

SUBMISSION TO NEWMARKET TOWN COUNCIL LISTENING SESSION
JANUARY 16, 2007, BY NEWMARKET EAGLES CYCLING CLUB.

History

The Newmarket Eagles Cycling Club was founded in 1985. One of the founding members was retired President (1994 – 2006) Tony Osborne, who operated Eagle Cycles on Eagle Street in Newmarket, at that time. Hence the name of the Club. The Club is one of approximately 90 similar clubs affiliated with the Ontario Cycling Association.

Membership and Goals

The Club exists to promote road cycling and racing (as distinct from off road/mountain biking) for its membership – which, in 2006, was approximately 180. The Club organizes weekly time trials (a solo, “against the clock” event), and monthly “pursuit” events on roads in York Region and beyond. Among the accomplishments of our members are a number of Ontario Champions in various age groups – most recently in the over 60 and under 15 groups, as well as a representative on the under 23 national team.

Current Objectives

In addition to our overall goal, stated above, the primary objectives of the Club are:

1. To propose and support initiatives that will increase the safety of bicycle use on Town and Regional roads.
 - In particular we would like to see a much greater number of designated bike routes throughout the Town. Supported by appropriate signage (such as “Bike Lane” and “Share the Road”), this will increase participation – both for transportation and recreation – in a health promoting activity that is not dependent on fossil fuel consumption.
 - We believe that giving greater prominence to the rights of cyclists to use the roadways, through such initiatives, will increase the acceptance of bicycles by the motoring public. There is a very low regard for the safety of cyclists in our area and reports of serious injuries and fatalities are frequent. This will only improve if Municipal, Regional and Provincial authorities demonstrate their commitment to improving the safety of cycling, by implementing bike-promoting initiatives.
 - For this reason, the Club has supported the establishment of the Terry Fox Bikeway, as part of the York Region Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan (see attached letter). It is hoped that this project will become the hub of open road

cycling in York Region and will be linked by well-designed bike routes to the major municipalities throughout the Region – especially Newmarket – which currently has no safe and efficient routes for cyclists to exit the Town.

2. To support the growth of cycling as a competitive sport through encouragement of youth participation.

- The Club has a Youth Development Program which, last year, saw 16 boys and girls ages 10-18 yrs participate in a 6 week course, designed to teach them bike handling and racing skills. Graduates of this course are already participating in Provincial-level race programs. We plan to repeat this program in 2007 and expand it to include a weekly group ride.
- The Ontario Cycling Association is planning a 5 race youth series, throughout the Province. We have proposed to organize one of these races on a course near Newmarket and have started to explore local facilities and municipal approvals.
- The Canadian Cycling Association, with which the Club is affiliated, has developed a “Sprockkids” program. This program is designed for communities and municipalities, to teach bike handling and safety, oriented to off road cycling. Further details, of possible interest to the Town’s Recreation Department, can be viewed at www.ontariocycling.org.

Some suggestions for Newmarket

1. Many roads within the Town, especially those over 8.5 metres wide could accommodate a 1.5 metre bike lane simply by adding a painted line and appropriate signage.

2. Opportunities to “join” subdivisions with routes that avoid regional roads should be identified. For example, a link from Savage Road to Silken Laumann Drive would allow cyclists to cross the Town while avoiding Mulock Drive.

3. The system of walking trails within the Town should be reviewed to determine where paved bike routes could be added.

4. With some advance planning, the new recreation complex on Mulock Drive could serve as a venue for short course, closed road, bike races (known as criteriums).

Submitted on behalf of Newmarket Eagles Cycling Club

Andrew C. Darke , President

905 895 4331

Newmarket Eagles Cycling Club

Joe Doria, P.Eng.
97 Winston Castle Drive,
Markham, ON.

9 December, 2006

Dear Mr Doria,

The Newmarket Eagles Cycling Club is one of the largest cycling organizations based in York Region and has been in existence for some 20 years, with approximately 180 members in 2006. Much of the cycling done by club members is on roads such as those identified for designation as the York Region Bikeway, and most of our members make their home in York Region.

We are particularly supportive of the proposal to designate a 30km section of the regional network as the Terry Fox Bikeway. This will provide a valuable focal point for cycling in York Region, through identification with one of Canada's heroes - while, at the same time, further honouring his memory and advancing his goals for cancer research.

Such a focal point is needed for several reasons:

-It will serve to increase public recognition of the role of the bicycle on roads outside of the conventional bike routes that have been established within our major urban areas.

-It will communicate to the motoring public that cyclists have a right to travel on York Region's roads.

-It will offer a safer environment for the public to take up road cycling, and will therefore help to increase participation in this health-promoting activity.

-Through linking publicity associated with the construction and operation of the Terry Fox Bikeway, with information on the "feeder" system provided by the wider network, further emphasis will be given to the need to accommodate both cyclists and motorized vehicles as rightful users of the Region's roads.

We wish you every success in the implementation of this project.

Sincerely,

Andrew C. Darke, Ph.D, President

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