

Our city streets are changing in an effort to make our streets more complete. For years streets were developed for cars and other users were ignored. We are now making it safe for pedestrians, transit users, bicyclists and those in wheel chairs. Today, I want to discuss “Sharing the roadway”. This requires each user being considerate of others having patience, and paying attention. Hopefully, this article will help folks understand their responsibilities, NC laws, and start changing their behaviors.

Speed limits are regulations determined by N.C DOT, Federal government & local jurisdictions. Criteria determining speed limits are many. **The limit is the fastest you are legally allowed to travel.** Drivers are encouraged to slow down as conditions change to make it safe.

Pedestrians have the right of way at all marked and unmarked crosswalks in residential and business areas except when there is a pedestrian signal and then they must follow the signal. When a vehicle is stopped at a crosswalk to permit a pedestrian to cross, other motorists or bicyclists approaching from the rear are not permitted to overtake and pass the stopped vehicle. Regardless of right of way all motorists & bicyclists must exercise caution to avoid colliding with pedestrians on the roadway. Much research has been undertaken regarding how speed affects the ability of a pedestrian to survive when hit by a motor vehicle. At 20mph the pedestrian’s chance of dying is 5%; at 40mph the chance of dying increases to 85%. **Going 10 mph over the speed limit is not okay.**

When a traffic light turns yellow it means you need to begin stopping. When a light has been green for awhile and you are coming upon it you should anticipate it changing and begin slowing down.

Turning right on red means, you come to a full stop look to see if it is clear and then proceed. When looking you should include pedestrians & bicyclists.

Other inappropriate behaviors include, driving while talking on the phone, eating, putting on makeup or changing CD’s. The Myth Busters recently dealt with the cell phone issue and found that cell phones were more impairing than driving under the influence of alcohol.

According to NC DOT statues, bicyclists are considered vehicles are entitled to use the road & must obey all traffic rules & regulations. Motorist must yield to bicycles at driveways and alleyways, not following more closely than is reasonable & prudent and allowing at least 3 feet when passing. Unfortunately, not all bicyclists behave like vehicle operators, so motorists should make every effort to avoid a collision. Bicyclists are more likely to be injured or killed in a crash. Motorist should watch out for children on bicycles because they often behave unpredictably. Motorists are required a license because motor vehicles are very heavy can be deadly.

Parking on the sidewalk and parking going the wrong are illegal because you perform illegal behaviors getting there. Sidewalks were not designed to the same specifications as roads and get damaged by the added weight.

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