Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL]Correspondence: City Council Meeting, September 30, 2020

From: Kevin Montgomery
Sent: 2020/09/27 9:44 PM
To: City Clerks Office <City.ClerksOffice@brampton.ca>
Cc: Cadete, Nelson <Nelson.Cadete@brampton.ca>; Fortini, Pat - Councillor <Pat.Fortini@brampton.ca>; Williams, Charmaine - Councillor <Charmaine.Williams@brampton.ca>; Brown, Patrick - Mayor <Patrick.Brown@brampton.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Correspondence: City Council Meeting, September 30, 2020

Hello.

I am unable to delegate at the City Council Meeting of September 30, 2020. However, I wish to include this correspondence regarding the following item:

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

The attached PDF includes my remarks regarding the North Park Drive bicycle lanes, and to other concerns that were expressed at the City Council Meeting of September 16, 2020, pertaining to paved shoulders and multi-use pathways in the context of the Road Resurfacing Program.

Thanks,

Kevin Montgomery **R.G.D., C.X.D.**

10.6.2 Staff Report re: Active Transportation Provisions in the 2020 Road Resurfacing Program

Context

At the City Council Meeting of September 16, 2020, there was a discussion regarding the on-street bike lanes on North Park Drive, and a question around why an on-street solution was installed rather than a facility such as a grade-separated cycle track or multi-use path.

From that discussion, I've itemized these points that I will attempt to address.

Please note that this document primarily addresses what I perceived being discussed in Council. As a result, **this document might inadvertently exclude segments of the population that also need to be considered in a broader transportation conversation, such as people with disabilities.**

Who am I, anyway?

I haven't owned a car since 2011. I believe in being the change we want to see. Council probably knows me as a "cycling advocate", which is true.

I'm also a Certified CAN-BIKE Instructor, a Certified User Experience Designer, and additionally, have completed a certificate course from the University of Amsterdam on "Building the Cycling City". I was also part of the Region of Peel's Road Safety Strategic Plan Stakeholder Workshop, from the Region of Peel's Vision Zero strategy derived.

I am not an accessibility expert.

Summary of my opinion

The best way to keep people safe on our roads, particularly in school zones, is to reduce the volume and speed of automobiles. Building a multi-use path as a compromise to maintain a higher capacity for cars does not improve safety. Reducing the capacity for cars, while also building infrastructure to enable safe bicycle transport to school, does.

However...

I also suggest that this is not the conversation we should be having. We need to stop having homogeneous conversations that create false dichotomies. The broader goals to increase active transportation, reduce car usage -- and with that, reduce emissions associated with transportation -- is not about bike lanes vs. multi-use pathways. It's about **understanding needs from an intersectional lens, understanding Council goals, and providing heterogeneous options and policy to accommodate and enable the changes Council wants to see**.

Confusion: School drop-off and traffic lights

It is unclear to me how school drop-offs will be impacted by bicycle lanes.

Regulatory sign restrictions

According to Google Street View, there were regulatory signs prohibited stopping/parking before the addition of bike lanes.


N Park Dr


8AM 5PM
MON-FRI


SCHOOL
BUS
LOADING
ZONE
8AM - 5PM
MON-FRI

Crossing a bike lane to turn right

This could be a source of confusion for drivers who have never had to do this before. The guidance provided to drivers crossing a bike lane to turn right from the MTO Driver's Handbook is for drivers to “enter the bike lane only after ensuring that you can do so safely, and then make the turn.”

http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/dandv/driver/handbook//section2.3.2.shtml

When bike lanes are appropriate, and when a separate path is appropriate (for bicycle transport)

While there are several other factors to consider, the Ontario Traffic Manual Book 18 offers pre-selection guidance on desirable bicycle facilities. Road speeds generally need to be faster than 50 km/h before a completely separate facility like a grade-separated cycle track or multi-use pathways makes the most sense.

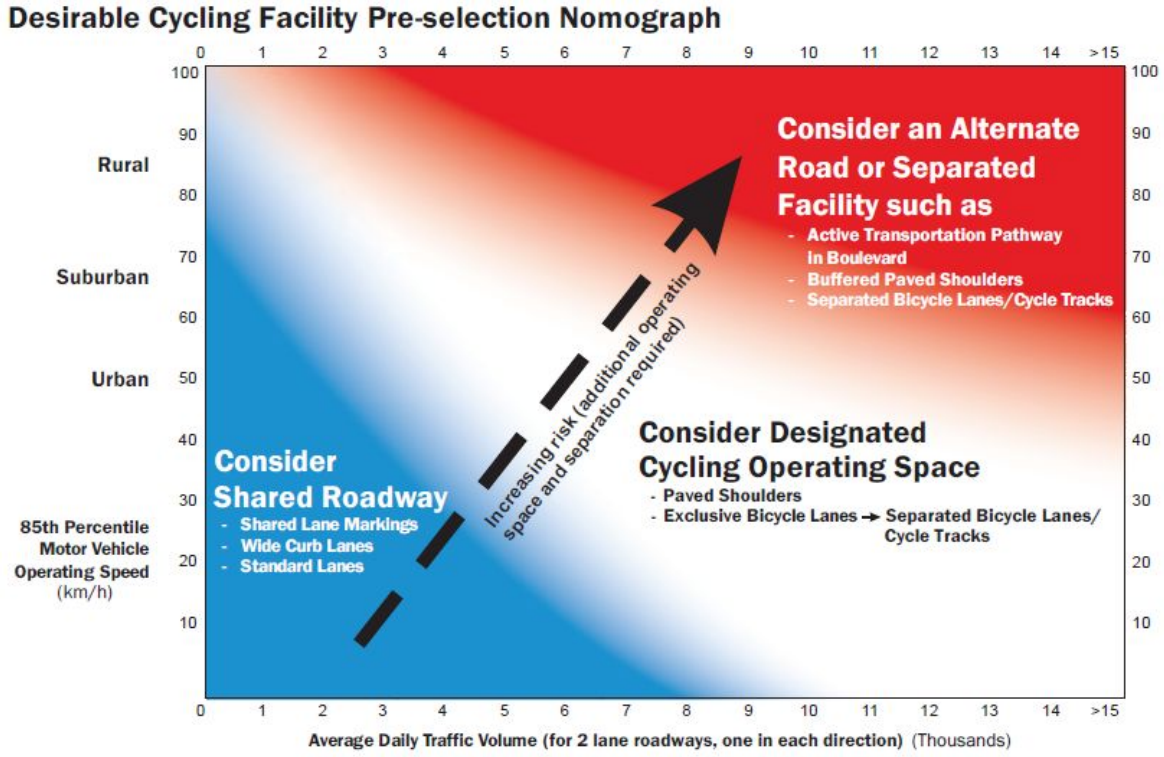


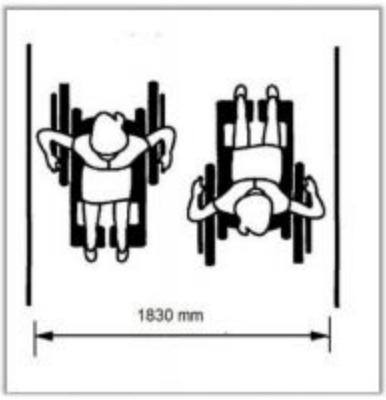
Figure 3.3 – Desirable Bicycle Facility Pre-Selection Nomograph

Other factors

Micro-mobility

“No person shall operate a motor-assisted bicycle or e-bike upon any sidewalk or multi-use trail.” - By-law 229-2011

At the moment, according to Brampton’s by-laws, the installation of a multi-use pathway would have prohibited using e-assist bicycles and e-scooters, potentially applying constraints to seniors, which tends to be the largest demographic of e-assist devices.



Accessibility

Design Requirements for Accessible Routes, Sidewalks and Corridors under City of Brampton Accessibility Technical Standards indicate that “where space is required for two wheelchairs to pass, it shall be 1830 mm” in width.

https://www.brampton.ca/en/City-Hall/Accessibility/Documents/technical-standards.pdf

While not necessary for bicycle usage in this context, a multi-use pathway might have been considered to improve accessibility standards along North Park Drive.

Human factors, and bicycle heterogeneity

Sidewalk and wrong-way riding may also be prevalent if multi-use paths do not have adequate connections in both directions of a multilane roadway

https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped_bike/tools_solve/fhwasa12018/fhwasa12018.pdf

Further, multi-use pathways are often subject to restrictions based on assumptions about bicycle homogeneity, which are false. This leads to barriers with accessing and transitioning onto and off of this kind of infrastructure. The example in this image is of a cargo bike, however, bicycles can also have trailers, baskets, or wide handlebars, which well intended devices such as “P” gates create barriers for.

Differences between paved shoulders and painted bike lanes

There was a discussion regarding some confusion on the differences between paved shoulders and bike lanes with respect to parking. This confusion is understandable.

Bicycle lanes - are spaces on the road that are reserved for exclusive use by cyclists, clearly designated by pavement markings and signage. If a car is parked in a bicycle lane, the driver of that car is breaking the law.

Paved "urban" shoulders - ...are not an alternative to bicycle lanes. They are spaces that can be used by people using bicycles. They can also act as a space for on-street parking. There usually isn't clear signage or guidance depicting this convergence of uses. It is correct that, if a car is parked in an paved shoulder, a person on a bicycle will have to navigate around it.

Congestion, school drop-off, and safety

I interpreted a section of Council discussion as suggesting that a source of congestion on this street is parents dropping off their children using private automobiles. In my opinion, while installing bicycle infrastructure is a good start, the City of Brampton cannot stop there.

The City of Brampton now needs to work with the various school boards represented on North Park Drive to consider implementing a school travel plan for nearby residents that offer education and encouragement for students to:

- Walk or cycle to school as the first transport choice.
- Plan and practise the route to their school with their parents.
- Walk or ride on their own.

Closing

I apologize for the length of this letter. However, it is important to consider the diverse backgrounds and experiences people have when contemplating how to best serve them moving forward, even with something as seemingly innocuous as a road resurfacing program.

Reducing the volume and speed of automobiles improves safety for all. In my opinion, on-street bicycle lanes are satisfactory to achieve this. But an intersectional conversation should also be had with appropriate stakeholders, such as people with disabilities, to consider improving their experience also.

It might be the case that a better solution is to implement both.