



**MORE PEOPLE BIKING  
MORE OFTEN**

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December 12, 2017

Dear Mayor Bowman and Council,

Bike Winnipeg is opposed to any decision that would allow taxi cabs access to diamond lanes for through traffic. The Vehicles for Hire study and public engagement process identified safety of drivers and passengers as a top priority; that desire for a safe transportation system needs to take all road users into account, especially its most vulnerable users, people on foot and people on bikes.

Diamond lanes are generally the only accommodation provided to people on bikes on the roads where they are located, and benefits people on bikes by limiting the amount of traffic present in those lanes. Transit buses travel pre-set routes with predictable stopping patterns, and transit drivers are taught to give half a lane of clearance when passing a person on bicycle (we are not aware of any such training being provided to taxi drivers). Transit buses and people on bikes will travel at around the same average speed such that diamond lane users exercising a reasonable amount of patience can manage to avoid passing each other.

With the exception of buses and people on bikes, all vehicles entering a diamond lane are required by law to turn right at the next intersection. This essentially turns the diamond lane into a right turn lane, which brings an inherent risk to people on bikes as collisions resulting from being cut-off by right turning vehicles (referred to as a right-hook collision) are one of the most common types of collision between people on bikes and people driving vehicles. To mitigate this risk, people on bikes are taught to ride in the middle of the lane through right turn lanes and diamond lanes to ensure their safety (see [MPI's website cycling safety](#)). Again, transit drivers are taught to expect this, but we are unaware of any such training being provided to taxi drivers who will be traveling at higher speeds and with fewer stops than buses, meaning that they will be passing people on bikes (and in buses) far more often than transit drivers. Beyond the obvious risk that this generates for other road users, it also removes most of the potential benefit hoped to be gained by allowing taxis use of diamond lanes.

Challenges already exist within diamond lanes when private vehicles ignore the requirement to turn right within the block. Allowing taxicabs to use diamond lanes would significantly increase lane traffic and speeds, put people on bikes at increased risk from collisions, and decrease the comfort level of people biking making it likely that many will choose to drive rather than bike to their destinations.

Please reconsider your decision to allow taxis use of diamond lanes. If safety is your number one concern for drivers and passengers of taxi cabs and ride hailing services, it should also be your top concern for those on our bikes who must share the roads with them.

Sincerely,

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