

north shore news

LETTER: Cyclists and motorists can coexist

North Shore News

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Dear Editor:

Having read Mr. [\(Don\) McPherson's letter \(http://www.nsnews.com/opinion/letters/letter-separate-paths-essential-to-safety-1.1806655\)](http://www.nsnews.com/opinion/letters/letter-separate-paths-essential-to-safety-1.1806655) published on March 27, I disagree with some of his statements:

"It is essential that people biking are separated from people walking. A cyclist travelling at 15 km/h is a danger to walkers. It is even more imperative to separate moving cars from people cycling."

I get the impression that he feels that cyclists will be forced onto the sidewalk, which will not happen, since provincial law (Motor Vehicle Act) prohibits it, with an exception for the very young.

"No increase in cycling will result from road designs that mean cyclists must ride single file with cars. Similarly cyclists must be buffeted from parked cars. The possibility of car doors opening on unsuspecting cyclists is a significant threat to the safety of both parties." Again, provincial law requires all cyclists to ride in single file unless they are overtaking another cyclist(s). In regards to the opening of doors (also known as "dooring"), it is up to both the motorist and cyclist to avoid this kind of collision.

The driver needs to shoulder check, check your mirror (never rely on just your outside mirror) and slowly open your door, while watching the mirror. Cyclists, need to assume that any door, on any vehicle, will open at any time and ride defensively, at a speed where they can stop in one half their range of vision.

"City planners narrowed the road for traffic calming purposes. This results in several points along the road where a cyclist must take the middle of the lane."

Cyclists are permitted to "take the lane" as required under provincial law, if, it is not possible to keep to the right portion of the roadway/lane for any reason (debris, parked vehicles, construction, etc). That said, a good cyclist will, at the first opportunity to safely do so, pull over to let traffic pass.

A good driver will wait patiently, staying two seconds behind the cyclist (ideal conditions only), or may find an alternate route.

Cycling Canada offers courses for those wishing to brush up on their skills: <http://canbikecanada.ca/> (<http://canbikecanada.ca/>)

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What are your thoughts? Send us a letter via email by clicking [here \(http://www.nsnews.com/opinion/send-us-a-letter\)](http://www.nsnews.com/opinion/send-us-a-letter) or post a comment below.

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