

September 2023

Volume 1, Issue 8

Advocating  
for  
safe  
cycling  
throughout  
Durham  
Region

## ***A Message from our President and Executive Director – Ron Lalonde***

With the warm days of summer now behind us, there is no better time than the cooler days of fall to be out on a bike enjoying the spectacular scenery Durham has to offer. No matter your choice; be it be the Waterfront Trail, Durham Forest or secondary side roads, please take time to ensure you are safe and well equipped while cycling.

Later this fall, we will be hosting our Annual General Meeting which will include the election of Directors and Officers for a new two-year term. We strongly encourage you to attend with additional details to follow in October.

Until next time, be well and enjoy spending quality time on your bike.

## **UPDATES**

### ***Rossland Road Widening in Ajax***

Despite our attendance and input to the EA Study, follow-up letters and a recent meeting with three local Ajax councillors; our proposal for a cycle track on Rossland Road was not accepted. Town staff had recommended a multi-use path, as shown in the original EA Study, which was subsequently supported by Town Council.

Although we are disappointed with the outcome, we do appreciate seeing improvements that support cycling being incorporated into new projects. As such, we continue to monitor future cycling projects in Ajax including the potential removal of identified bike lanes on Harwood Avenue South which would be a major step backwards for a silver rated cycle community.

Our work continues!

## ***Ontario Shores Gate, Whitby***

As reported in previous issues we have lobbied the Town of Whitby to modify the gate on the Waterfront Trail at Ontario Shores to improve accessibility. We are now pleased to report that the Town has recently modified the gate which has greatly improved access and safety for cyclists.



Previous Gate



New Gate and Cross Ride

## ***Two Oshawa Creek Trail Closures***

The first closure noted in our spring issue was to accommodate the bridge replacement on an adjacent trail connecting Oxford St to Erie St is ongoing. Construction is scheduled for completion this fall when we expect both trails will reopen.

The second closure, which is at Gibb St, is still in place and there is no indication when it will reopen. The future plan is to upgrade the crossing at Gibb St but no time line is available.

Perhaps the two will coincide.



The New Bridge

## ***Whitby Shores Shopping Plaza***

In our January 2020 issue we reported on the safety issues at the Victoria St entrance to the Whitby Shores Shopping Plaza where exiting vehicles did not have a clear view of pedestrians and cyclists on the multi-use path. After corresponding with Smart Centres, the Plaza owners, overgrown shrubbery was cut back and large diameter convex mirrors were erected on the entrance pillars affording vehicle drivers a greater view of users on the MUP.

Recently, we noticed an additional sign specifically warning drivers to check those mirrors for approaching cyclists.

Kudos to Smart Centres for their continued attention to safety issues.



## **OTHER NEWS**

### ***Concession Road 7, Pickering***



Cycling in the Middle of the Road

First brought to the attention of Pickering Council in April 2016 we again reached out to the City Engineer for any updates on future pavement improvements to Concession Rd 7 between Westney Rd and Lake Ridge Rd.

Apparently, an annual schedule for road improvements is determined by an outside consultant who, so far, has omitted any work to Concession 7.

We will continue a dialogue with the City to see if they will give some priority to our request.

## ***Anderson Street, Whitby***

Earlier this year construction began for a major, new residential development on the east side of Anderson St immediately north of Conlin Rd. Many of us cycle this section of Anderson making full use of the bike lanes on either side. Soon after construction began a lot of gravel and mud accumulated around the construction entrance on Anderson as well as construction workers parking their vehicles in the bike lanes on both sides of the road. This resulted in cyclists having to ride in the vehicle lanes with the inherent dangers.



Parking in the Bike Lanes



Gravel Spewed on the Bike Lane

After contacting the Town of Whitby both issues have been resolved and the bike lanes are now free of obstruction.

## ***Anderson Street/St Thomas Street Intersection, Whitby***



Looking South at St Thomas St.

Cycling south on Anderson St over the Hwy 407 bridge and gaining speed there is a sudden end to the bike lane and an encroaching curb forcing cyclists into the vehicle lane. After contacting the Town of Whitby to appraise them of the dangerous situation the Town has responded and has indicated that they will review the situation and possibly implement safety improvements.

We are hopeful this will be sooner rather than later.

### ***Pickering Farmer's Market***

At the invitation of the City of Pickering and in support of June Bike Month, we set up our information booth at the Pickering Farmer's Market held at the Chestnut Hill Developments Recreation Center. On display we had maps from the City's Integrated Master Transportation Plan showing current and future cycling infrastructure.

Despite the rainy weather we had many cycling supporters stop by voicing the need for continued cycling improvements. We also handed out Bike Month T-Shirts, bottles and bike bells provided by Durham Region.

### ***Durham Transit Incidents***

On a few occasions various cyclists have experienced a close call or near miss with a Durham Transit bus. On raising the issue with Durham Transit, the response has been with words to the effect, "All our drivers are fully trained with respect to the Highway Traffic Act and we do not discuss internal disciplinary issues."

Hopefully, in the future, transit drivers will have a greater awareness of cyclists when stopping and turning.

### ***Off-Road Trails***

As reported by GlobeNewswire in April a new national Léger survey commissioned by Trans Canada Trail (TCT) confirms that Canadians' trail use continues to increase. With an abundance of trails in Durham Region this is encouraging news particularly with the increased popularity of gravel bikes.

However, we have noticed a serious gap in the Durham trail system. This lies on the Trans Canada Trail between Lake Ridge Rd and Simcoe St which utilizes a decommissioned rail bed. Although owned by Infrastructure Ontario (Government of Ontario) they take no responsibility for trail maintenance. Instead, they lease the trail to another entity who then becomes liable for user safety and maintenance. Previously leased to Lake Simcoe Regional Conservation Authority, who have declined to accept future responsibility, there is no current lessee.

Given this is an important link in the Trans Canada Trail we contacted Durham Region and suggested that they might consider leasing this section to provide continuity and improvements to the trail infrastructure. At this time, the dialogue continues.



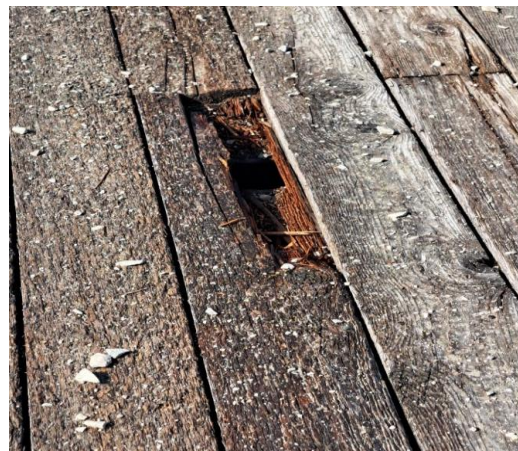
New "Trail Closed" Signs



Durham Trails Sign Overgrown.



Trail Flooding



Lack of Bridge Maintenance

### ***Accident Statistics***

In 2019 DRCC participated in the implementation of the Region's Vision Zero campaign. Statistics at that time showed a steady increase in the number of cycling collisions between 2012 and 2016. The latest figures for 2017 to 2022 indicate an average of 89 collisions per year. This is actually higher than in the period 2012-2016. Year over year numbers vary but the overall trend is that collisions are not going down.

This is very disturbing and clearly there needs to be some action to reduce the numbers. It's also worth noting that the statistics are for reported collisions only.

A more detailed analysis, e.g., location, time of day, weather and who was at fault would provide some useful insights. As such, we will endeavor to open a dialogue with Durham Regional Police Services with the view of ultimately reducing the number of cycling collisions.

***Where is it?***



In our last issue we asked if you knew where this photo was taken.

The answer is alongside the Oshawa Creek Trail.

The fence was decorated by local school children to show what they thought you would see in and by the creek.

In this issue we are asking if you recognize this location?

Apparently, the bike has been there for some time.





### Contact Information:

Web site <https://durhamsafecycling.ca>

### We're Social

X (Twitter)  @durhamrcc

Facebook  @durhamrcc

Instagram  durhamsafecycling

### ***Become a Member***

If you belong to one of our five supporting clubs you are a DRCC *Affiliate Member*.

We also welcome non-cycling club cyclists looking to support our advocacy work.

You can join DRCC as an *Associate Member* for the low annual fee of \$10.00. Simply send an e-mail to: [info@durhamsafecycling.ca](mailto:info@durhamsafecycling.ca) and we will provide an application form.

We welcome comments and suggestions or, would you like to volunteer your services? You may contact us via e-mail or social media as noted above.