



# Multi Use Trail Safety Enhancements

February 22, 2021



# Agenda

1. Purpose
2. Overview
3. Types of Users and Trail Volumes
4. Trail Risk Inspection
5. Recommendations
6. Timelines
7. Questions



Photo Credit: [www.newmarkettoday.ca](http://www.newmarkettoday.ca)

# Purpose

1. Council provided direction to report back on best practices and options for improving signage and markings on the TTT
2. Provide an overview of the existing situation along the TTT
3. Recommend best practices and options for improving trail use and safety on the TTT
4. Recommend next steps on the future development of multi use trail systems

# Overview

- 42 KM of paved recreational trails in Newmarket
- Tom Taylor Trail (TTT) is the most prevalent multi use trail. It runs through the centre of the Town from the northern to southern boundary.
  - Critical route connecting key Town destinations and forms part of our multi use paths (MUPs) network, Nokiidaa Trail and Regional Lake to Lake Trail.
- Seeing increased volumes and we anticipate further growth
- Noticeable change in types of users (ex. cyclists)
- Concerns around overall trail experience and safety on trails

# Overview

## Analysis Undertaken

- Trail Count Analysis
- Trail Risk Assessment (BFL Canada and PM Law)
- Best Practices for High Use Trails





# Types of Use

Tom Taylor Trail experiences a high-level of use by various types of users (usage varies in different parts of the trail)\*

## **Cyclists**

- 52% usage overall on the TTT
- 60% usage on the north and south ends of the TTT

## **Pedestrians and Joggers**

- 46% usage overall on TTT
- 70% usage in the core parts of Town and 40% usage on the north and south ends of TTT

## **Other**

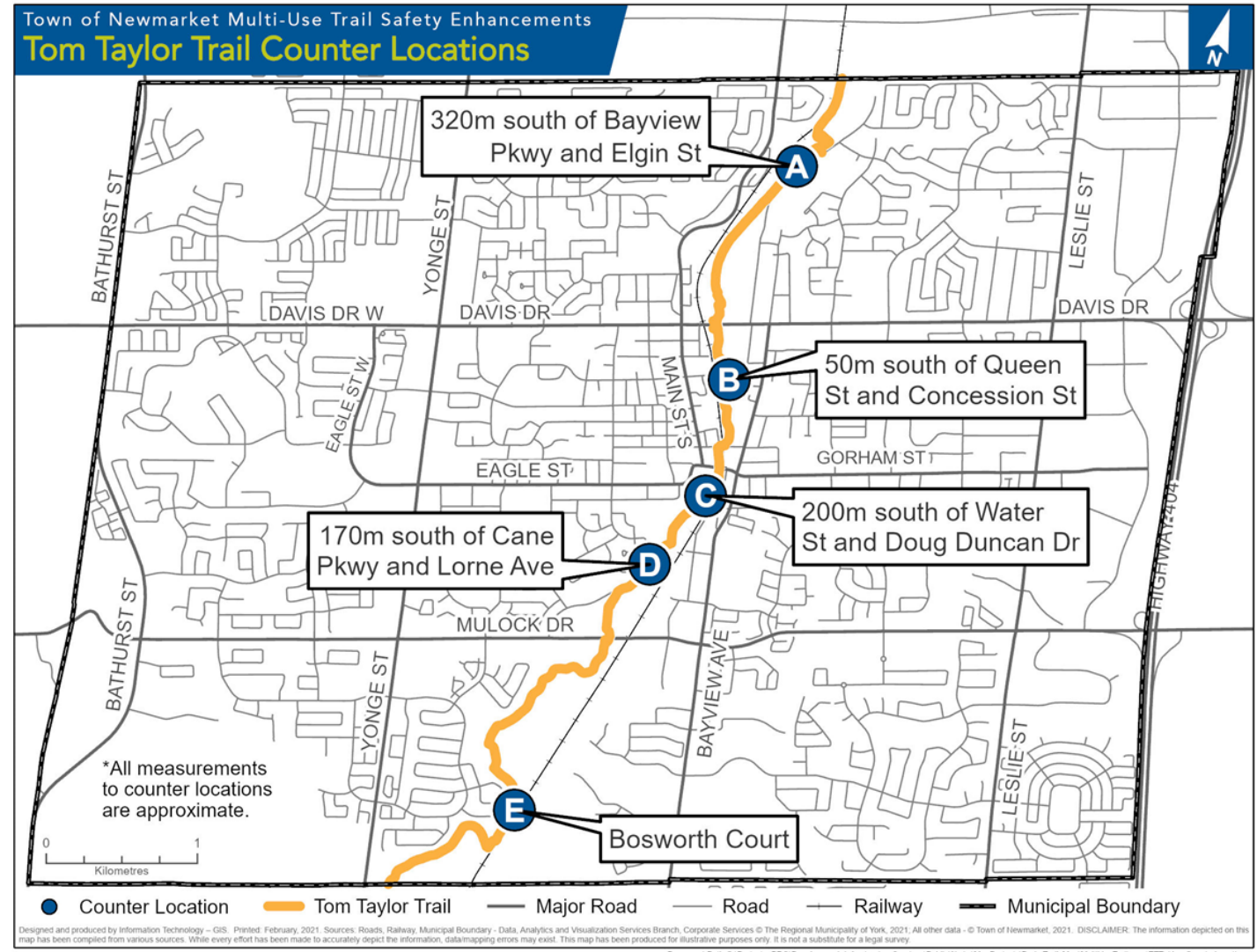
- 1-2% - Skateboarders, Accessibility Scooters, etc.

\*Data taken from trail count analysis from a three day period in August 2020

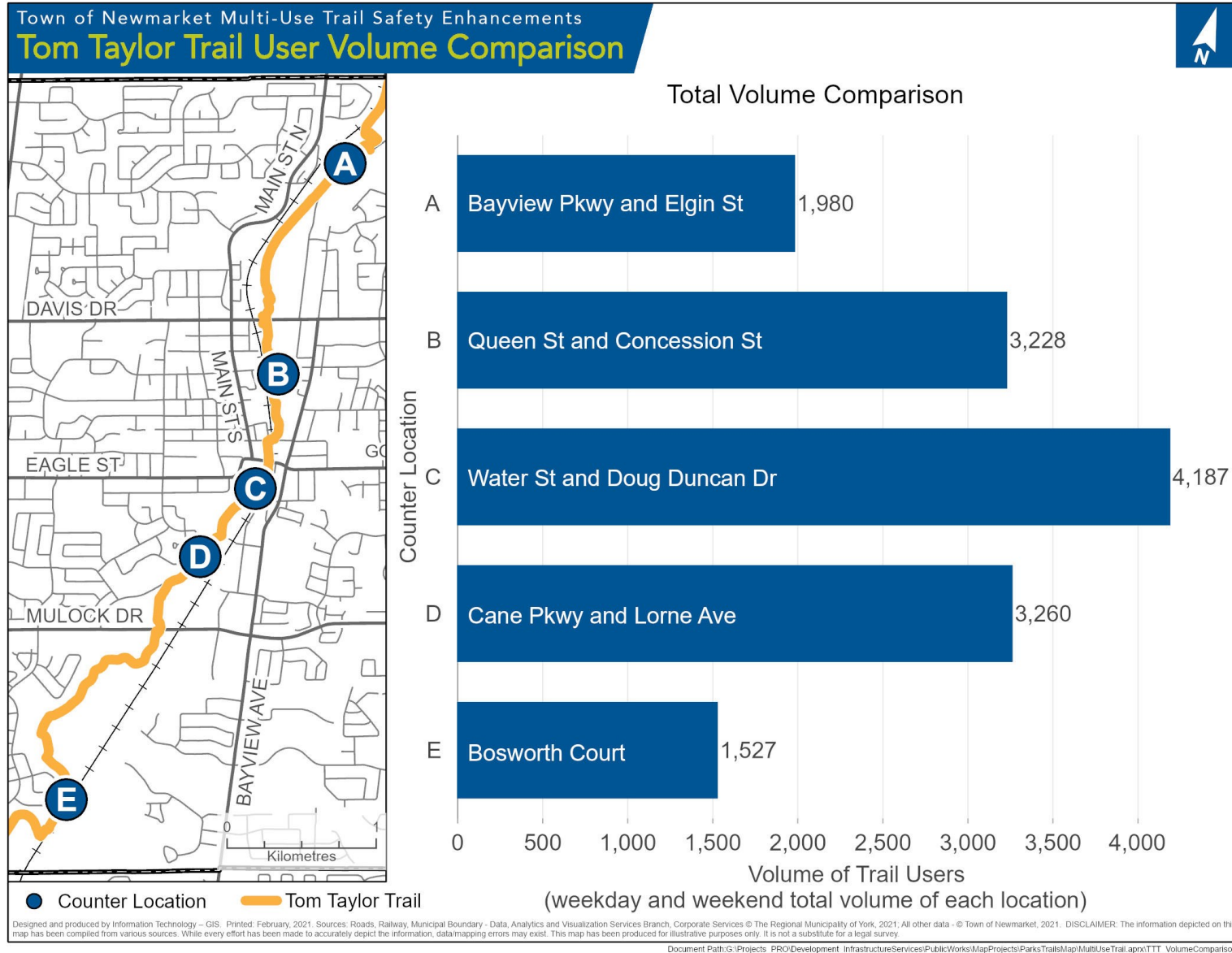
# Trail Volumes

## Trail count analysis

- Completed in August of 2020
- 3 days - one weekday and a weekend
- Very limited snap shot of trail usage
- Anticipate higher volumes during spring
- Covid impact on counts



# Trail Volumes





# Trail Risk Assessment

## **Risk Assessment and Inspection**

- Completed in August of 2020
- On site review of the TTT

## **Key Observations**

- Overall growth and a change in types of users
- Concerns with cyclists and speed of travel
- No centre lines or defined safe space
- Inconsistent signage
- Need for additional education
- Identification of locations with limited sight lines
- Other minor concerns and general trail hazards – to be dealt with by PWS

# Recommendations

## **Two Phase Approach for Trail Development**

1. Address immediate safety improvements
2. Undertake a Council Workshop to explore opportunities and clarify priorities for future development of multi use trails.

# Immediate Safety Improvements

## Centre Line Painting

- Create better visual separation and defined lane for users
- Effective for cyclist navigating hills
- Keep pedestrians in a safe space
- Follows traditional road traffic practices



Photo taken at: Ajax Waterfront Park Trail



# Immediate Safety Improvements

## Improve sight lines

- Increase visual sight lines
- Selective and sensitive tree and shrub removal
- Increased grass cutting in specific areas beyond the current one metre shoulder



Photo taken at: Tom Taylor Trail – Bosworth Court

# Immediate Safety Improvements

## Improved signage and pavement markings

- Additional hazard and educational signage be installed
- Early notification of hills, potential hazards such as curves, controlled intersections
- More cohesive and standardized signage/markings



Sample signage and pavement markings

# Immediate Safety Improvements

Municipal Best Practices - Trail Safety Elements			
Municipality	Centre Lines	Hazard Signage	Education Program
Toronto	●	●	●
Ottawa	●	●	
Hamilton		●	
Burlington	●	●	●
London	●	●	●
Kitchener	●	●	
Vaughan	●	●	



# Immediate Safety Improvements

## Education

- Outreach program to communicate and educate all users on new improvements
- Educational trail ambassadors to support outreach program



# Education and Enforcement

## Communications and Outreach Plan

### Goals

- Raise awareness and educate public about the new enhancements for trail safety.
- Remind all stakeholders of safety tips for cyclists, walkers, trail users with pets etc.
  - Trail etiquette, alternate routes, sharing the trails, trail safety, speed on trails and more

### Tools and Tactics

- Work with Corporate Communications to deploy a number of communication tactics
- Examples: Media release, information on the website, social media, e-newsletters, ads in the local paper, educational video, materials for trail ambassadors, public engagement portal and more

# Education and Enforcement

## **Educational-first approach via trail ambassadors is being recommended**

- Educational-first approach is more favourable for residents
- Parks By-law allows for limited ability to manage negative behavior and actions on the trails
- Trail ambassadors can educate and engage with all trail users and resources can be combined with other ambassadorship needs within the Town (ex. Parks)
  - Proactive approach to mitigate and reduce complaints
  - This successful approach was previously used for the new Smoking By-law
- Trail ambassadors can carry out educational stops and use solar speed boards to educate cyclists
- Trail ambassadors can be used as a first point of contact with residents. If matters escalate, bylaws can assist

## **Increased enforcement on Town Trails is not being recommended**

- Unfavourable for residents to have Bylaw Officers patrolling trails
- Impacts to Bylaw services for other areas of Town
- Impacts to budget requirements for Bylaws to monitor trails (resource impact)



# Recommendations

## **Two Phase Approach for Trail Development**

1. Address immediate safety improvements
- 2. Undertake a Council Workshop to explore opportunities and to clarify priorities for future development of multi use trails.**

# Best Practices

## Municipal Review

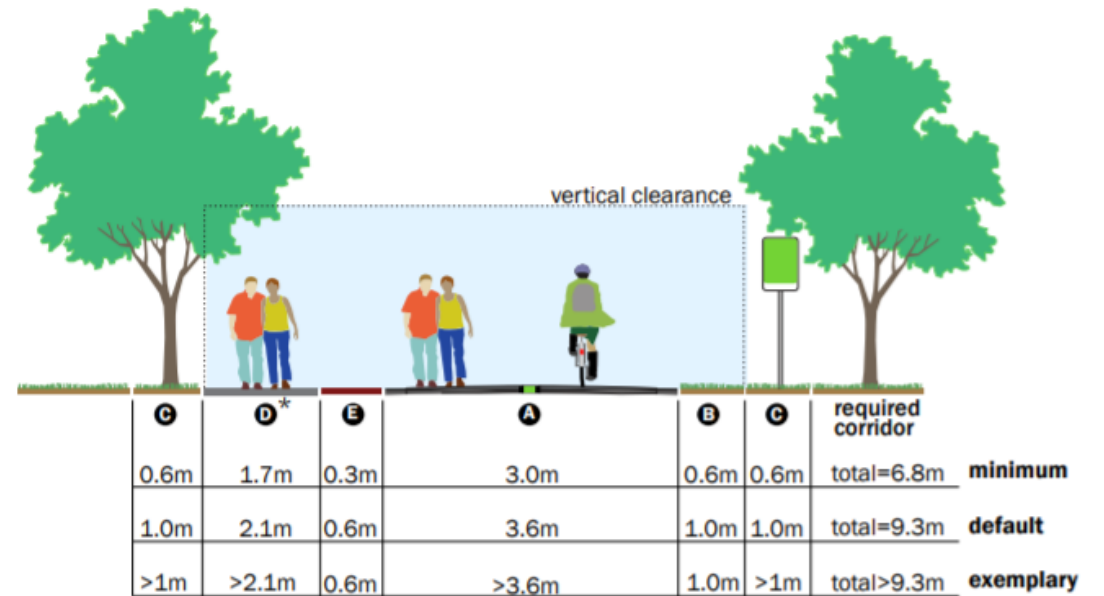
- Reviewed municipalities with high volume trails
- All had comprehensive formal design and construction guidelines
- Majority had formal maintenance standards
- While there are many best practices, there are varied or unique solutions specific to the municipality (ex. Line painting).
- Need a “Made in Newmarket” solution

Municipality	Formal Design Guidelines	Maintenance Standards	Expanded Trail Widths, >3m
Toronto	●	●	●
Ottawa	●		●
Hamilton	●	●	●
Burlington	●		●
London	●	●	●
Kitchener	●	●	●
Vaughan	●	●	●

# Best Practices

## Expanding Trail Capacity and Trail Types

- Trail counts and user types, indicate there may be a need for high capacity trails
- Central part of the TTT has significant volumes and should be reviewed for increasing trail capacity.
- Multi use trails need to be explored in conjunction with alternate routes and other transportation systems.
- Need to consider how multi use trails operate and interact with other MUP's (ex. similar signage, markings, rules, symbols where appropriate)



Source: City of Toronto High Capacity Trail Configuration, Toronto Trail Design Guidelines, 2015



# Opportunities

## Public Consultation

- Strong community attachment to our multi use trails
- Gain a better understanding of community experiences on trails and further needs
- Undertake a collaborative process for creating a long term vision

## Other Opportunities

- Management of and opportunities for off-leash dogs
- Public WiFi and Data on trails
- Environmental Sustainability
- Accessibility
- Public Art and Cultural
- And more...

# Council Workshop

## Recommended Workshop

- Review current situation
- Explore opportunities
- Identify a long term vision
- Establish priorities
- Set a clear path for moving forward



# Timeline

## **Spring 2021**

- Proposed safety enhancements (line painting, sight line clearing and signage)
- Enhanced communications/education plan
- Recruiting trail ambassadors for deployment in spring

## **Q3 - 2021**

- Council workshop to explore multi use trails in further detail, identify opportunities and priorities, and establish a clear direction for moving forward.



# Questions?

