



DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES – ENGINEERING SERVICES
TOWN OF NEWMARKET
395 Mulock Drive
P.O. Box 328
Newmarket, ON L3Y 4X7

www.newmarket.ca
info@newmarket.ca
905.895.5193

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**DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES INFORMATION REPORT
ENGINEERING SERVICES ES 2016-20**

TO: Mayor and Members of Council

COPY: R.N. Shelton, P.Eng., Chief Administrative Officer
P. Noehammer, P.Eng., Commissioner, Infrastructure and Development Services
I. McDougall, Commissioner, Community Services
E. Armchuk, Commissioner, Corporate Services
Members of OLT

SUBJECT: Alternative Bicycle Facilities on Mulock Drive

ORIGIN: Director, Engineering Services

PREAMBLE

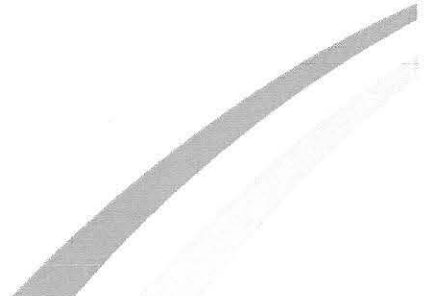
In accordance with the Procedure By-law, any member of Council may request this information report to be placed on an upcoming Committee of the Whole agenda for discussion.

BACKGROUND

At its regular meeting of October 5, 2015, Council adopted the following recommendation:

“That the deputation by Mr. Paul Jolie regarding Ontario Municipal Cycling Infrastructure be received and referred to staff for a report back to Council related to cycling infrastructure on Mulock Drive”.

The recommendation came as a result of a presentation outlining the need for cycling infrastructure along Mulock Drive to connect various destination points, including Newmarket High School, the Magna Centre, Town Hall, and the north-south trail system.

A decorative graphic in the bottom right corner consisting of two overlapping curved lines, one solid grey and one lighter grey, curving upwards and to the right.

COMMENTS

Mulock Drive is an arterial road that belongs to York Region and is part of a regional road network. When Mulock Drive was being resurfaced by York Region in 2015, Town staff enquired about the consideration of cycling facilities. York Region advised that the project involved maintenance resurfacing only and therefore, widening of the asphalt surface for cycling facilities was not included. To accommodate properly designed on-street bicycle lanes, the roadway would need to be widened and buffered to ensure safe cycling operation on this very high volume arterial road.

Similarly, consideration for off-road cycling facilities in the boulevard was also out-of-scope for the resurfacing project, but could be considered in the future. York Region indicated that there were obstructions within the boulevard preventing a proper off-road full-length multi-use pathway (MUP) or separate sidewalk and cycling facilities along many sections of that road.

As a result, cyclists who currently wish to travel along Mulock Drive must use the existing right lane in mixed traffic. However, according to the Town of Newmarket Traffic By-Law, children's bicycles, which are defined as bicycles with wheel diameters of 61 cm or less (24 inches or less) can legally ride on the pedestrian sidewalk system. In addition, there are two existing multi-use path (MUP) systems on Mulock Drive to accommodate cycling and pedestrians simultaneously (see map at end of this report). The first is on the north side of Mulock Drive between the Holland River and Cane Parkway. This asphalt path was constructed as a by-pass route to safely convey people across Mulock Drive prior to the construction of the Mulock Drive bridge underpass. The second MUP is on the south side of Mulock Drive, between Yonge Street and Sawmill Valley Drive. The location of this asphalt path allows cyclists to travel along the south side of Mulock Drive.

OPTIONS

It should be noted that York Region is currently updating its Transportation Master Plan in support of its future Official Plan update. As part of this exercise, the Region is recommending taking over all boulevard infrastructure (sidewalks, street lighting, MUP's, cycle tracks, etc.) which is currently under the jurisdiction of lower tiered local municipalities. One of the main reasons that the Region would like to take over the boulevards is to ensure consistency of the infrastructure on all Regional rights of way. For the time being, however, the responsibility for boulevard infrastructure on Regional roads still lies with the local municipalities. Regardless of jurisdiction, options for Mulock Drive cycling facilities include:

1. On-street cycling facilities: This option would require the widening of Mulock Drive in most areas. York Region is not planning any widening or on-street cycling facility on Mulock Drive in its 5 or 10 year capital budget.

2. New Boulevard Facilities: Mulock Drive has sufficient boulevard width along most of its length to accommodate a cycle track (dedicated bicycle lane on a minimum 3.0 metre asphalt path), or to create continuity of its existing interrupted MUP's. However, a new connection of almost six kilometres in length would be required. The construction cost is estimated at well over \$1,000,000 for only one side of the road. As well, there would be some design constraints near intersections and bridges and possible costly utility relocations required in addition to the basic cost.

3. Use of Existing Sidewalks. Mulock Drive does have either sidewalks or MUP's on both sides from Leslie Street to Bathurst Street. Although not recommended at this time, the Town's Traffic By-Law could be amended to allow all cyclists to use sidewalks. Allowing cyclists on sidewalks has been hotly debated in many municipalities over the last decade because of the serious safety-related and other considerations to take into account. For example, there exists evidence of several cyclist/pedestrian collisions on sidewalks in other municipalities. One of these even led to a fatality when a pedestrian was hit by a cyclist on a sidewalk on Finch St. in North York in 2011. Also, persons who are hearing impaired cannot react to the sound of cyclists' bells or horns, resulting in higher chances of collisions. Also, drivers who are entering or exiting commercial or residential driveways have limited visibility due to reduced sight lines and do not expect the rapid arrival of cyclists along a sidewalk, resulting in a higher risk of collisions between cars and cyclists at all driveways. Another negative is that there is no law to enforce speed control or recklessness on sidewalks. Furthermore, cyclists would still have to dismount when crossing intersections. This is a Highway Traffic Act requirement (HTA section 140.6) which a local municipal bylaw cannot override. This, along with other physical factors such as bumpy joints between concrete slabs on sidewalks, discourages the more advanced cyclists from using sidewalks and therefore, there would still be cyclists using the roadway along Mulock Drive.

Based on the above, it is recommended that the Town wait for the outcome of the York Region Transportation Master Plan update to determine jurisdiction of the boulevard, and then work with York Region to develop a plan for accommodating cyclist demands in the Mulock Drive corridor.

BUSINESS PLAN AND STRATEGIC PLAN LINKAGES

- Well Planned and Connected...strategically planning for the future

CONSULTATION

Not applicable.

HUMAN RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS

No impact on current staffing levels.

BUDGET IMPACT


No impact of the current budget.

CONTACT

For more information on this report, please contact Mark Kryzanowski at 905-953-5300 extension 2508; or at mkryzanowski@newmarket.ca via e-mail.



Mark Kryzanowski, BES, MCIP, RPP
Manager, Transportation Services






Rachel Prudhomme, M.Sc., P. Eng.
Director, Engineering Services



Peter Noehammer, P. Eng.
Commissioner, Development & Infrastructure Services



-  Multi-Use Paths
-  Tom Taylor Trail Crossing
-  Major Cycling/Pedestrian attraction/destination points along corridor