red rear light or reflector if you ride between 1/2 hour before sunset and 1/2 hour after sunrise and white reflective tape on the front forks and red reflective tape on rear forks.

HTA 75 (5) - Bell

a bike must have a bell or horn in good working order.



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What Sections of the Law Apply to Cyclists?

HTA 64(3) - Brakes

a bike must have at least one brake system on the rear wheel. When you put on the brakes, you should be able to skid on dry, level pavement.

HTA 218 - Identification

Cyclists must stop and identify themselves when required to stop by police for breaking traffic laws. The police officer will ask you for your correct name and address.

HTA Reg. 630 - Expressways

Bicycles are prohibited on expressway / freeway highways such as the 400 series, the QEW, Ottawa Queensway and on roads where "No Bicycle" signs are posted.

HTA 178(2) - Passengers

Passengers are not allowed on a bicycle designed for one person.



What Sections of the Law Apply to Cyclists?

HTA 104 - Helmets

Every cyclist under the age of eighteen must wear an approved bicycle helmet. Parents or guardians shall not knowingly permit cyclists under sixteen to ride without a helmet.

HTA 179 - Dismounted bicyclist

Cyclists are required to ride on the right-hand side of the road. If you are walking your bike on a highway where there are no sidewalks, you are considered a pedestrian and you should walk on the left-hand side of the road facing traffic. If it is not safe for you to cross the road to face traffic, you may walk your bike on the right-hand side of the road.



The Sections of the Law that Make it Confusing

HTA 147 - Slow moving traffic travel on right side

HTA 148 – Slower traffic must give way to faster traffic when safe and practical

any vehicle moving slower than the normal traffic speed should drive in the right-hand lane, or as close as practicable to the right edge of the road except when preparing to turn left or when passing another vehicle



Section 148 in More Detail

Vehicles meeting bicycles

(4) Every person in charge of a vehicle on a highway meeting a person travelling on a bicycle shall allow the cyclist sufficient room on the roadway to pass

Bicycles overtaken

(6) Every person on a bicycle or motor assisted bicycle who is overtaken by a vehicle or equestrian travelling at a greater speed shall turn out to the right and allow the vehicle or equestrian to pass and the vehicle or equestrian overtaking shall turn out to the left so far as may be necessary to avoid a collision

Driver unable to turn out is to stop

(7) Where one vehicle is met or overtaken by another, if by reason of the weight of the load on either of the vehicles so meeting or on the vehicle so overtaken the driver finds it impracticable to turn out, he or she shall immediately stop, and, if necessary for the safety of the other vehicle and if required so to do, he or she shall assist the person in charge thereof to pass without damage

Passing vehicle going in same direction

(8) No person in charge of a vehicle shall pass or attempt to pass another vehicle going in the same direction on a highway unless the roadway,

(a) in front of and to the left of the vehicle to be passed is safely free from approaching traffic



The Sections of the Law that Make it Confusing

“bicycle” = “vehicle”

“bicycle” ≠ “motor vehicle”

“roadway” vs. “highway”

Section 132. (1)

No motor vehicle shall be driven on a highway at such a slow rate of speed as to impede or block the normal and reasonable movement of traffic thereon except when the slow rate of speed is necessary for safe operation having regard to all the circumstances. But with the way this was written this only intended for motor vehicles, not vulnerable users including equestrian, off-road vehicles or bicycles.

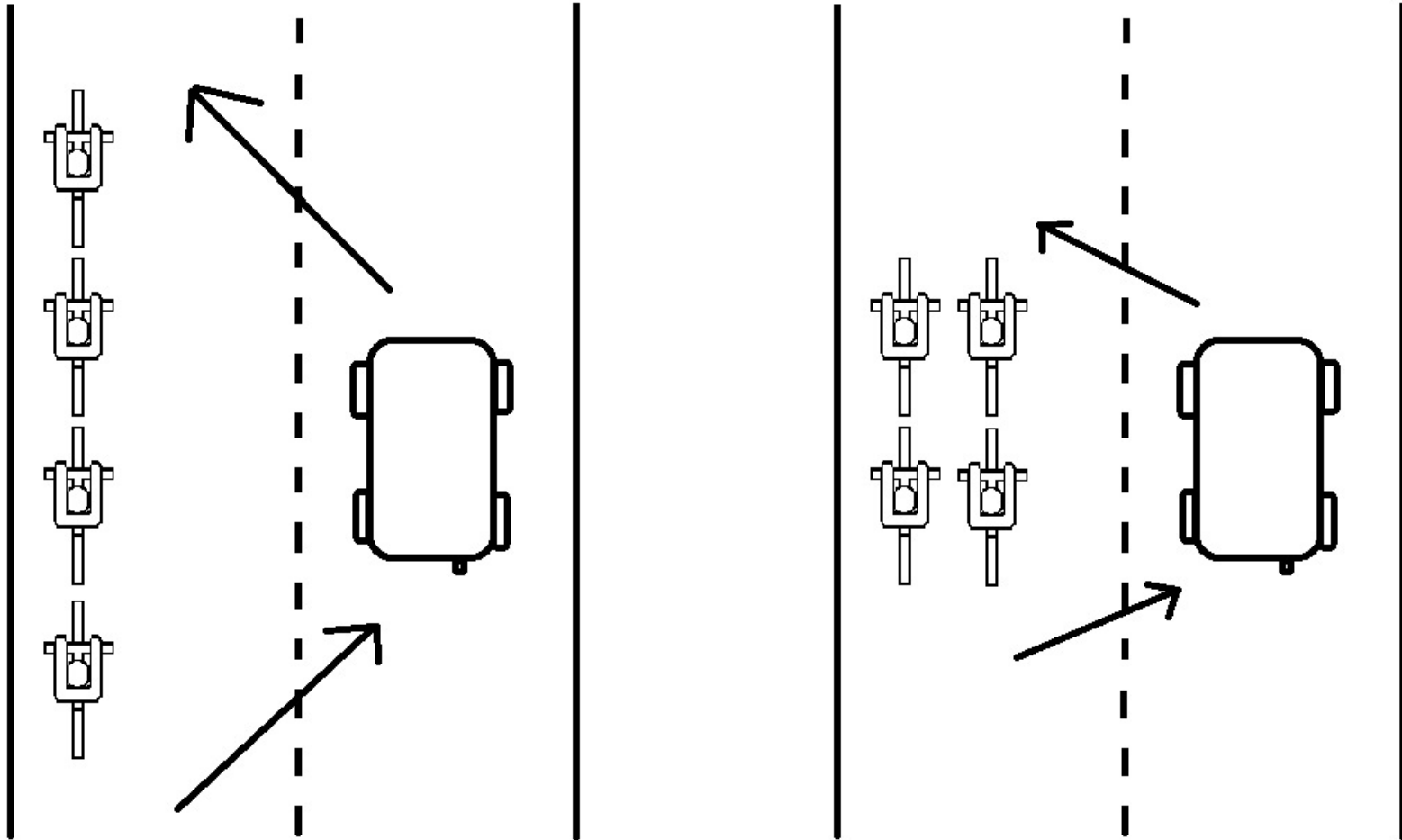


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SOME RECOMMENDATIONS ON HOW TO RIDE



UK Cycling Blog on Two-Abreast



<http://ukcyclelaws.blogspot.ca/p/the-laws-according-to-highway-code.html>



Info to the UK Two-Abreast Slide

So why do cyclists cycle two abreast?

It's Safer!

Simply put, it's safer for cyclists to ride two abreast, it means that motorists usually have to overtake in a proper manner rather than overtaking in the same lane as the cyclists. If a group of cyclists are in single file, motorists will often assume they can overtake in places which are not safe and will not leave the cyclist enough room. Motorists should give cyclists the same amount of room they would give another car when overaking (please see the Overtaking Cyclists page for more details) which means they should be on the other side of the road and would have to wait until there are no oncoming cars. Being in two files usually forces this scenario but riding in single file can lead the motorist to think they can overtake on the same side of the road if there are oncoming cars thus not giving the cyclist the correct amount of space.

It allows motorists to overtake quicker!?!

Riding two abreast also allows the motorist to overtake the group of cyclists quicker as there is less distance between the front and rear of the group (about half!!). This means that the motorist is past the group in less time, spending less time on the other side of the road and along side the group of cyclists and therefore safer all round.



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Info to the UK Two-Abreast Slide

It's sociable!

Cyclists out for a long ride will have a much more enjoyable ride if they have someone to talk to, and enjoying the ride is the main point of the ride for most. Most cyclists prefer to have someone to chat with but this does not mean that they are not riding safely, most car drivers will talk to their passengers and this is not regarded as unsafe driving!

Why do motorists get annoyed by cyclists two abreast?

There are many reasons why motorists tend to get annoyed so here are a few that I know of:

They think it's harder to overtake

They think it's illegal

They think it's dangerous in general

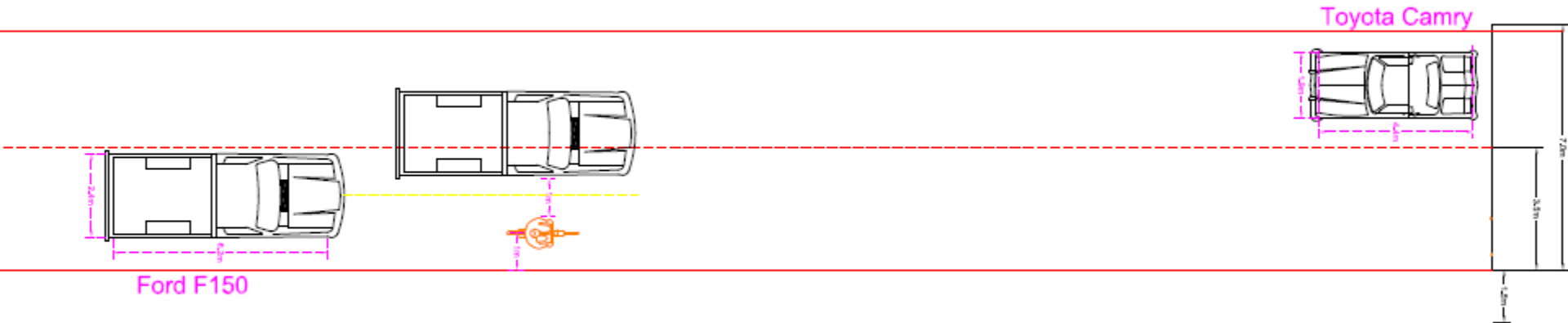
They think it means cyclists are not paying attention to the road



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Even when there's 1 Cyclist...

Drivers need to be aware that even when there is only one cyclist on the road that they have to cross the centre line to safely pass the cyclist.

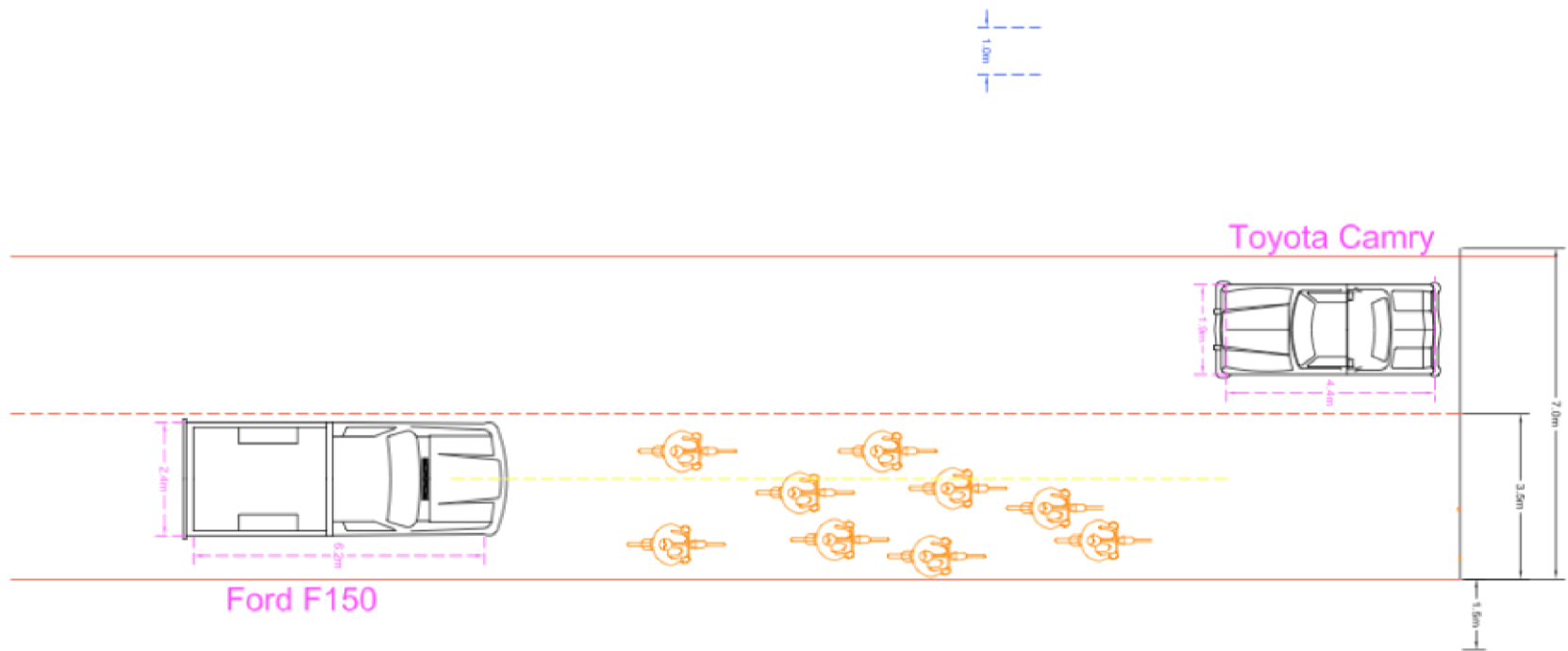


This cyclist is riding the recommended 1m away from the curb or edge of pavement. This is a typical 3.75m road, which leaves 2.75m.

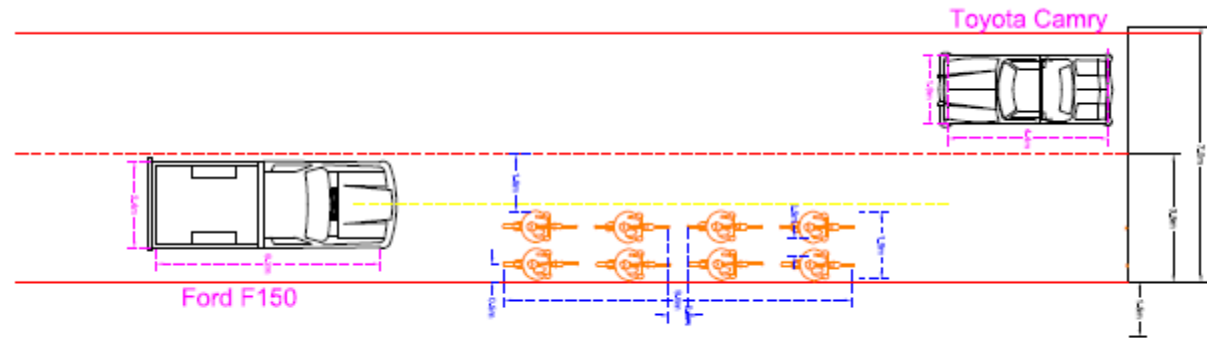
In the US there are 16 states where it is now law to leave 3ft/1m of room when passing. Using this 3ft/1m recommendation this leaves 1.75m of pavement in the lane. Again this demonstrates that a vehicle must cross the centerline to pass safely.



This is how we are sometimes seen



Here is what you should strive to do

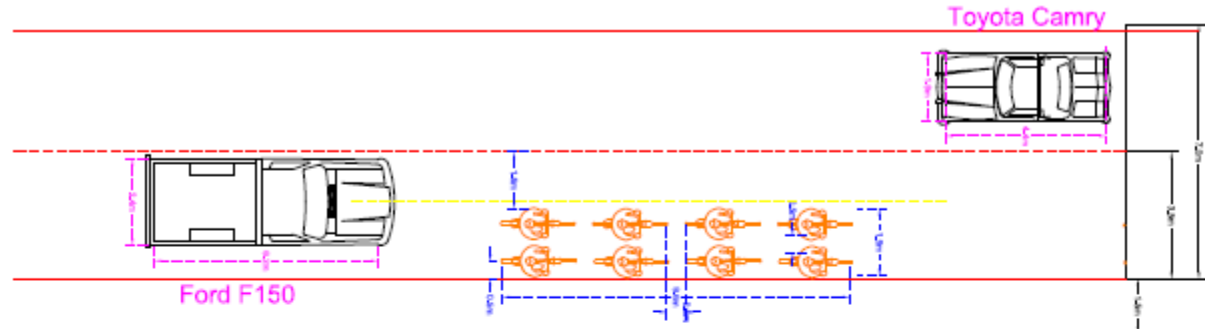


This diagram is similar to the one that I showed from the UK of Why Cyclists choose to ride two abreast, but the dimensions match those of a typical Ontario Road.

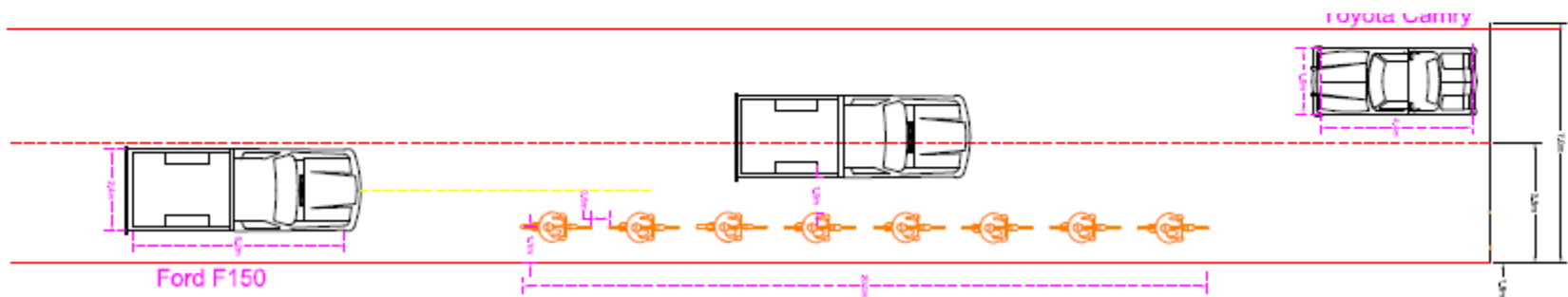
As you can see it is much more efficient and easier for a driver to pass the cyclists when they are two abreast. The driver can easily see up the road and the driver needs less time to pass the cyclists.



Single file vs. Two-Abreast... You still have to Cross the Centerline



This also demonstrates that even if the cyclists did ride single file that the driver must cross the centre line to pass the cyclists safely. However, in this formation it takes a lot longer to pass the cyclists; given that it takes more time there are likely fewer opportunities for a vehicle to pass legally and safely



Cycling Literature

Ministry of Transportation of Ontario

- [Drivers and Vehicles' Vehicle Licensing: Recognizing New and Emerging Vehicles](#)
- [Young Cyclists Guide](#)
- [Cycling Skills Guide](#)
- [Safe Cycling Advice](#)
- [Provincial Cycling Strategy](#)

Ontario Coroner's Report



From the Ontario coroner's Report

Recommendation #14

To the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police, the Ontario Provincial Police, and police services

- ...should review local data related to cycling injuries and fatalities in order to identify and address opportunities for targeted education, public safety interventions and enforcement activities

Recommendation #9

- A comprehensive review and revision of the Municipal Act, the City of Toronto Act and relevant Municipal By-Laws should be conducted to ensure that they are consistent and understandable with respect to cycling and cyclists and therefore easier to promote and enforce



Recommendations for Group Cycling: URBAN

Example 1 - Roadways Where There Are Multiple Lanes Which Motorists May Use To Pass

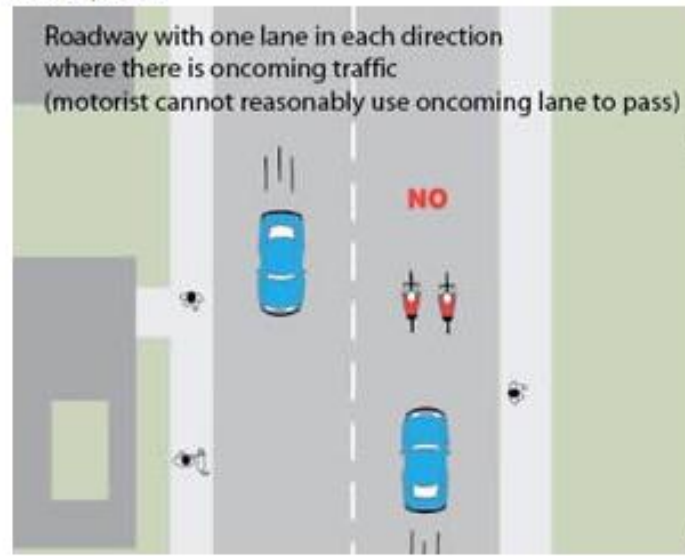
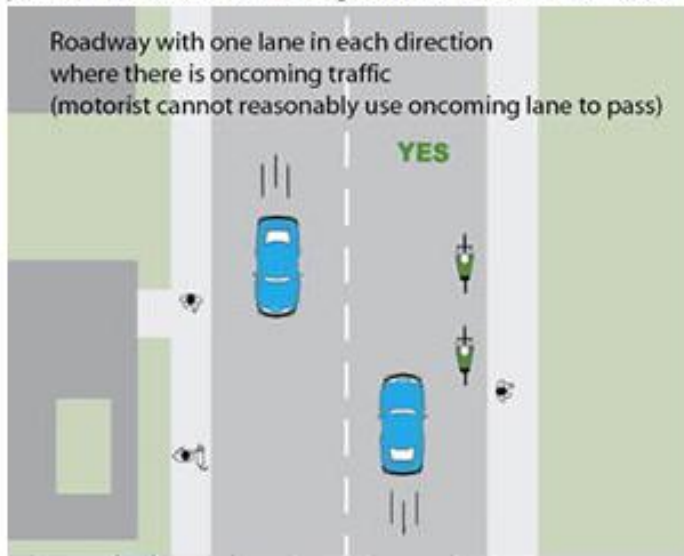
If a roadway has multiple lanes which a motorists may use to pass slower moving vehicles, then a motorist should allow slower moving vehicles (such as cyclists) to use the lane on the right, while using a lane (or lanes) to the left of this lane for the purpose of passing.



Recommendations for Group Cycling: URBAN

Roadway Or Traffic Where It Is Not Possible For A Faster Vehicle To Pass

On a road where the travel lane is wide enough for a passing vehicle to safely share the lane with a cyclist, but a motorist *cannot pass* use another travel lane which is free of traffic, in order to comply with the law cyclists must as close to right as practicable, position themselves in single file and allow the faster vehicle to pass.



Recommendations for Group Cycling: URBAN

Four Lane Roads:

- Ride within the right hand lane
- Ride in a predictable manner
- Follow the rules of the road (including local bylaws)

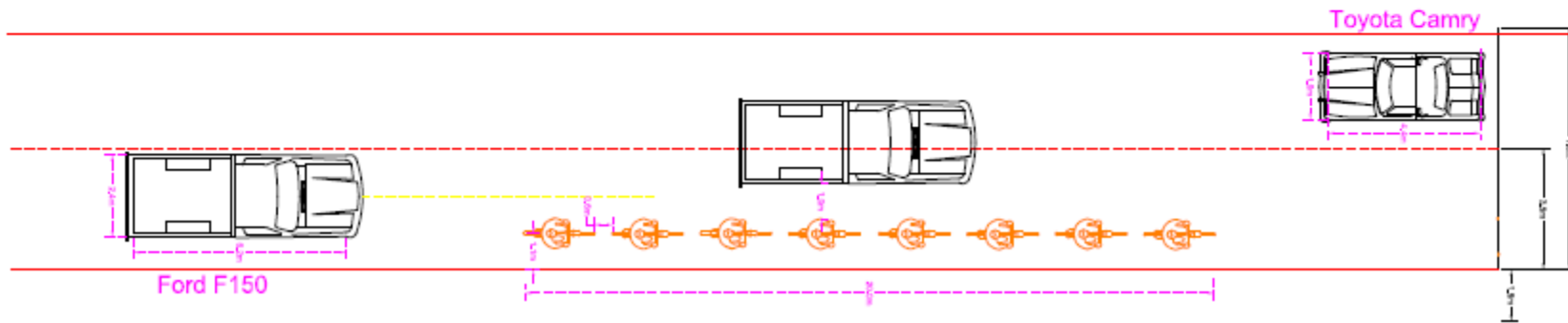
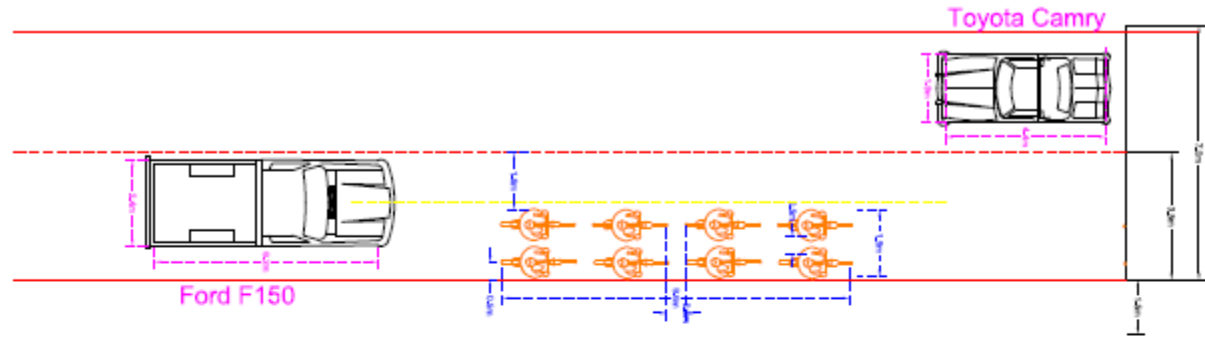
Two lane Roads:

- When a car approaches endeavour to move to single file
- Move to the right as is safe to do so (no less than 1 m from the edge of pavement)
- Some municipal roads are wide enough (~5m) to accommodate a cyclist and a car; on these roads be sure not to impede vehicular traffic



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Recommendation for Group Cycling: RURAL



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Recommendation for Group Cycling: RURAL

- Remember that most roads are two lane roads
- Respect the rules of the road
- Respect all road users
- Riding two-abreast is not illegal; however, if a car approaches the group should endeavour to move to be single file



What Can we do to Make the Roads Safer for Cyclists

- Updates to the HTA are coming in two-three weeks
- Including a recommendation to update the HTA every year
- Our Ask = **Make Two Abreast Legal** and defined under the HTA



QUESTIONS?

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