

URBAN SHOULDERS HAVE NO PLACE IN BRAMPTON'S CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

PRESENTATION TO CITY OF BRAMPTON, COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

NOVEMBER 13, 2024

Donna Laevens-Van West

Brampton Resident and Cyclist

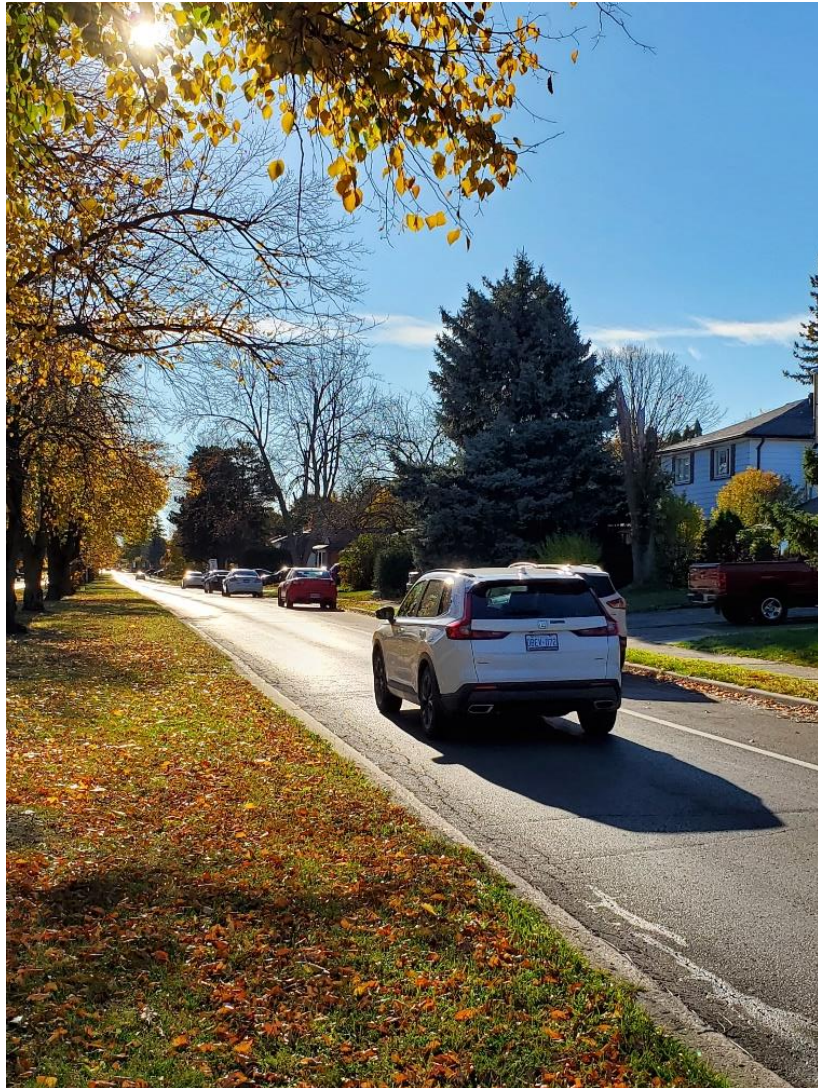


My Cycling Experience

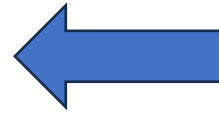
- First rode a bicycle 68 years ago at the age of 5 when the training wheels came off.
- 50 years cycling in Brampton.
- Frequently rode my second-hand red bike (which has only one gear) the 4 km to work when I didn't need the car to attend meetings.
- I ride my red bike almost daily (when I don't walk) in the summer, and spring and fall in good weather, to run errands (that are up to 5 km one way) e.g. library, groceries, doctor, general shopping, recreation centres
- I ride my white bike (which has gears) for the odd long-distance ride (up to 30 km).



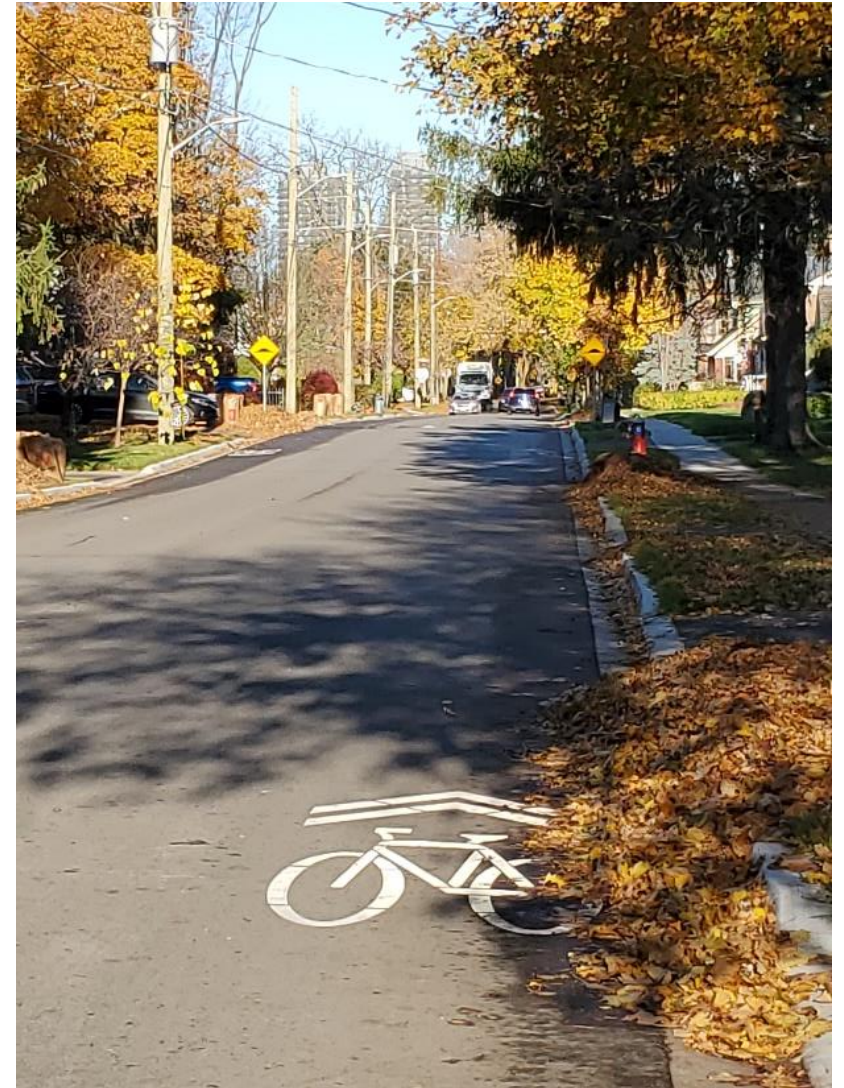
An Urban Shoulder is Delineated with an Edge Line as a Space for Cyclists to Ride and Cars to Park



**McMurchy Ave
South** (on left) with
urban shoulder



Mill Street South
No urban shoulder
(2022 Brampton
Cycling Map
inaccurately shows an
urban shoulder here)



URBAN SHOULDERS

Ontario Traffic Manual, Book 18

- *Cyclists and motorists may interpret this space as a bicycle lane*
- *Urban shoulders are not an alternative to bicycle lanes*
- *Urban shoulders may also be used as an ‘interim’ measure to build local support for a dedicated cycling facility*
- ***Cyclists will be required to merge into a live lane to exit and re-enter the shoulder in avoidance of parked motor vehicles***



Ontario 

Book
18

Ontario
Traffic
Manual

June 2021

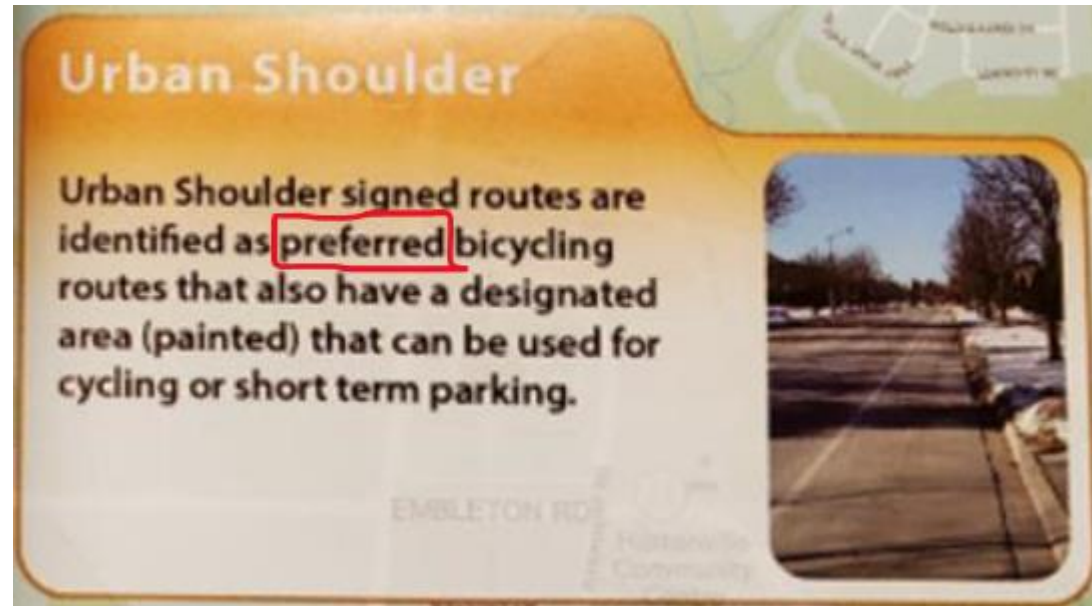
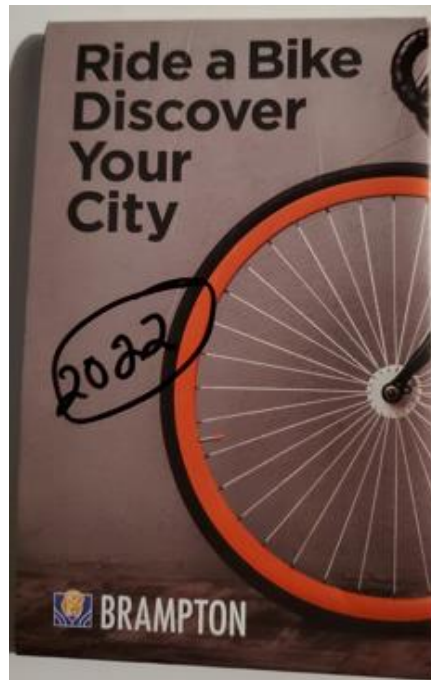


City of Brampton
DESIGN COMPENDIUM
JULY 2019



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*“Although they are **not considered a designated cycling facility**, the **City of Brampton** has installed urban shoulders on residential streets and **signed them as bike routes**. They are similar to bike lanes, however, parking is currently permitted in them for short durations (3 hours). The City intends to **transition these to designated bike lanes over time as demand warrants.**”*



Urban Shoulders are Not Standard or Safe

- Other major cities do not have urban shoulders as part of their cycling infrastructure.
- The Official Ministry of Transportation (MTO) Driver's Handbook mentions bike boxes, bike lanes and sharrows – not urban shoulders.
- The Government of Ontario's *Guide to Safe Cycling* does not include urban shoulders in their list of "cycling facilities" and in fact states that cyclists should not be riding in and out of parked cars.



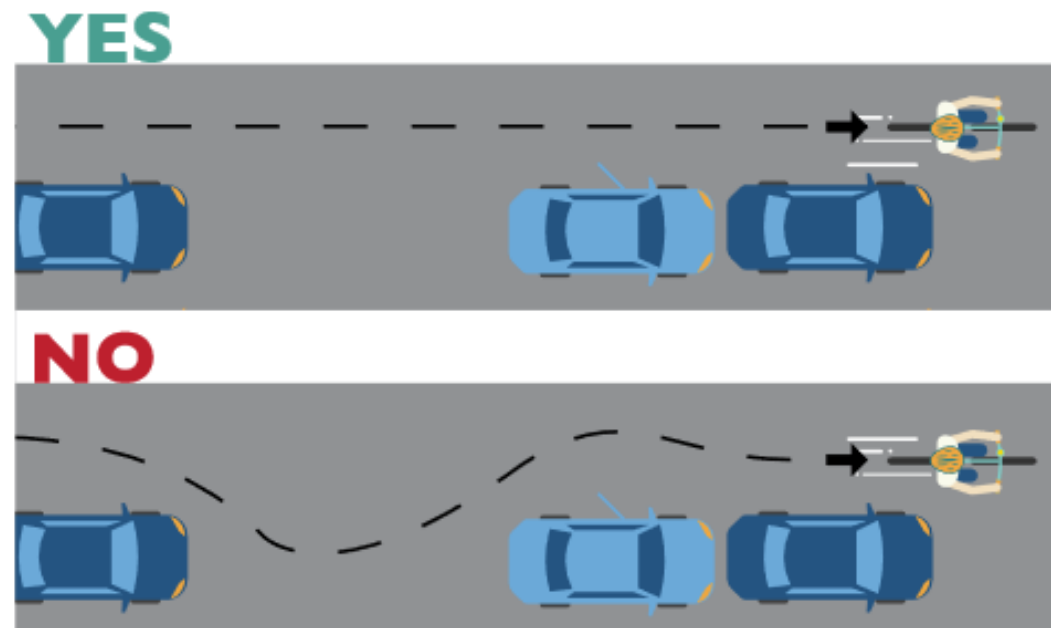


Cycling within Brampton's Urban Shoulders Contravenes the instructions in: *Cycling Skills - Ontario's Guide to Safe Cycling*

RIDING AROUND PARKED VEHICLES

Ride in a straight line at least one metre away from parked vehicles. Even if the cars are parked far apart from one another, don't swerve or zig zag. Keep riding in a straight line.

When riding around parked vehicles, watch for parked vehicles' doors opening and for cars entering or exiting from driveways or laneways.



The City is Fully Informed that Urban Shoulders are Not Safe

- Residents raised the dangers and pitfalls of urban shoulders for cyclists with senior City staff years ago – to no avail.
- Mayor Brown and six current City Councillors were present at the City Council Meeting, September 2020, for a delegation by Lisa Stokes, Member, Bike Brampton who:
- *“...provided a video delegation in which she highlighted various types of cycling infrastructure in the City and outlining comments and concerns on this topic.”*

Lisa Stokes’ presentation and video included the dangers of weaving in and out of the parked cars on the urban shoulder on McMurchy Avenue South, into traffic. There was an understanding, subsequently, that no further urban shoulders would be implemented by the City.



Yet! The City of Brampton:

- *“Building on the success of recent years, in 2024 City staff are **planning** the implementation of 20.3 km of linear cycling infrastructure (bike lanes, urban shoulders, multi-use paths and recreational trails/paths)”*

(Active Transportation Master Plan Implementation – 2023/2024,
Staff Report, The Corporation of the **City of Brampton** 4/22/2024)

Besides being unsafe, urban shoulders do not encourage general ridership to “build critical mass” to legitimize the construction of future bike lanes:

- **Narrow painted bike lanes or wide urban shoulders..... do not accommodate people of all ages and abilities.** Edge lines and urban shoulders can reduce motor vehicle speed, but are not considered a bikeway.

(Memorandum, February 6, 2023, To: Transportation Services Division, **City of Toronto**)



In Conclusion

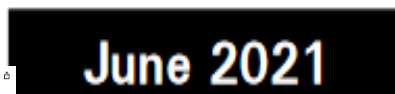
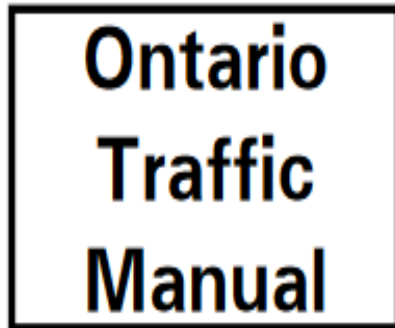
Urban Shoulders Do Not Belong in Brampton

- The City of Brampton should not be adding any new urban shoulders to city streets.
- Existing urban shoulders should be removed. Until then, **clear signs** need to be installed along urban shoulders stating that **they are not bike lanes**.
- The next iteration of the Brampton Active Transportation Plan, and the cycling map, must not include any reference to urban shoulders.
- The current supply of Brampton cycling maps should have stickers placed over the description of urban shoulders stating that they are not bike lanes or preferred cycling routes.



BACKGROUND TO PRESENTATION





What are Urban Shoulders?

Page 104 (quote)

*“Along wide shared roadways with urban cross-sections, practitioners may choose to apply a white edge line to designate an “urban shoulder”. **Cyclists and motorists may interpret this space as a bicycle lane** even though no bicycle pavement markings are applied to this area. **Urban shoulders are not an alternative to bicycle lanes**, but may be used to narrow existing wide travel lanes, to calm traffic or to facilitate on-street parking.”*

“Urban shoulders may also be used as an ‘interim’ measure to build local support for a dedicated cycling facility.”



Ontario 

Book
B18

Ontario
Traffic
Manual

June 2021

The Danger of Urban Shoulders?

Page 106 (quote)

*“Consideration should be given to the number of parked motor vehicles and their impact on the path of cyclists since **cyclists** will be required to merge into a live lane to exit and re-enter the shoulder in avoidance of parked motor vehicles. In these cases, people riding bikes may not always be visible to other road users given the temporary obstruction by parked motor vehicles in the shoulder.”*





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*“Urban shoulders **do not provide a dedicated space for cycling** (motorists are permitted to park in them), but may be **understood as a traffic calming measure that can delineate a cycling travel area outside the travelled way**. On streets where urban shoulders have been installed, the introduction of a signed route may be appropriate. As cycling increases, parking can be prohibited and the urban shoulder can become a designated bike lane.”*

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*“Although they are **not considered a designated cycling facility**, the **City of Brampton** has installed urban shoulders on residential streets and **signed them as bike routes**. They are similar to bike lanes, however, parking is currently permitted in them for short durations (3 hours). The City intends to **transition these to designated bike lanes over time** as demand warrants.”*



City of Brampton Cycling Map

Urban Shoulder

Urban Shoulder signed routes are identified as preferred bicycling routes that also have a designated area (painted) that can be used for cycling or short term parking.



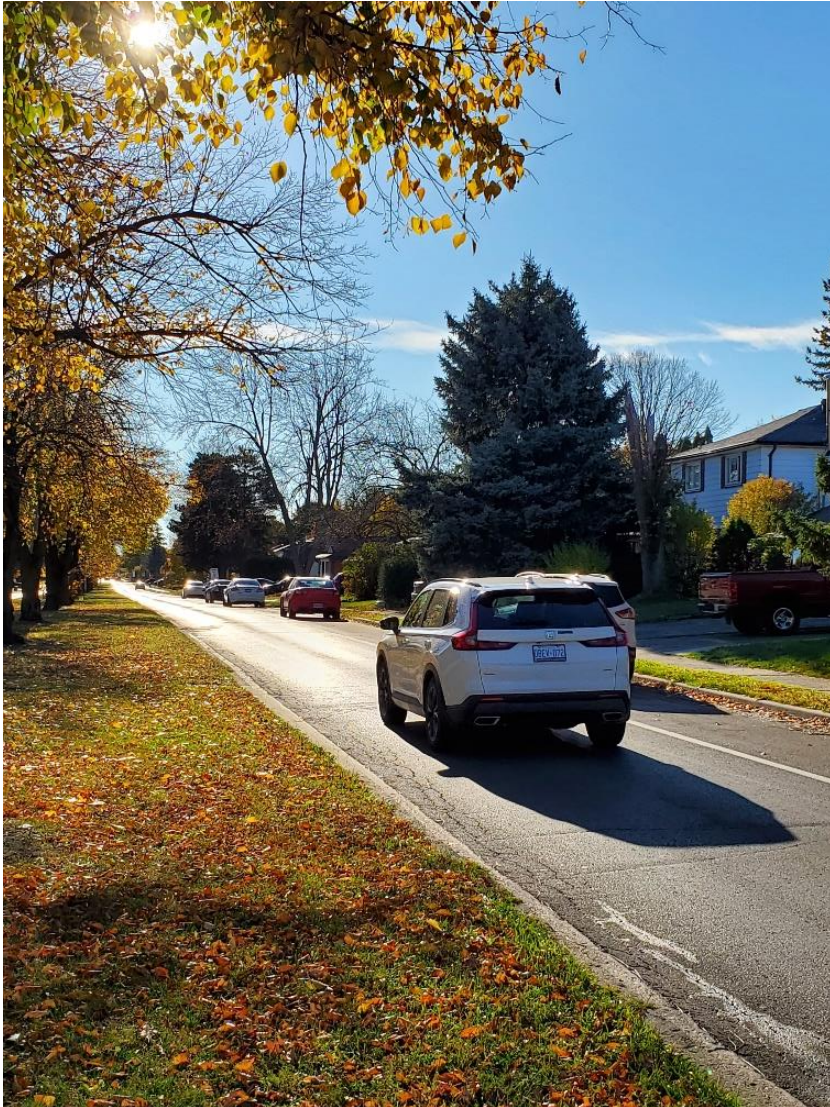
EMBLETON RD

HUTTONVILLE

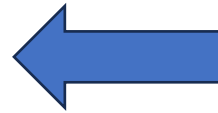
CENTREVILLE



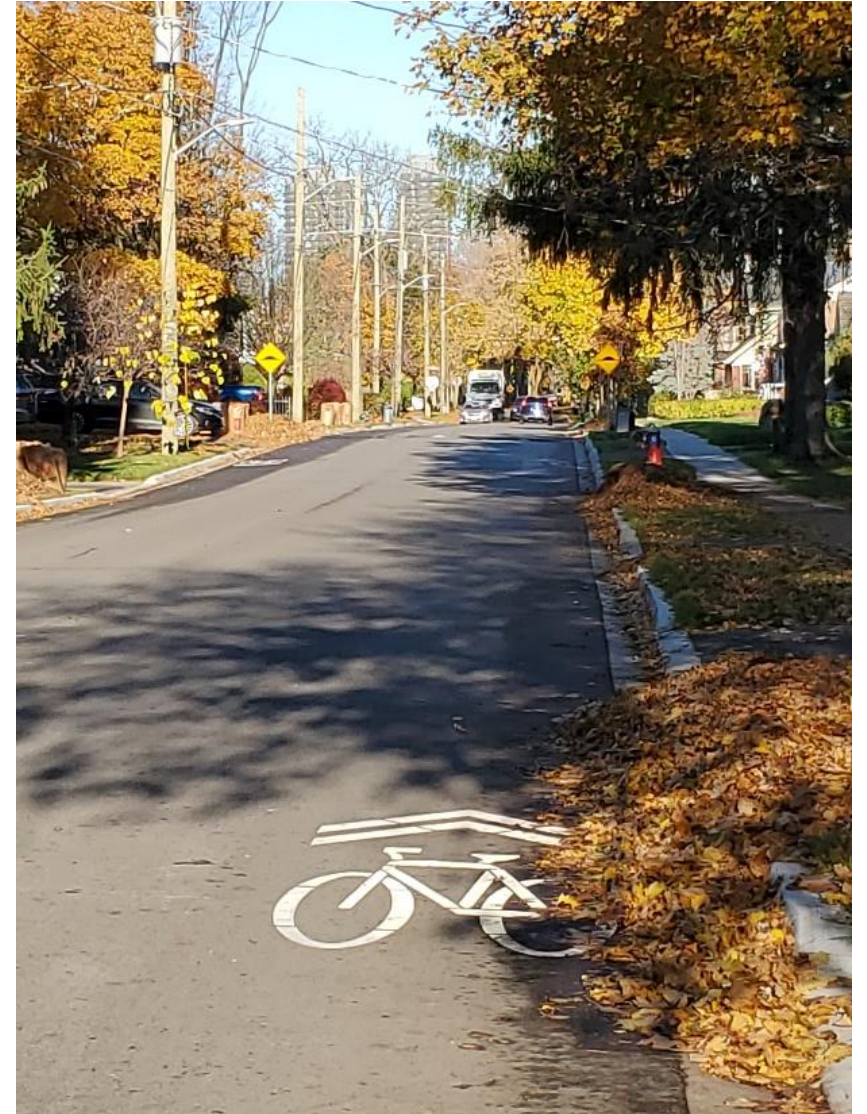
Why is McMurchy Ave. S. with the Urban Shoulders a Preferred (i.e. Better) Choice for Cyclists Than Mill Street S.?



McMurchy (on left)
with urban shoulder



Mill Street South
(2022 Brampton
Cycling Map
inaccurately shows an
urban shoulder here)



These Cities DO NOT Include Urban Shoulders on Their Bike Maps

- Mississauga, Waterloo, Toronto, Hamilton, Ottawa, Vancouver, Newmarket, Montreal, Calgary, Edmonton

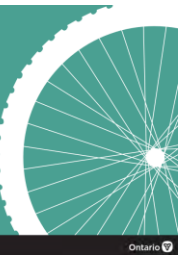
These Cities DO Include Urban Shoulders on Their Bike Maps

- Brampton, Markham

Urban Shoulder Program Newmarket

- *An Urban Shoulder..... is not an alternative to a dedicated cycling facility, but a **traffic-calming measure** to slow down vehicular traffic on the road.*
- *The existing Urban Shoulder locations are available on [the Traffic Calming Map](#).*





Cycling Skills - Ontario's Guide to Safe Cycling

(Guide does not mention of urban shoulders)

CYCLING FACILITIES

Many municipalities in Ontario offer bicycle facilities specially designed with cyclists in mind. The different types of facilities can be organized into two categories: on-road and in-boulevard bicycle facilities.

On-Road Bicycle Facilities

- » Shared Roadway and Signed Only Bicycle Route
- » Signed Bicycle Route with Paved Shoulder
- » Conventional Bicycle Lane
- » Separated Bicycle Lane
- » Raised Cycle Track
- » Bicycle Priority Streets

In-Boulevard Bicycle Facilities

- » Active Transportation / Multi Use Path
- » Raised Cycle Track



The Official Ministry of Transportation (MTO) Driver's Handbook

<https://www.ontario.ca/document/official-mto-drivers-handbook/sharing-road-other-road-users>

Mentions: Intersections, Bike lanes, Bike boxes, Sharrows

No mention of urban shoulders



Active Transportation Master Plan Implementation – 2023/2024

Staff Report The Corporation of the City of Brampton 4/22/2024

Building on the success of recent years, in 2024 City staff are planning the implementation of:

- *20.3 km of linear cycling infrastructure (bike lanes, urban shoulders, multi-use paths and recreational trails/paths)*



Will Urban Shoulders Increase Cycling Activity i.e. a “critical mass”?

**Barbara Gray, General Manager, Transportation Services, City
of Toronto:**

*“Previous design guides focused on the design of **narrow painted bike lanes or wide urban shoulders**. But extensive research including ridership data in Toronto show that these bikeways **do not accommodate people of all ages and abilities**.*

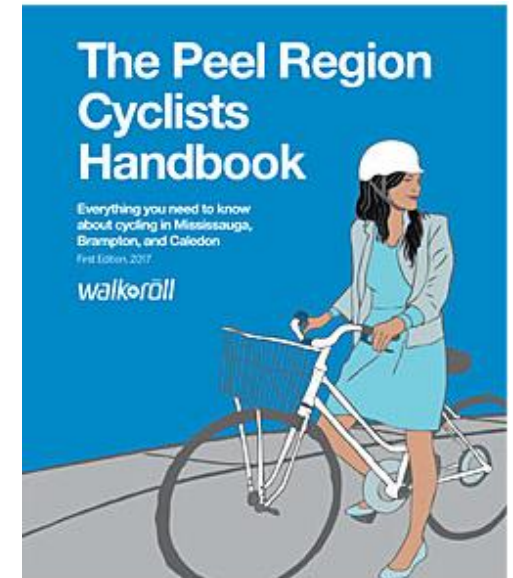
Edge lines and urban shoulders can reduce motor vehicle speed, but are not considered a bikeway.”

Memorandum, February 6, 2023, To: Transportation Services Division



Why is the City of Brampton continuing to include urban shoulders as part of its cycling infrastructure?

- What is the evidence that “*these urban shoulders can easily be converted into designated bike lanes*”? (The Region of Peel Cyclists Handbook)?
- Residents raised the dangers and pitfalls of urban shoulders for cyclists with senior City staff years ago – to no avail.
- How many urban shoulders in Brampton have been converted to dedicated bike lanes?
- Urban shoulders can, and do, place cyclists at risk if they weave in and out of cars parked, as permitted, within the designated urban shoulder.
- Other major cities do not include urban shoulders as part of their cycling infrastructure.



Members Present:

Mayor P. Brown

Regional **Councillor R. Santos**

Regional **Councillor P. Vicente**

Regional **Councillor M. Palleschi**

Regional **Councillor M. Medeiros**

Regional **Councillor P. Fortini**

Regional Councillor G. Dhillon

City Councillor D. Whillans

City Councillor J. Bowman

City Councillor C. Williams

City Councillor **H. Singh**

Those members **highlighted in bold are current council members** who were formally informed in September 2020 that urban shoulders are dangerous for cyclists.

There was an understanding, subsequently, that no further urban shoulders would be implemented by the City.



Delegation to City Council by Lisa Stokes, September 2020

8.3 Delegations re: Item 10.6.2 - Staff Report re: Active Transportation Provisions in the 2020 Road Resurfacing Program:

2. Lisa Stokes, Member, Bike Brampton (by video)

- *“Lisa Stokes, Member, Bike Brampton, provided a video delegation in which she highlighted various types of cycling infrastructure in the City and outlining comments and concerns on this topic.”*

Minutes, City Council, The Corporation of the City of Brampton, Wednesday, September 30, 2020

Lisa Stokes’ presentation included the dangers of weaving in and out of the urban shoulder on McMurchy Avenue South, into traffic, in order to go around parked cars.



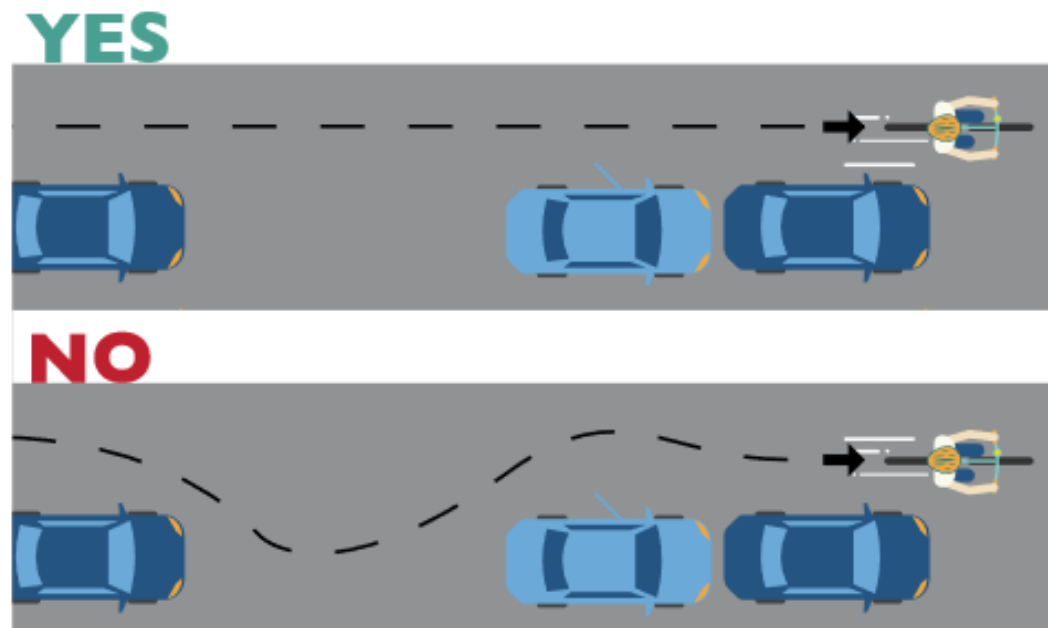


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In Conclusion

Urban Shoulders Do Not Belong in Brampton

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