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Advocating for Safe Cycling Throughout Durham Region

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Town of Whitby  
575 Rossland Road East  
Whitby, ON  
L1N 2M9

Via E-Mail: [romanoj@whitby.ca](mailto:romanoj@whitby.ca)

Attention: Commissioner Romano

March 28, 2021

**RE: Whitby Waterfront Trail Closure Notice**

Dear Commissioner Romano,

As an advocacy group in support of safe cycling, Durham Region Cycling Coalition (DRCC) is a not-for-profit volunteer organization representing the six cycle clubs as well as local cycling enthusiasts within Durham Region. Having recently learned of the above noted planned closure of the Waterfront Trail (WFT) in Whitby, we are writing to you directly to express our concern.

First off, DRCC fully supports the upgrades to the WFT section within the Town of Whitby. We appreciate the work and look forward to seeing the new and improved end result later this year.

We are however dismayed at the lack of recognition by the Town of Whitby to the importance of the WFT as a primary, province wide, connected cycling corridor by simply announcing the corridor is closed and asking users in a press release to look at [whitby.ca/trails](http://whitby.ca/trails) for other available trails. With Whitby being a Bronze Rated Bicycle Friendly Community, this does nothing to enhance the Town's image as a progressive cycle friendly community.

Within Ontario, the WFT is a significant tourist route for cyclists from the Quebec border to Windsor and beyond. Within Durham Region the WFT is a very popular route for many of our members who cycle across the full 70 KM Durham segment. This in mind, it would seem reasonable for cyclists riding the WTF and arriving in Whitby to expect that a trail closure would be well sign and posted with a detour route. If this was a primary Whitby auto route, would a closure take place with no alternate detour? We know the answer would be no and therefore wonder why the Town of Whitby would choose to close a "**primary cycle route**" with no alternatives for 16 plus weeks.



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This said, DRCC is suggesting the WFT project be broken into three staged segments for closure supported with an alternate cycling detour utilizing construction cones in a similar fashion to how many GTA municipalities created temporary COVID 19 bike lanes in 2020 and now continuing into 2021.

Although not perfect, we see this as a viable low-cost workable alternative to simply closing a primary cycling corridor.

1. Close the WFT from Intrepid Park to Forbes Street.
  - a. Detour cyclists onto a by-direction lane by using traffic cones on the west side RR#52, close one eastbound lane on Wentworth Street - and yes, it can be done - with traffic cones and the same on Forbes Street back to the WFT.
  
2. Close the WFT from Forbes Street to Thickson Road.
  - a. Detour cyclists in similar fashion- Forbes Street to Wentworth Street – closing one east bound lane - and then onto the east side Thickson Road using construction cones back to the WFT.
  
3. Close the WFT from Thickson Road to South Blair Street
  - a. We fully acknowledge this is very difficult detour and will require some out of the box thinking.
  - b. Place construction cones on the shoulder- and it may be the gravel shoulder base - to create a by-directional corridor as both Thickson Road and Victoria Street are very busy roads with significant commercial truck traffic.
  - c. From the WFT- Thickson Road on the west side to Victoria Street, Victoria Street on the south side to South Blair Street and then South Blair Street back to WFT.

Further to this, we have enclosed a few best practice examples of cycle route trail closures with detour support.

## Closure Notice 2019, Oshawa Creek Trail, Oshawa

Fig 1.



## Trail Diversion Signs in Germany

### Velo Route # 15 Rhine River which is the equivalent to our WFT

Fig 2



Fig 3





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In closing, on behalf of every-one at DRCC, thank you for taking the time to review our concerns which we believe have merit for implementation. Knowing more can be done, we look forward to garnering your support with respect to our feedback.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Derek Lee". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Derek Lee, Director

Durham Region Cycling Coalition

[derek@safecycling.ca](mailto:derek@safecycling.ca)

C.C. M. Powers, Senior Manager Parks and Planning, Town of Whitby

D. Mitchell, Mayor, Town of Whitby

P. Phillips, Chair, Whitby Active Transportation Safe Roads Advisory Committee

M. Koehler, Executive Director, Waterfront Regeneration Trust