

October 15, 2015

Doug MacRae, P.Eng.
Division Manager, Transportation Planning & Design
City of London
300 Dufferin Ave.
P.O. Box 5035
London, ON
N6A 4L9

Dear Mr. MacRae:

Under the Ontario Public Health Standards, the Middlesex London Health Unit (MLHU) promotes physical activity as a means of working towards the goal of reducing the burden of preventable chronic diseases which are the main cause of death and disability in Canada^{1,2}. This public health goal aligns with the City of London's 2015 – 2019 Strategic Plan area of focus of Building a Sustainable City. Having infrastructure and mobility choices that are convenient and well connected help to support physically active lifestyles. Development of the Cycling Master Plan - *London ON Bikes*, identifies that improvements to the current cycling infrastructure and cycling facilities will provide health, environmental and social benefits.

Cycling is an increasingly popular mode of active transportation used not only for recreation but also for utilitarian purposes, such as travel to and from home to places of work, school or shopping. According to the 2012 Office of the Chief Coroner for Ontario, Cycling Death Review report, cyclists are considered vulnerable road users³. For this reason there is a need to consider safety issues when developing this master plan. We see the Cycling Master Plan - *London ON Bikes* as being well positioned to play a significant role in improving the health and safety of cycling Londoners and improving the cycling environment.

Designing an effective Cycling Master Plan for the City of London is a complex undertaking and we acknowledge the expertise of city staff & consultants involved directly in this project. MLHU commends the efforts undertaken to consult the public and to inform and engage stakeholders.

The need to meet engineering standards and provincial guidelines as outlined in the *Ministry of Transport Book 18 – Cycling Facilities* is an important part of this process. Specifically, MLHU recommends the following:

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- That the cycling facilities along with programs, initiatives and policies provide clarity for both cyclists and drivers regarding the roles and responsibilities of each when sharing the road.
- Prioritize and provide appropriate cycling facilities on roads and intersections that have the highest cyclist-vehicle collision rates.
- Maximize continuity in the types of bicycle facilities along road ways in order to reduce confusion of both cyclists and drivers.
- Enhance connectivity of on-road and off-road facilities that coincides with current and anticipated future use of various cycling routes.
- Provide appropriate on-road bicycle facilities to increase safety and help reduce the number of cyclists who ride on sidewalks.
- At prioritized intersections, provide clarity to both cyclists and drivers as to where bicycles should be positioned and how they should proceed through the intersection, e.g. chevrons, bike boxes, surface treatment, staggered stop bar, left turn queue box, bicycle-level traffic lights, etc.
- Provide way finding that is clear and includes names of particular key routes and distances to destination points. Incorporate this into a revised Bike & Walk Map.
- Provide an ongoing variety of education strategies using multi-media approaches (e.g. website, Facebook, Twitter, email, radio, television, newspaper, Bike & Walk Map, etc.) directed at both cyclists and drivers to increase mutual understanding and respect of roles and responsibilities when sharing the road.
- Consult with Middlesex County and respective municipalities to coordinate bicycle facility connections between London and Middlesex county roadways.

The Middlesex London Health Unit supports the City of London Transportation Planning services in its efforts to provide Londoners with a Cycling Master Plan that will improve the cycling environment in the City of London. Having a Cycling Master Plan that supports health, safety and overall quality of life are of particular importance from a public health perspective.

Sincerely,

Christopher Mackie, MD, MHSc, CCFP, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health & Chief Executive Officer

¹ Toronto Public Health, City of Toronto Planning, City of Toronto Transportation Services and Gladki Planning Associates. *Active City: Designing for Health*, May 2014 City of Toronto.

² Warburton, DE, Katzmarzck, PT, Rhodes, RE, Shephard, RJ. (2007). *Evidence –informed physical activity guidelines for Canadian adults*. Canadian Journal of Public Health, 98:Suppl 2:S16-68.

³ Office of the Chief Coroner for Ontario (2-12). *Cycling death review: A review of all accidental cycling deaths in Ontario from January 1st, 2006 to December 31, 2010*. Province of Ontario.