

September, 2020

Volume 1, Issue 2

Advocating
for
safe
cycling
throughout
Durham
Region

Covid 19

The pandemic has created unimaginable distress throughout the world and has caused a significant disruption to club cycling activities since March this year. Undaunted, some of us have taken to riding solo or in small groups with appropriate distancing.

Another casualty of Covid 19 has been the charity rides. Many of us would normally partake in these worthy causes raising much needed funding. If you still want to make a donation to a charity of choice please visit the charity's web site where you will find relevant instructions.

One of the few positives from the pandemic has been the huge surge in cycling by individuals and families looking for fresh air and exercise. The cycling shops have been hard pushed to keep up with the demand for new bikes as well as repairs to older bikes getting a new lease on life.

Message from our President - Bruce MacDonald:

Two more Durham cyclists killed. These tragedies again highlight the vulnerability of cyclists on the roads. Our efforts to convince all levels of government to invest in infrastructure improvements is politely received but little happens. Often, municipal and regional cycling plans recognize the value of cycling to the community but fail or delay for years any improvements. Nevertheless, we must not give up pursuing changes that will benefit all cyclists and save lives.

I would like to extend our thanks to the Durham Mounting Biking Association for allowing us to hold our executive and board meetings using their Zoom account. I would also like to welcome the Velo Rouge Cycling Club into the fold and offer congratulations to Anne-Marie Thompson who has joined the board representing the Uxbridge Cycling Club. Our thanks go to Michael Kishinevsky, the previous board member, for his past contributions.

Victoria Road MUP



We wrote a follow-up letter to the Town of Whitby regarding our previous letter that included recommendations for safety improvements, i.e., a cross ride at Halls Road, relocation of an overhanging sign east of Lake Ridge Road and other signage issues. Subsequently the overhanging sign has been relocated.

Additionally, Smart Centres has installed convex mirrors on each pier at the entrance/exit to their shopping mall. The mirrors were added instead of removing the piers (which restrict the vision of drivers to MUP users) that we had suggested.

Ontario Shores

We followed up with Ontario Shores regarding the permanently locked gate at the bottom of Gordon Street in Whitby leading onto their property and connecting with the Waterfront Trail. Ontario Shores have advised that the gate is not their responsibility and will pass on our concerns to the Town of Whitby.

We are following up with the Town.



Website Restructuring

We are currently working with one of our club members to modernize the website which is about 50% complete. We are hoping to achieve a more modern look and easier links to the data. We expect to have the new website up and running in September.

Lynde Shores Parking Lot

The entrance to the Lynde Shores parking lot from Victoria Road has become a safety issue with vehicles not seeing cyclists and pedestrians when entering and exiting the parking lot. An email to the Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority expressing concern elicited a prompt reply acknowledging the concerns and stating that they are in talks with the Region to address the problems. To alleviate congestion CLOCA plans to open a new parking lot south of Victoria St on Halls Road. Hopefully this will include a cross ride on Halls Rd at Victoria St.

MUP Safety Concerns

Municipalities are turning more to MUPs as a means of providing safe thoroughfares for pedestrians, cyclists, skateboarders etc. However, there are shortfalls. A painted center line dividing opposite travel directions are not always provided which results in users wandering all over the path and blocking other users.

Driveways, especially in and out of businesses, and road crossing still present a danger even if crosswalk markings have been provided. When approaching these always shoulder check, look right and diagonally ahead for vehicles that are going to turn. Many times, drivers are more intent on beating the traffic and are not cognizant of MUP users. Be prepared to stop.

As a courtesy to other users ding your bell when overtaking to let those ahead know you are approaching. Also, calling “On your left” helps when passing other cyclists.

Waterfront Trail, Bowmanville

Paving of the last gravel section of the Waterfront Trail between Bowmanville Ave and West Beach Rd has recently been completed. Construction had been delayed due to Covid 19.

Thanks go to Jim Boate and his team for bring this about.

Pringle Creek Bridge Reconstruction, Brock Road S

Existing Bridge

A new bridge over Pringle Creek has been proposed and a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment has been released for a 45 day public review. The 2-lane bridge will include a sidewalk on one side and an MUP (Waterfront Trail) on the other. On review we have identified some shortcomings, namely the absence of bike lanes on the bridge, and we have submitted a formal letter requesting design changes to improve overall safety.



Durham Region's Cycling Plan

Phase 2 of the Region's Cycling Plan is underway and the Region recently sent out another survey request aimed mainly at recreational and commuter cyclists. Unfortunately the deadline has passed so we couldn't include a survey link here.

The first survey saw 494 respondents and the Region is taking all of them into consideration. Thanks to all who responded.

For the latest on the Regional Cycling Plan please visit the Region's website: <https://www.durham.ca/rcp2020>

Vehicles Blocking Cycling Lanes

We have noticed an increase in the number of vehicles and other obstructions blocking bike lanes and forcing cyclists to move into the traffic lane. One example is on Ashburn Road where Elexicon Energy have a construction project.

One of our members brought this to the attention of Elexicon and subsequently met with an Elexicon VP with positive results. DRCC will now be recognized as a stakeholder when Elexicon scopes out future projects which may impact cycling. The take away is they are reacting. As this road is a primary cycle route we should note work will continue through the fall and cyclists should expect to see lane redirections.



Highway 401 Bridge Reconstruction

Reconstruction of the bridges on Simcoe St and Albert St in Oshawa is slated to commence next year.

When this reconstruction, together with Bennett Rd in Bowmanville, was announced we contacted MTO in March 2019 requesting that these bridges include adequate bike lanes, a separate sidewalk and that bike lanes be buffered where on-off ramps occur.

So far zero response!

Hwy 401 Interchange 425 Reconstruction at Courtice Road

During the EA stage of this project we submitted a request that asked “for proper 1.5 to 2.0 meter wide bicycle lanes and lighting to be installed underneath that bridge, starting at the Baseline Rd and connecting to the Energy Dr intersection”

The rehab work has been completed without any consideration of our requests from MTO, Durham Region or Clarington.

DRCC SUCCESSES

Lake Ridge Road



The Region has completed the resurfacing of Lake Ridge Road from Hwy 407 to Myrtle Road including a paved shoulder.

As a result of earlier input to the Region the section from Concession Road 7 and Columbus Road includes an extra wide shoulder designated as a cycling lane with double white lines and a rumble strip separation.

This represents a significant safety improvement on a well used cycling route.

Regional Road 57

Further to our input, recent road works on RR57 included bike lanes between Nash Road and Longworth Avenue which is a vital link on popular cycling routes.

Gaps Still to Close

Simcoe Street between Coates Road and Shirley Road; and York Durham Line between Aurora Road and Wagg Road. These were originally identified (including the two above) in a presentation to the Region’s Joint Committee in January 2016.

Meadoway Durham

About a year ago a couple of our members thought it would be an excellent idea if the Toronto Meadoway, <http://www.themeadoway.ca>, was extended east through Durham Region. The Meadoway concept is to create a linear urban park utilizing existing Hydro powerline right-of-ways.

Further to meetings with the Region, where we put forward several suggestions, we can now report that the Region has fully endorsed the concept and Meadoway Durham will be an integral part of the Region's Cycling Plan.



If you belong to one of our six 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: durhamrcc@gmail.com and we will provide an application form.

Contact Information:

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Comments, suggestions, something to add or would like to volunteer your services? Please Contact us at durhamrcc@gmail.com

RIDE SAFE, STAY SAFE