

# Oxford reviews bike lanes

Most comments have been positive, says city official.

By Eric Robinette  
Staff Writer

OXFORD — City officials are reminding drivers and bicyclists the rules of the road as there are a lot more bicycles on city streets after the opening of new designated bike lanes on Spring Street and the multi-use path along Patterson Avenue.

Bike lanes along on Spring Street between Patterson Avenue and Beech Street were completed in mid-August. Their implementation came after considerable debate about safety for both drivers and cyclists and the loss of parking spaces.

The lanes eliminated about 26 parking spaces, affecting 13 property owners with rental properties, according to Councilman Bob Blackburn.

The planning commission last week reviewed various safety improvements around town, including the bike lanes.

"We've had very positive comments from almost the entire community about this — a few scattered complaints here and there, like bikes running stop signs or people passing or people passing or delivery trucks using this as a parking lot," said Mike Dreisbach, the city's service director. "Enforcement should take care of those problems."

Dreisbach reminded motorists that even without dedicated bike lanes, they are supposed to share the road with cyclists.

Some say that during heavy traffic times on Spring Street, motorists will use the bike lanes as a right turn lane.

"They just whip over there and pass about five cars and make a right turn through the intersection," Councilman Rich-

ard Keebler said he has been told. "I don't know how true that is, but it would probably be a good idea for a little information about that and perhaps some enforcement."

David Prytherch, the chair of Oxford's planning commission and a Miami professor, said he has never seen so many bikes on campus.

"Bike lanes are great. It's way better to get around," said Roland Taylor, a Miami University sophomore who rides his bike daily. "I wish they were on all the streets, though. It's nice that they're on the big streets, but if they had them on the campus that would be nice too."

Not everyone is fond of the lanes, though, even if they do ride a bike.

"I feel like they just take away parking that's more useful," said Miami sophomore Felipe De La Barra as he was unlocking his bike.

Dozens of residents in support of the bike lanes showed up to a July 2 city council meeting when council approved the city's first bike lanes.

Keebler voted with the rest of council to implement the bike lanes, although he harbored some reservations.

"I certainly have nothing against bike lanes, as long as they serve a need and receive widespread use ... the amount of use (has to justify) the removal of parking and the affect on adjacent residents and property owners. I'm not convinced that's the case here, but I'm willing to give it a try," he said at the July meeting.

Keebler said people want the bike lanes to go past College and Locust and connect to Fairfield Road, but he said the streets in that area aren't wide enough for dedicated bike lanes and would require the purchase of additional right of way and more construction costs that are beyond the city's reach.



A cyclist rides in a dedicated bike lane along Spring Street in Oxford. The city's bike lanes eliminated about 26 parking spaces, according to a councilman. NICK DAGGY / STAFF

## SHARING THE ROAD

### Bike lanes

A bicycle lane is a designated traffic lane for bicyclists, and only bicyclists are permitted on that lane. No moving or parked cars are permitted on bike lanes.

Bicyclists must ride in the bike lane only in the same direction as other traffic. Riding against the flow of traffic is against the law and greatly increases your chances of having a crash, especially at intersections where pedestrians and crossing traffic are unlikely to see you.

### Safety tips for bikes

1. Be safe. Wear a bike helmet.
2. Be predictable. Make your intentions clear to motorists and other road users. Ride in a straight line and don't swerve between parked cars. Signal turns, and check behind you well before turning or changing lanes.
3. Be visible. Ride where drivers can see you and wear bright clothing. When riding in the dark or twilight, cyclists should always use both a headlight and blinking taillight. Many cyclists also use a blinking taillight in the daytime. Lights, reflectors, and bright colored biking shirts and tunics are available at any bike shop.
4. Anticipate. Consider what drivers, pedestrians, and other bicyclists will do next. Watch for turning vehicles and ride outside the door zone of parked cars. Look out for debris, potholes, and utility covers.

### Safety tips for cars

1. When driving on a road with a bike lane, keep your eyes out for cyclists who might be turning at an intersection onto a road without a bike lane.
  2. Pay attention to the "sharrows" signal on the road, which, like the "share the road" signs, means that bikes will be on the road.
  3. Move to the center of the road when passing a cyclist.
  4. Don't honk at a cyclist as it could scare the cyclist into a fall. To gain a cyclist's attention, tap your horn lightly.
  5. After parking your car, look carefully in your rearview mirror before opening your car door so that you do not injure a passing cyclist.
  6. Drivers might consider turning their head lights on, to make it easier for cyclists to see you coming, both ahead and in their rearview mirrors.
- For more information, visit [www.bikeleague.org](http://www.bikeleague.org) or [www.ohiobike.org](http://www.ohiobike.org)

He also questioned whether the bike lanes would prompt more ridership, as some have suggested. He asked the city

manager, Douglas Elliott, to keep a count of users of the bike lanes to see how much they were being used.