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<b>TO:</b>	<b>CHAIR AND MEMBERS CIVIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING ON DECEMBER 17, 2012</b>
<b>FROM:</b>	<b>JAY STANFORD DIRECTOR, ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS &amp; SOLID WASTE &amp; EDWARD SOLDI, P.ENG. DIRECTOR, ROADS &amp; TRANSPORTATION</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>COMMENTS ON ENVIRONMENTAL BILL OF RIGHTS REGISTRY ONTARIO MINISTRY OF TRANSPORTATION'S CYCLING STRATEGY</b>

<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>
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That on the recommendation of the Director, Environmental Programs & Solid Waste and the Director, Roads & Transportation, the following comments **BE APPROVED** and submitted by London Municipal Council in its entirety to the Ministry of Transportation by January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2013 in response to the Environmental Bill of Rights Registry posting (EBR 011-7552) titled *Ontario Ministry of Transportation Cycling Strategy*.

<b>PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER</b>
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The relevant report that can be found at [www.london.ca](http://www.london.ca) under City Hall (Meetings) is:

- Report to the June 19<sup>th</sup> 2012 Civic Works Committee (CWC) Meeting, London 2030 Transportation Master Plan (Agenda Item #15)

<b>BACKGROUND</b>
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**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this report is to provide Committee and Council with:

- A summary of the Ontario Ministry of Transportation's proposed Cycling Strategy (found in its entirety in Appendix A), and
- The City of London's feedback on the strategy for approval and forwarding to the Environmental Bill of Rights Registry.

**CONTEXT:**

Research commissioned by the Ontario Ministry of Transportation in 2011 found that 48 per cent of Ontarians ride a bicycle at least once a week during the spring, summer and fall. Exercise and recreation are the main reasons that Ontarians ride their bicycles, but around 50 per cent of Ontario cyclists also do so as a mode of transportation – to ride to work or school, for shopping, to run errands, or to visit family and friends. While most cycling takes place on municipal roads, the Province still can play an important role in increasing both the number and safety of cyclists, through legislative and policy changes that affect municipal infrastructure design and operations.

The Ministry of Transportation's draft Cycling Strategy outlines the Province's plans for infrastructure, education and legislation, including a separate consultation on potential legislative amendments to the *Highway Traffic Act* aimed at improving cycling safety, such as those proposed in the Coroner of Ontario's "Cycling Death Review" report (i.e. mandatory helmets for all riders regardless of age and a minimum one metre passing rule for vehicles passing cyclists). The draft Cycling Strategy sets out a map for ongoing work and describes in detail the Ontario Government's plan and priorities.

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The Ministry's vision is "to be a world leader in moving people and goods safely, efficiently and sustainably, and to support a globally competitive economy and a high quality of life." Achieving this vision requires that the Province encourage cycling and improve the safety of cyclists in Ontario.

The Ministry is requesting feedback on the draft strategy as part of a 60-day public review and comment period.

**DISCUSSION:**

**Part A – How the proposed Cycling Strategy affects London**

Over the past several years, the City of London has undertaken many initiatives to encourage and facilitate more trips by bicycle. In particular, London's 2011 Bike Summit, in partnership with Share the Road Cycling Coalition and several local partners, highlighted the role the Province could play in advancing cycling across Ontario but also specifically in London.

In June 2012, Municipal Council received and approved the London 2030 Transportation Master Plan which included numerous details on expanding cycling in London including:

- implementing priority on street bike routes
- establishing more continuous bike lane routes and an extensive bike network
- securing bike parking facilities at all key public destinations and at major employers

and specific recommendations included:

*The Civic Administration BE DIRECTED to finalize a short-term Active Transportation and Transportation Demand Management Implementation Strategy that addresses recommendations in the plan and focuses on activities for the near term (2013 - 2015), and outlines the planned and proposed activities for the medium term (2016 - 2020);*

*The cycling infrastructure recommendations of the Plan BE REFERRED to the 2013 Capital Works Budget development; it being noted that there is an existing program for the Cycling infrastructure;*

It is widely acknowledged that there is still much more work to be done by the City of London, local organizations, businesses and individuals. As part of *A Green and Growing City*, which is one of the key result areas of Council's Strategic Plan, facilitating more trips by bike will contribute to Londoners' high quality of life.

The Province's proposed Cycling Strategy will address some of the local challenges that affect Londoners, but which are outside the City's jurisdiction. The areas under provincial jurisdiction include:

- Ensuring the Health Unit is fully part of the municipal planning review process to make the connection between our built environment, cycling (and walking) rates, and public health benefits.
- Ensuring the Ontario Driver Handbooks and related testing include more "share the road" concepts and educate drivers about bicycle road markings and signage. This will ensure that new drivers in London are well-versed in how to treat cyclists as both must share the road.
- Determining whether the *Highway Traffic Act* should be amended to include mandatory helmet use for all, adding a one metre passing rule for motorists passing cyclists, and exploring how cyclists can safely cross intersections (currently cyclists are not allowed to cycle along a crosswalk).
- Updating the Ontario Traffic Manuals to ensure that a menu of bicycle infrastructure treatments, bicycle signage, and signals are standardized and endorsed in municipal planning and engineering practices.

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The benefits of the Province's draft Cycling Strategy to London are many:

- Economic returns from a Province-wide strategy have already been demonstrated through better public health (i.e., lower obesity) and increased tourism as demonstrated both in Quebec and in British Columbia.
- An Ontario-wide strategy would help further position London to tap into the bicycle tourism market (e.g., cycling routes to Port Stanley on Lake Erie, Grand Bend on Lake Huron, routes to St. Mary's and Stratford, etc.).
- It would help make it easier for Londoners to ride a bike for more trips.
- It would make it easier for the City to design and build useful and safe bike infrastructure and develop effective education and safety messaging.

#### **Part B - Comments to be Submitted to the EBR Registry (#011-7552)**

City of London staff recommends that the following comments be submitted to the EBR posting:

1. The City of London supports the overall directions in the draft strategy in the areas of infrastructure, safety, education, monitoring, research, and coordination.
2. The Ministry of Transportation and other ministries that have already taken actions to support cycling are to be commended.
3. The City of London encourages the Province to show leadership in providing safe and convenient infrastructure for cyclists (and pedestrians) to cross over provincial highways and to provide funding for the incremental costs associated with bridge expansion to accommodate cycling lanes. Funding must not be the sole responsibility of municipalities.
4. The City of London encourages the Province to act on the suggestions proposed for funding including making "cycling infrastructure eligible for funding under the Municipal Infrastructure Investment initiative, and will explore options to include cycling within other provincial funding programs." It is imperative that the Province not only becomes a partner locally but also becomes a leader when linking municipalities and key destinations by shared or dedicated bike routes or paths.
5. The City of London supports updating the Ontario Driver Handbooks and related testing to include more "share the road" concepts and introduce more bicycle road markings and signage.
6. The City of London supports amending the *Highway Traffic Act* to include a one metre passing rule for drivers when passing a cyclist.
7. The City of London encourages the Province to clarify the definition of an "e-bike" for the public by further working with e-bike dealers and municipalities across Ontario to provide the provincial regulations in addition to the municipal by-laws governing e-bikes at point of sale.
8. The Province should further recognize the needs and context of municipalities outside the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA). That is, the less significant level of congestion in London is not an economic reason for individuals to switch to cycling for more peak period trips. Rather, our shorter average trip distances (5.2 km based on the 2010 Transportation Master Plan Household Travel Survey) do make cycling more time-competitive compared to driving.

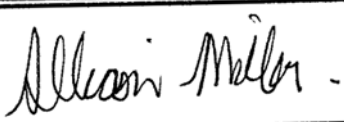
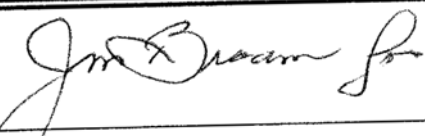
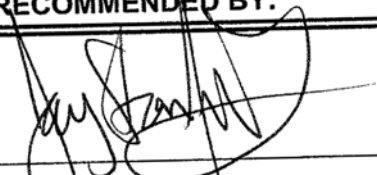
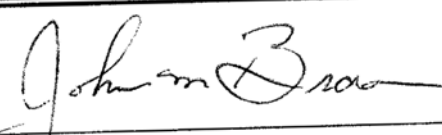
Municipalities like London, are proactively encouraging bicycle trips to avoid the congestion issues that the GTHA faces. Infrastructure, safety and education needs are just as important in municipalities without major congestion issues as demonstrated in the GTHA. Also, resources for monitoring and research in these communities will provide data and findings that are applicable to many other Ontario jurisdictions. Whereas, a focus on GTHA research and monitoring has little application in other Ontario communities.

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9. The City of London supports the work of public health units and host agencies in developing policies to increase physical activity. The Province should further enshrine the connection between providing bicycle infrastructure and health impacts by requiring public health units to be part of the municipal planning review process. An increase in physical activity levels due to the design of our built environment will lead to provincial healthcare savings from reduced chronic diseases, risk of physical injury and fatalities.
  
9. The Province should work with municipal partners and stakeholder organizations (such as the Share the Road Cycling Coalition) to cost-share the production of a series of cycling safety videos that are disseminated across the Province. These could have local branding added to them and be disseminated in each municipality. In-kind services can also be tapped into through local organizations in a municipality. In London, for example, there is the Thames Region Ecological Association, Our Street and several cycling clubs.
  
10. The City of London supports the Province encouraging a menu of options to assist cyclists (e.g., bike lanes, bike boxes, bicycle-actuated traffic signals, and segregated bike lanes) through its bikeways planning and design guidelines.
  
11. The Province should provide specific guidance for how cyclists are to be treated at and through intersections, as this is where most conflicts occur with motorized vehicles. There are many other jurisdictions that can be used as best practices for intersection treatments. Currently in Ontario municipalities, providing cycling infrastructure often focuses on the areas between blocks and cyclists are left to fend for themselves through intersections.
  
12. The City supports the further development of a Province-wide monitoring program, specifically conducting regular counts of cyclists, to establish baseline data and measure future increases in the number of trips made by bicycle. The City of London has recently become a leader in collecting data on bicycle use (and walking) both related to on and off-road facilities. This is data that can be shared with other Ontario municipalities and be part of provincial tracking to better understand cyclists' travel patterns, needs, and barriers to cycling more.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

This report was prepared with assistance from Jamie Skimming, Manager, Air Quality.

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