

BROCKVILLE CYCLING NETWORK – PHASES II AND III

A Discussion Paper For The BCAC Meeting of May 11, 2017

This discussion paper provides information in support of two motions anticipated to be deliberated by the cycling committee for Phase II and Phase III of the Brockville cycling network.

Background – History and Context

“We are where we are because we got here.” (Yogi Berra) Still, an understanding of Brockville’s history with respect to better support of residents’ desires for safer cycling, coupled with an understanding of what’s happening outside of Brockville, helps to inform current discussions.

In June 2008, Council carried a motion directing city staff to develop a plan for an East-West and North-South grid of cycling routes for the city. The requested delivery of the plan was December 1, 2008.

As plans for the required update of the city’s Official Plan were getting underway, it was decided to incorporate active transportation considerations into the public workshops and planning process, rather than deal with separately. Public meetings facilitated for the Official Plan generated many requests for better support for cycling. The Official Plan included a chapter on transportation which in turn included a section on active transportation. The adoption of the Official Plan committed Council to create a Comprehensive Transportation Master Plan as an update to the city’s aged transportation plan. In adopting the Official Plan, Council also committed to creating a cycling network. The transportation plan update would have addressed active transportation. City Council subsequently defeated, twice, motions to carry out the committed update of the plan.

Council’s adoption of the Sustainability Plan further committed Council to moving forward with active transportation.

City Council endorsed the Healthy Communities Vision in Sept 2015, stating support for, among other items, complete streets and active mobility, including cycling.

The Brockville 2015 Economic Development Strategic Directions Update recognized that a bicycle-friendly designation is an important piece of an integrated strategy, for its value in attracting residents and supporting lifestyle choices.

The recently delivered "First Impressions" report noted as key observations Brockville’s lack of bicycle infrastructure and lack of support for active transportation.

The cycling advisory committee of council was formed at the beginning of 2011 with a mandate, in short, to advise the city on ways to fulfill the city’s commitment to becoming bike friendly.

In 2013 with help from the City and the Health Unit, an application was submitted to Share the Road to have Brockville designated as a Bicycle Friendly Community. That application failed, although we did receive an honourable mention for our efforts. We fell short in not having a plan and not having any cycling facilities implemented.

Late in 2013 and early 2014, the cycling committee accepted a request from the Mayor to come up with a plan for cycling network in lieu of the City undertaking a comprehensive transportation plan update.

Council, in December 2015, unanimously approved report 2015-129-12 including the rationale, design principles and recommendations for Phase I of the City's cycling network, comprising:

- 🚲 Laurier Blvd as an east-west core route between Bridlewood and Stewart,
- 🚲 King St W & Cty Rd 2 from Rivers Ave west to Grants Creek, in collaboration with the Counties, and
- 🚲 A north-south linkage route along Parkedale, Ormond and Central, in collaboration with the Brock Trail committee, to cross the 401 corridor.

The planned upgrades to King St W and Cty Rd 2 have been completed and favourably received, and work is on track for the north-south linkage route to be completed in the Summer of 2017.

The Laurier bike lanes were delayed, to be incorporated into a more holistic plan, Phase II, for the network north of the 401.

The importance of active transportation at the federal and provincial levels is reflected in the City having attracted \$500,000 of funding for the north-south linkage project, money that is being spent locally, bolstering the local economy. As well, Ontario has recently announced plans for the provincial cycling network, linking communities large and small across the province, an Ontario Cycling Strategy, designed to better harvest this fast-growing tourism sector, and a commitment to cycling infrastructure funding of \$225 million over the next five years, with \$50 million in the coming year.

Over 2/3 of Ontarians now live in 40 designated Bike Friendly Communities, about 10% of the province's municipalities, with those communities realizing the health and economic benefits of active transportation. They all continue to make further investments. The roster of Bike Friendly Communities includes smaller centres such as Pelham, Mississippi Mills, Town of the Blue Mountains, Belleville and others.

Current Status

The cycling advisory committee has reviewed emerging and current best practices and cycling plans and progress in multiple locations, has reviewed Council's commitment in the Official and other City Plans, and has undertaken a review and analysis of various route segments for the City's cycling network, including public review and input, while following MTO and other design guidelines.

The design principles used by the committee were articulated in 2015 and included in the proposal adopted by Council in December 2015. The first one, “Connected and Safe”, has been added, drawing on the experiences of several cities over the last while. Our design principles are:

Connected and Safe – This principle speaks to enabling people to get to where they want to go as directly as possible, and then to designing a complete minimum network that achieves this as safely as possible. The network must allow people to feel safe.

Extend the Reach of the Brock Trail – When complete, the Brock Trail will be a linear park with a multi-use paved and accessible path that will span the city from east to west and north to south, with marked crossings at major roads. The cycling network will extend the reach of the Brock Trail to every neighbourhood and major destination in the city.

Everyday Cycling – The segment of the population targeted by the network is first and foremost the “everyday” cyclist – those people who would like to bike recreationally to start, perhaps with friends and family, and then venture to use their bike for everyday trips around town for appointments, work, school, shopping and visiting. Research shows this group is eager yet cautious – reluctant to mix with motorized traffic – and holds the greatest latent demand. Safety for all ages, all abilities is considered. The network will also serve, but is not specifically designed for, those comfortable with and skilled at mixing with traffic on Brockville’s busier roads.

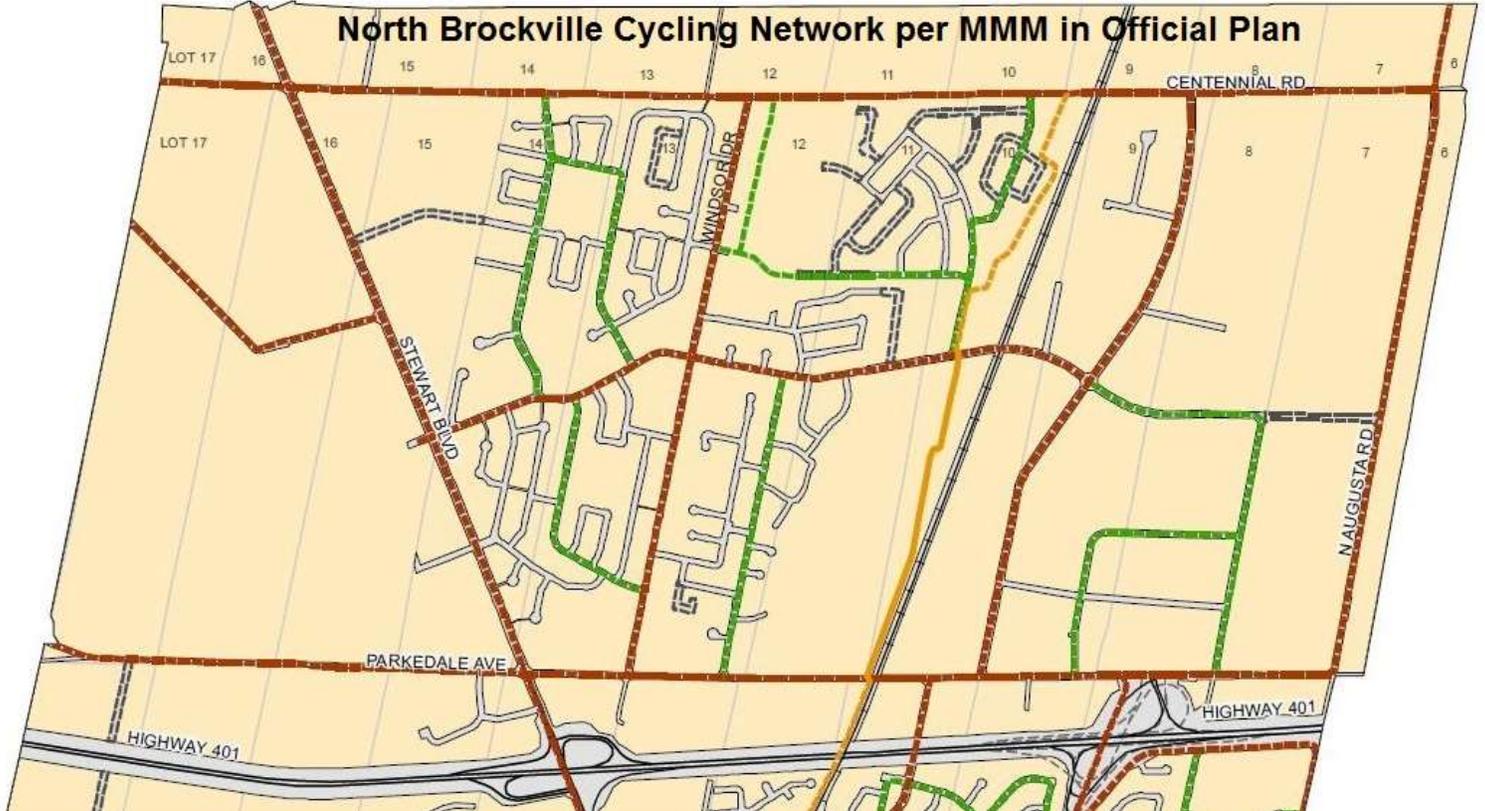
Traffic Separation – Recognizing the people for whom this network is designed, core segments of the cycling network will be physically separated from motorized traffic wherever possible.

Compliance and Best Practices – The network will reflect best practices from communities that are certified Bicycle Friendly or otherwise seen as leaders. Network design will be compliant with Ontario Traffic Manual – Book 18 – Cycling Facilities (“OTM-18”), MTO’s Bikeway Design Guide and other guides in common use. The network will adhere to Section 5.2.5 of the Official Plan and Schedule 5 that shows potential cycling facilities outlined by the consulting firm MMM.

Staged Implementation – The cycling network may be designed to be staged for several reasons:

- 🚲 Address key routes first that demonstrably provide best connectivity and extend the Brock Trail for greatest benefit.
- 🚲 Allow for coordination of new facilities with planned refurbishing of streets (e.g. as done with King St. West).
- 🚲 Allow for available budget, planning and resources for implementation.
- 🚲 Allow latent demand to emerge and demonstrate the uptake that occurs when connectivity needs are met.

Phase II: Cycling Network North Of The 401



A review of the Official Plan, coupled with an inventory of major source/destination locations led to the endorsement of the OP's spine network, while recognizing that many of the spine segments are only viable when future road renovation allows for multi-modal upgrades. Of note, these deferred spine segments include:

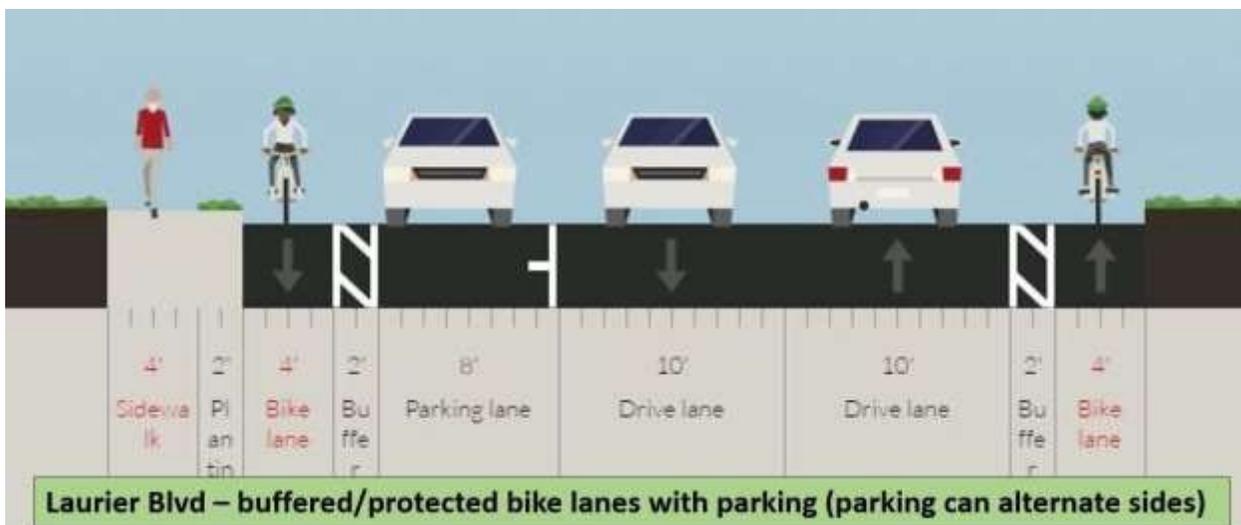
- 🚲 Parkedale Ave west of Alumni Dr and east of California Ave (to N Augusta Rd)
- 🚲 N Augusta Rd north of Parkedale Ave
- 🚲 Stewart Blvd and Victoria Rd
- 🚲 Centennial Road – pending discussion of off-road trail on north side

California Ave needs the rest of the shoulders to be paved to be usable, as does Laurier Blvd from Briarwood to California. These road segments as part of the cycling network are not deferred but rather treated in Phase III described further on.

Analysis of origin/destination nodes and existing road infrastructure, using input from multiple sources and following the design principles, leads to the conclusion that both Laurier Blvd and Windsor Dr are suitable for upgrade today. These arterial or spine routes are essential to a cycling network covering the north section of the city. At the same time, an implementation of feeding and linking neighbourhood greenways can serve to provide some alternate interim routing for spine routes that are deferred. The resulting minimal network will serve a high number of key origin/destination nodes north of the 401.

With the above discussion, it was moved and carried at the Feb 9, 2017 BCAC meeting: *“THAT the BCAC recommends that the spine routes for the north end as depicted on Schedule 5 of the Official Plan be adopted with the current focus being Laurier Boulevard and Windsor Drive.”*

Drawing on current best practices in Ontario and across North America, and using the available road width and copious over-supply of unused on-road parking space, the illustrated approach of buffered/protected lanes would work well on both Laurier and Windsor. Such an approach retains ten times or more on-road parking space than is currently used during peak periods, retains turning lanes at Windsor and Laurier, and can be implemented inexpensively in pilot mode with paint and signs. The diagram below illustrates a common design which would work for a 40 ft wide street like Laurier Boulevard or Windsor Dr.



It should be noted that the previously common practice of placing bicycle lanes in the door zone of parked cars, sandwiched against the travel lane, is no longer recommended nor used in leading cities.

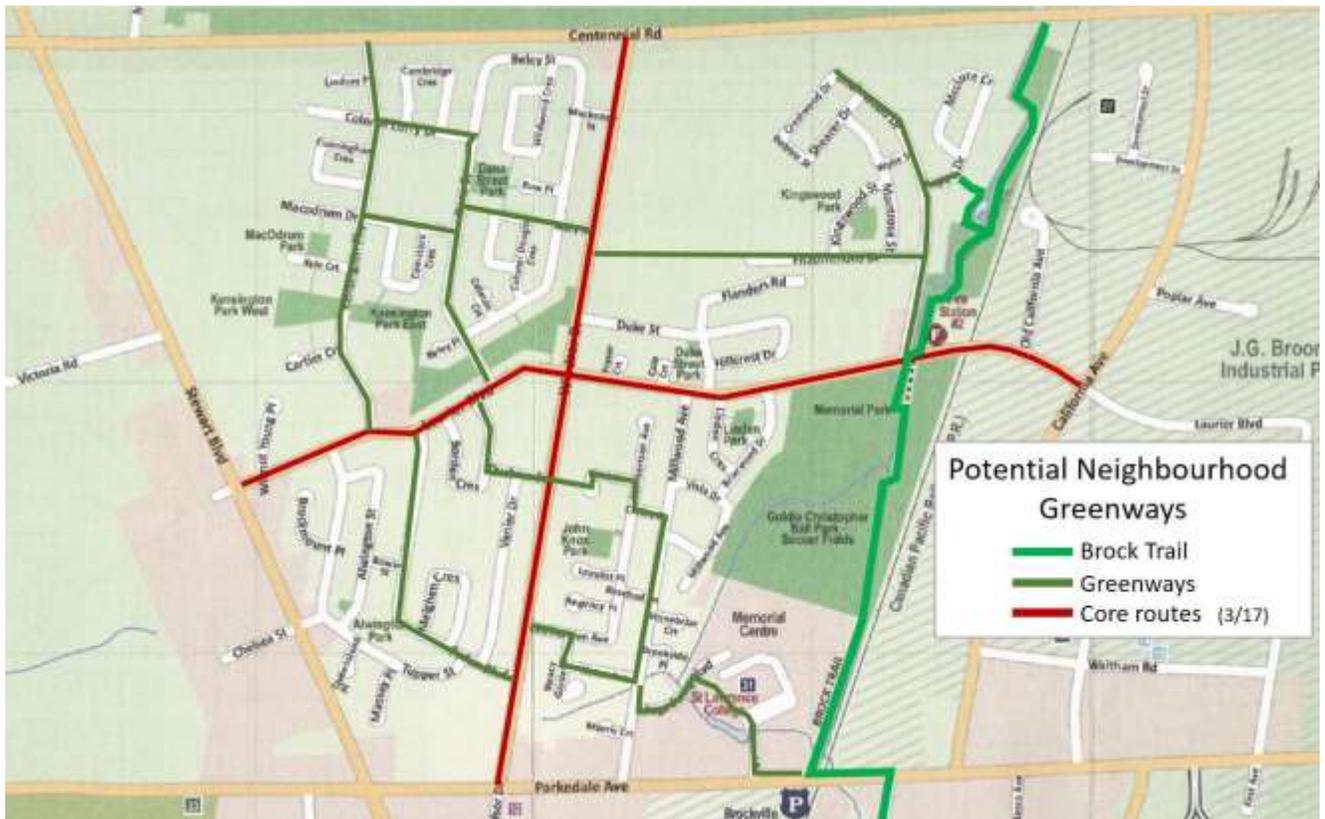
Neighbourhood Greenways

These are quieter routes through residential areas that serve to feed the core/spine routes. They are usually implemented with one or more of the following features:

- 🚲 Posted speed of 40 km/h max
- 🚲 Sometimes, traffic calming features such as bulb-outs or speed bumps
- 🚲 Route signage
- 🚲 Sometimes, depending on traffic patterns, sharrows painted on the road

The OP map on page 4 shows neighbourhood greenways in green. The cycling committee, through discussion in 2014, suggested consideration of a slightly different mix. Given that alternate routing is desired for deferred core segments, the picture below shows an amalgam of some various options for consideration.

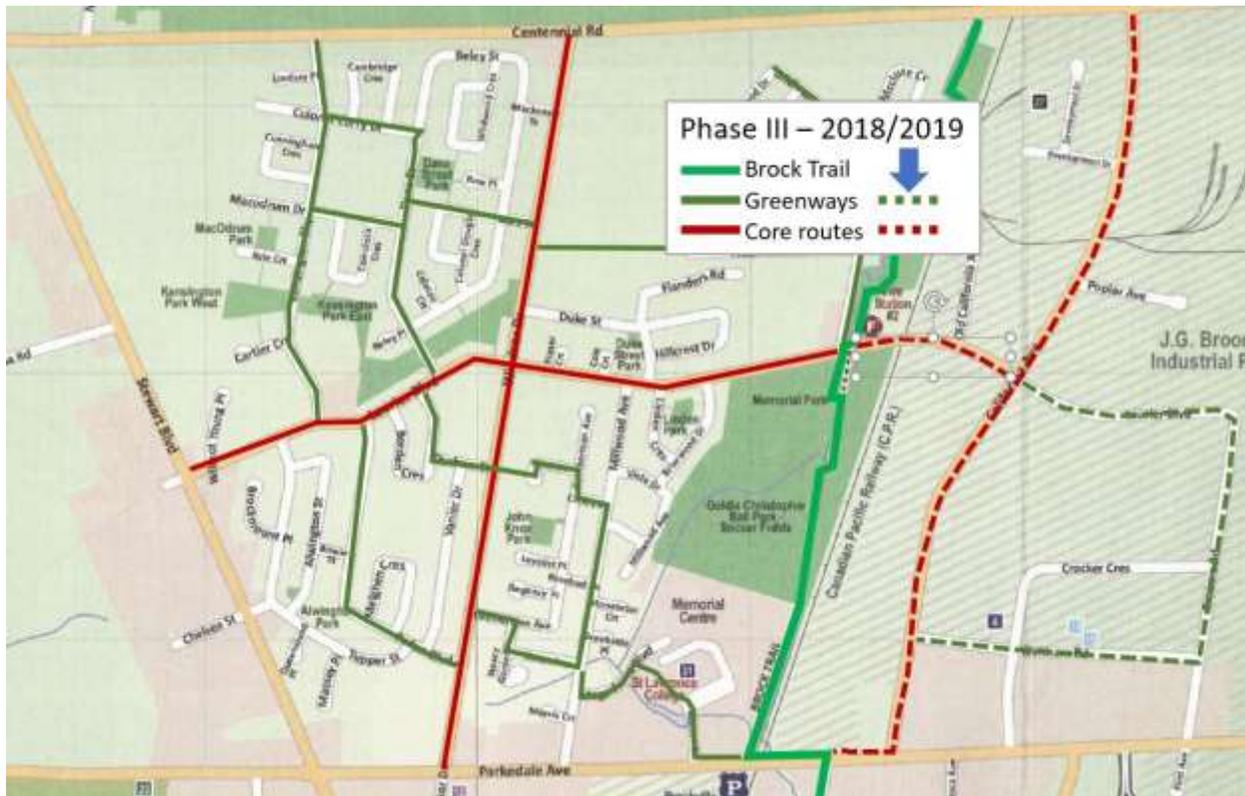
As part of Phase II, in addition to Laurier Boulevard and Windsor Drive as core routes, the cycling committee looks to the operations department to select and implement a suitable network of neighbourhood greenways to support movement between the core routes and neighbourhood elements.



Preparation for Phase III in 2018/2019

The recent 2017-2018 Ontario budget announcement included a further \$50 million of funding for cycling infrastructure, with a total commitment of \$225 million over the next 5 years. A sizable portion of this will be funneled to the OMCIP for municipal projects. Taking advantage of this requires that projects be identified, approved and have a high-level costing done.

With that in mind, Phase III of the cycling network would complete coverage of the region north of the 401 as shown (dashed lines):



Phase III Projects:

- 🚲 Complete Laurier Blvd between Bridlewood and California for link to Centennial
- 🚲 Pave shoulders on California for bike lanes, to serve commercial/industrial area
- 🚲 Turn sidewalk on north side of Parkedale between Ormond and California into multi-use trail
- 🚲 Greenway along Laurier, Broome & Waltham from California, to serve big box stores.

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