

Safe Routes to School - Parent Info Sheet

Will your child be biking or walking to school next year? If so, great! Biking and walking to school can help increase a student's daily physical activity, which research has shown can help youth maintain healthy weights, bones and muscles, reduce the risk of disease, improve academic performance and improve psychological well-being¹.



WHICH ROUTE TO TAKE?

Whether you have lived in Coronado your whole life or moved here recently, there are a few things to keep in mind when selecting a biking or walking route to school for your child. While only you can select the best route for your child between your specific home location and school location, these tips are designed to help inform your decision.

PICK YOUR ROUTE

When picking your route, it is important to remember that the shortest route *may not* always be the fastest or the safest. Consider the location of bike lanes, bike paths, and crossing guards, your child's age and cycling ability, major roads that must be crossed, vehicle traffic volumes and speeds, the need for your child to make left turns, and the presence of stop signs and driveways. Below are some practical tips that can help you pick a route for your child to get to and from school:

- **Crossing Major Roads:** Coronado is divided by two state highways that have higher auto traffic volumes and speeds (Orange Avenue and Third and Fourth Streets). Locations that provide enhanced crossing opportunities are listed below and are **shown in the attached map**:

- **Orange Avenue**

- First Street (signalized intersection with a bike lane)
- Sixth Street (signalized intersection with a bike lane)
- Seventh Street (not signalized, however crossing guards are present in the mornings and afternoons)

- **Third and Fourth Streets**

- Third and F Avenue (crossing guard is present weekday mornings)
- Fourth and F Avenue (crossing guard is present weekday afternoons).
- Bike Path under the Coronado Bridge (completely separated from vehicle traffic)
- Orange Avenue (the only signalized crossing of Third and Fourth Streets).



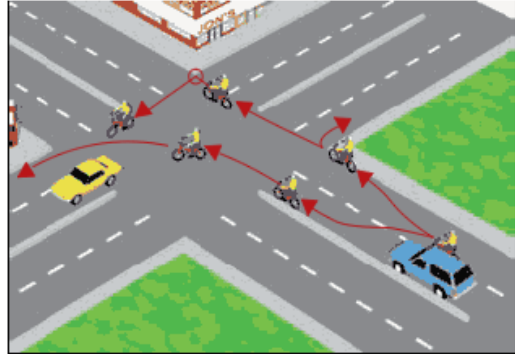
Bike Path under the Coronado Bridge

- **Consider Cycling Ability:** Consider your child's age and cycling ability when selecting a route. Younger children have less skill at estimating closing speed for automobiles and have less ability to process peripheral vision. It is better for younger children to cycle on less complicated streets with lower traffic volumes and speeds where they can focus on one hazard at a time. Older students will

cycle faster, so they need to have longer sight lines. Remember that routes suitable for high school students may be unsuitable for elementary school students, and vice versa.

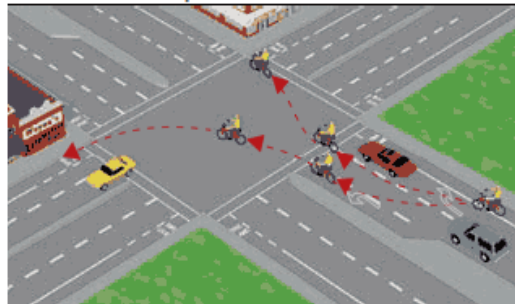
- **Left Turns:** When possible, select routes with right turns, rather than left turns. It is much easier for a cyclist (particularly a beginning cyclist) to turn right than to turn left. This means that the best route to school may be different from the best route home. When left turns are necessary, bicyclists should look over their left shoulder, signal left and merge into the left side of the lane (or into the left turn lane) when safe to do so. Alternatively, bicyclists may also dismount and walk in the crosswalks of the two intersecting roads. Bicyclists should never make a left turn from the right side of the road, including from a bicycle lane. If a bicyclist is traveling straight ahead and a right-turn only lane is present, they should move left into the through traffic lane.

Turns for bicyclists



- **Stop Signs:** When possible, select routes with fewer stop signs. Stopping requires significant extra effort to regain lost momentum, tempting students to run stop signs illegally. It is often safer for them to ride on a slightly busier street with fewer stops and the protection of having the right of way, rather than to risk running stop signs. Remember that all stop signs apply to bicyclists as well as drivers.

Intersections with special lanes



- **Driveways:** When possible, select routes with fewer curb cuts and driveways. Vehicles turning into and out of driveways and alleys are a serious hazard to cyclists (especially bicyclists that are riding on the sidewalk). A street with fewer curb cuts is often safer, even if motor vehicle volumes and speeds are slightly higher.

WHERE TO RIDE?

- **Street:** Per CA law, bicyclists are entitled to share the road with motor vehicles. However, when doing so, they have the same rights and responsibilities as motor vehicle drivers and must obey all traffic laws. This means, for example, bicyclists must stop at all stop signs, obey traffic signals, and ride in the same direction as traffic, not against it. Remember that, when traveling slower than vehicle traffic, bicyclists should ride as near to the right curb or edge of the roadway as practical. However, when on-street parking is present, they should also stay out of the “door zone” and avoid “weaving” in and out of parked cars. If the lane is too narrow for cars to pass, drivers are required to wait patiently until they can pass safely on the left with 3 feet of clearance. Bicyclists should ride single file on busy or narrow streets.
- **Sidewalks:** Riding bicycles on sidewalks is prohibited in Coronado’s business districts (see attached “Coronado Bike-Free Sidewalk Zones”). If riding your bike on the sidewalk in other locations, keep in mind that drivers are often not looking for bicyclists on sidewalks and bicycle



When riding in the street, stay out of the “Door Zone”

accident rates are higher on sidewalks. If sidewalks are part of your route, yield to pedestrians and bike defensively, assuming drivers turning into alleys or backing out of driveways do not see you. Also, dismount and walk your bike in all marked crosswalks.

- **Bike Path:** Bike paths are completely separated from motor vehicles. Coronado has a network of paths, shown in red on the attached map. Bike paths are shared by bicyclists and pedestrians. Remember that bicyclists are required to yield the right of way to pedestrians.
- **Bike Lanes:** A bicycle lane is a traffic lane just like any other; however they are designed to improve safety for bicyclists by separating them from vehicle traffic and giving them a dedicated travel lane. A bicycle lane helps channel bicycle traffic and increases driver awareness that bicyclists may be present. It also helps drivers to better anticipate where to look for bicyclists. Children may, but are not required to ride in bike lanes. Below are a few safety tips for bike lanes:

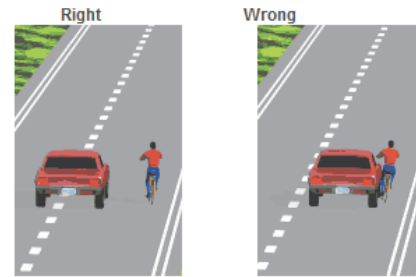
- **For Bicyclists:**

- Stay in the bike lane if traveling slower than the speed of traffic. It is okay to leave the bicycle lane under certain circumstances, for example to pass another bicyclist, prepare to turn left, or avoid hazards or a car door.
- Ride predictably and use arm signals before entering or exiting the bicycle lane.
- Bike lanes improve safety for bicyclists, however, watch for car doors opening into a bike lane - some can open as wide as 4 feet!

- **For Drivers:**

- Take extra care when opening your car door when next to a bicycle lane.
- Vehicles are not allowed in bicycle lanes unless they are entering or leaving the roadway or preparing to turn right at an intersection.
- When turning right next to a bike lane, first check for bicyclists, then merge into the dashed white stripes of a bike lane. Do not attempt to turn right from the travel lane across the bike lane, as you may hit a bicyclist that is going straight.
- Remember that bicyclists are allowed to travel in vehicle lanes, even with a bicycle lane present, if they are riding at the same speed as traffic, preparing to turn left, or avoiding a hazard.

- **Shared-Lane Pavement Marking (a.k.a “Sharrows”):** Sharrows are bicycle symbols carefully placed on roadways to guide bicyclists to the best place to ride on the road. They also remind drivers to share the road with cyclists. Sharrows help improve safety by encouraging bicyclists to position themselves in line with the sharrow to help



The Law Requires Drivers to Allow at Least Three Feet When Passing a Bicyclist



Open car doors can be a hazard to bicyclists

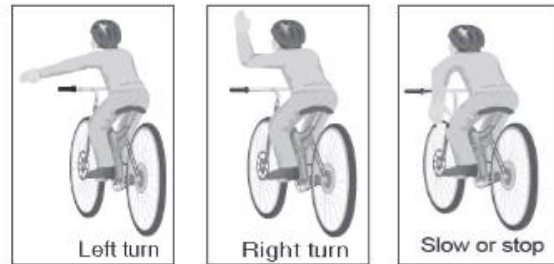


Shared-Lane Markings or “Sharrows”

prevent unsafe vehicle passing where lanes are too narrow for a motor vehicle and bicycle to travel safely side by side. Sharrows also alert drivers to the presence of bicyclists and the lane position that bicyclists are likely to occupy within the travel lane. In Coronado, sharrows are currently located in the Pomona Roundabout. Bicyclists may choose to follow the sharrows and ride in the travel lane or ride up onto the sidewalk, dismount, and cross in the crosswalks as a pedestrian.

USE HAND SIGNALS

Use hand signals before making turns or changing lanes to warn traffic around you. To signal a left turn, look behind you, over your left shoulder, and then extend your left arm out. To signal a right turn, hold your left arm up with your elbow bent (you may also hold your right arm straight and point to the right). You do not have to keep your arm extended while completing the maneuver—always have at least one hand on the handlebars to maintain control. To signal that you are slowing or stopping, extend your left arm down.



GEAR UP!

California law requires bicyclists and bicycle passengers under 18 to wear a helmet. Often students are concerned about helmets looking “uncool” and may unstrap their helmets or place them on their handlebars while riding. Parents can do a lot to encourage students to wear helmets by wearing them themselves at all times while riding a bicycle. See attached “Fitting Your Helmet” handout for additional tips.

BE VISIBLE AND ALERT

At night, California law (CVC §21201) requires a bicycle to be equipped with a white light (visible from 300 feet) from the front and sides of the bicycle, a red reflector on the rear (visible from 500 feet), a white or yellow reflector on each pedal, shoe, or ankle (visible from 200 feet), and a white or yellow reflector on the sides of the bicycle (or reflectorized front and back tires). Increase your visibility by wearing light or bright colored clothes, such as yellow or lime green. Red appears black in fading light and is not a good choice for riding in the evening.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Below are some links to learn more about bicycle safety in California. Happy riding!

- Caltrans Bicycle Program – Codes, Laws, and Regulations: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/bike/codes.html>
- CA Driver Handbook – Laws and Rules of the Road: http://apps.dmv.ca.gov/pubs/hdbk/driver_handbook_toc.htm
- San Diego County Bicycle Coalition Bicycle Laws and Safety Tips: <http://www.sdcbc.org/Bicycle-Laws-Safety-Tips.html>
- San Diego Safe Routes to School Coalition: <http://www.casaferoutestoschool.org/get-assistance/california-regional-srts-networks/san-diego-safe-routes-to-school-coalition/>