

**Toronto Bike Plan Survey
Summary Report:
Priority Bicycle Routes around York University**

Report Prepared by:

Brian Shifman, Executive Director
Keagan Gartz, Program Coordinator
Smart Commute – North Toronto, Vaughan

1.0 - Introduction

The Smart Commute – North Toronto, Vaughan (NTV) York University Bicycle User Group (BUG) was formed in 2001. It is comprised of students, alumni, staff and faculty members. It has since expanded to include over 500 members and continues to grow steadily. As the administrator of the BUG, Local Transportation Management Association Smart Commute NTV:

- Connects and educates cycling enthusiasts,
- Organizes and promotes cycling events, and
- Supports the improvement of cycling infrastructure by working collaboratively with partners, members, and the City of Toronto.

As part of this mandate, Smart Commute NTV conducted a brief survey from July 16th-31st, 2009 to understand if planned future bike lanes in the vicinity of York University's Keele and Glendon campuses, as proposed in the City of Toronto Bike Plan, will meet cyclists' needs.

2.0 - Methodology

A list of current *and* proposed bike routes (Appendix A) in Smart Commute NTV's service area, District 3 (North York), and a corresponding map of these routes were obtained from the City of Toronto Bike Plan website. Based on this data, a fourteen question online survey was created. The survey questions referred to various on-road bike lanes, signed routes, and off-road paths around the York University Keele campus, located at 4700 Keele Street, and the York University Glendon campus, located at 2275 Bayview Avenue, Toronto. The survey was entitled: *Proposed City of Toronto Bicycle Routes around York University*. It was circulated to the York University BUG distribution list, of which there were 458 active members at the time. 104 people responded (a participation rate of 23%). Highlights from the survey follow.

3.0 – Results

3.1 - Frequency of Cycling Around York University

- The majority (83%) of BUG members cycle to York University at least once per week.
- Almost half of those respondents cycle to campus 3 or more times per week.
- Only seventeen respondents (16%) indicated that they do not cycle to York University.

3.2 - Priority Bicycle Routes Around York University

Of the existing bike routes around York University, those used most frequently by respondents are:

- N27 - Sentinel Road Bike Lane (57%)
- †The Pond Road Bike Lane (51%)
- N47 - North Black Creek Multi-use Path (51%)

Of the bicycle routes identified in the survey that are proposed by the City of Toronto Bike Plan, those that would be used regularly by York University BUG members if made available are:

- N15 – Finch Hydro Corridor Bike Path (58%),
- N25 - Newmarket Bike Path (50%)
- N36 – York U Bike Path (46%)

* The Toronto Bike Plan North York District Map (Appendix B) indicates that the Sentinel Road bike lane is proposed, but has already been implemented since the map was produced.

† The Pond Road bike lane is not labelled on the Toronto Bike Plan North York District Map (Appendix B).

A detailed map adjusted from the Toronto Bike Plan's District 3 (North York) bikeway network highlighting these priority bike paths is included in Appendix B.

Respondents also suggested the development of on-road bike lanes not currently proposed by the City of Toronto Bike Plan. Bike lanes along **Keele Street, Finch Avenue and Steeles Avenue** were among the most frequent suggestions, respectively. These suggestions further support the implementation of routes N15, N25 and N36 as they run parallel to these streets and are therefore viable alternatives to bike lane creation on roads with heavy motor traffic.

3.3 – Signage

- 71% of respondents indicated that bike routes around York University have adequate signage. Of those who felt that signage was not adequate, 45% indicated that all routes need increased signage or that they were not aware of any signs located on the specified routes in the current Toronto Bike Plan maps.

3.4 – Medians

- 71% of respondents indicated that they would be encouraged to cycle more if bicycle lanes were segregated from cars by a median.
- 93% of respondents indicated that medians would likely encourage others to cycle more.

These results suggest that while frequent cyclists may be willing to traverse busy roads, the majority of respondents feel that cycling lanes separated from cars by medians would provide an increased sense of safety, and moreover, have the potential to attract new cyclists.

3.5 - Additional Highlights

When asked if respondents had any other comments regarding cycling accessibility to either of York University's two campuses, common themes were:

- Mutual respect amongst cyclists and motorists to share the road. Typical responses indicated that travelling by bicycle on arterial roads around York University is often precarious, as motorists are seldom aware of cyclists.
- Increased road maintenance. A response representative of this common sentiment was: "I often choose not to cycle to York, because without proper bike lanes the roads are very dangerous. On major roads, such as Steeles Ave W., the pavement is broken up and full of pot holes."
- Additional bicycle parking and secure storage in the area. Comments characteristic of this theme suggested providing more bicycle lockers at subway stations.

4.0 - Recommendations

Section 5 of the Toronto Bike Plan emphasizes the need to "establish priority routes with a formal bikeway facility to provide a higher level of comfort for cyclists". While implementing such a network, mitigating the need for road narrowing or lane reduction would be the preferred option to avoid negatively affecting traffic flow. Off-road bicycle paths adjacent to arterial roads do not interrupt traffic flow during their construction or utilization. Rather, they have the potential to facilitate a comprehensive bike network in North York while having no

adverse impact on traffic congestion. Bicycle paths adjacent to arterial roads can also attract new cyclists by providing a sense of safety away from motor vehicles. Implementing interconnected off-road bike paths in areas with a significant number of cyclists encourages environmentally friendly modes of transportation and supports an active, vibrant, and safe cycling community.

Based on the results of this survey and the reasons stated above, Smart Commute - North Toronto, Vaughan recommends the following:

- To create a more comprehensive bike network in District 3, North York by prioritizing:
 - Route N15 – Finch Hydro Corridor Bike Path (adjacent to Finch Avenue West)
 - Route N25 - Newmarket Bike Path (adjacent to Keele Street)
 - Route N36 – York U Bike Path (adjacent to Steeles Ave and Keele Street)

- To consider segregated medians as part of bike lane design on high traffic roads.

For more information, please contact:

Brian Shifman, Executive Director
Smart Commute – North Toronto, Vaughan
120 William Small Centre, York University
4700 Keele Street, Toronto, ON M3J1P3
416-650-8059
bshifman@smartcommutentv.ca

Keagan Gartz, Program Coordinator
Smart Commute – North Toronto, Vaughan
120 William Small Centre, York University
4700 Keele Street, Toronto, ON M3J1P3
416-736-2100 x 70690
kgartz@smartcommutentv.ca

Appendix A – Bikeway Network – District 3 (North York) Routes

Bikeway Network - District 3 (North York) Routes

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Facility lengths include both existing and proposed sections.

| Route | Bike Lane length (km) | Signed Route length (km) | Off-road length (km) | Total Length (km) |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| N1 Sloane | 2.9 | 1.0 | | 3.9 |
| N2 Underhill | 1.9 | 1.1 | | 3.0 |
| N3 Lawrence East | 6.8 | | | 6.8 |
| N4 Bala Sub | | | 7.0 | 7.0 |
| N5 Eglinton East | 4.5 | | | 4.5 |
| N6 Linkwood | 1.7 | 1.1 | | 2.8 |
| N7 Donway East | 2.1 | | 1.0 | 3.1 |
| N8 Three Valleys (del) | | | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| N9 Bayview | 5.3 | | | 5.3 |
| N10 Finch Hydro East | | | 7.0 | 7.0 |
| N11 Van Home | 2.0 | 5.5 | 1.8 | 9.3 |
| N12 Shaughnessy | | 5.0 | 0.5 | 5.5 |
| N13 Burbank | 1.0 | 3.2 | 2.5 | 6.7 |
| N14 Willowdale | 4.1 | 0.3 | | 4.4 |
| N15 Finch Hydro West | | | 12.8 | 12.8 |
| N16 Park Home | 1.1 | 4.3 | 0.9 | 6.3 |
| N17 Seniac | 2.5 | 2.4 | | 4.9 |
| N18 Wilmington | 3.4 | 2.2 | 0.4 | 6.0 |
| N19 Neptune | 1.4 | 1.9 | 0.4 | 3.7 |
| N20 Joicoey | 1.8 | 4.2 | 0.2 | 6.0 |
| N21 Florence | 2.3 | 3.9 | 0.8 | 7.0 |
| N22 York Downs | 1.7 | 2.3 | 0.4 | 4.4 |
| N23 Fairlawn | 1.9 | 7.9 | 0.3 | 10.1 |
| N24 Glencairn | | 3.7 | 0.3 | 4.0 |
| N25 Newmarket | 0.4 | 1.5 | 7.8 | 9.7 |
| N26 Trethewey | 1.4 | 1.3 | 0.4 | 3.1 |
| N27 Cufford | 0.6 | 6.7 | 1.3 | 8.6 |
| N28 Black Creek | 0.4 | 1.2 | 2.5 | 4.1 |
| N29 Oakdale | | 6.6 | | 6.6 |
| N30 Wendell | | 1.0 | | 1.0 |
| N31 Wilson | 2.7 | 1.3 | 0.4 | 4.4 |
| N32 Exbury | | 3.9 | 0.8 | 4.7 |
| N33 Grandravine | | 3.4 | 1.0 | 4.4 |
| N34 Sheppard | 1.2 | | 0.4 | 1.6 |
| N35 Humber River | | | 6.5 | 6.5 |
| N36 York U | | | 4.9 | 4.9 |
| N37 Ormont | | 3.4 | 0.6 | 4.0 |
| N38 Fenmar | 1.5 | 1.3 | 0.2 | 3.0 |
| N39 Rivalda | 1.3 | | 0.3 | 1.6 |
| N40 Milvan | | 4.4 | | 4.4 |
| N41 Finch West | 2.2 | | 0.2 | 2.4 |
| N42 Duncan Mill (del) | | | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| N43 Banbury | | 4.6 | 0.5 | 5.1 |
| N44 Havenbrook | 2.0 | 3.1 | 1.3 | 6.4 |
| N45 York Mills (new) | 7.1 | 1.1 | 0.7 | 8.9 |
| N46 Earl Bales (new) | | 1.6 | 3.0 | 4.6 |
| N47 North Black Creek | | 1.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 |
| N48 East Don Trail | | | 5.4 | 5.4 |
| N49 Betty Sutherland Trail | | | 1.8 | 1.8 |
| N50 G. Ross Lord Trails | | | 4.0 | 4.0 |
| N51 Wilket-Don Trails | | 1.0 | 3.5 | 4.5 |
| N52 Post | | 0.7 | 0.3 | 1.0 |
| N53 North Bathurst | 0.3 | | 1.5 | 1.8 |
| Totals | 69 | 99 | 90 | 258 |

Appendix B – City of Toronto Bikeway Network Map Adjusted to Reflect Smart Commute NTV-York University BUG's Recommendations for Priority Bike Paths in District 3, North York.

