

Comments from City of London Cycling Advisory Committee on Ministry of
Transportation's (MTO) Cycling Action Plan Input – October 15, 2014

Our committee values cycling for all the benefits it brings to London to provide safe and convenient routes that support and influence sustainable transportation systems, improve health of our citizens and that protects and enhances the environment.

1. ONTARIO MUNICIPAL CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM

Question 1: Below are types of cycling infrastructure that the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) will be making eligible for funding under the program. MTO welcomes your thoughts and feedback on the list below, including what would encourage cycling most, and whether there are additional types of infrastructure the ministry should consider making eligible for funding.

On-Road Cycling Infrastructure

- Shared Roadway with Signed Bicycle Route
- Signed Bicycle Route with Paved Shoulder
- Conventional Bicycle Lane
- Contra-flow Bicycle Lane
- Separated Bicycle Lane (with painted buffer)
- Separated Bicycle Lane (with physical barrier)
- Raised Cycle Track
- Bicycle Priority Street
- Construction/modification of bridges, tunnels and access ramps to accommodate cycling
- Enhancing existing cycling infrastructure as part of a reconstruction/resurfacing project

In-Boulevard Cycling Infrastructure

- Active Transportation/Multi-Use Path
- Bicycle-only Facility
- Enhancing existing cycling infrastructure as part of a reconstruction/resurfacing project

Off-Road Cycling Infrastructure

- Off-Road Active Transportation/Multi-Use Path

Other Cycling Infrastructure

- Improvements to an intersection configuration (including traffic control devices)
- Bike Racks
- Other Bike Storage
- Cycling-Specific Signs

Please consult Ontario Traffic Manual - Book 18 - Cycling Facilities for further information about cycling infrastructure (see Additional Information section for a link to this document).

Our committee would emphasize project funding be distributed from the Ministry that moves cities forward on projects not already underway. For example, this could involve more costly infrastructure initiatives such as one way or two way separated bike lanes with physical barriers between cyclists and vehicle traffic, integrated connection of bike routes and better facilities at destinations (bike racks, lockers, etc.) whereas sharrows, intersection crossing markings, bike boxes and painted buffers are low cost items any city should be able to integrate easily into its operational budget. Also communities should be encouraged to build on existing routes located on collector or arterial streets so that they better connect neighbourhoods and major destinations throughout the community.

We note the above MTO list does not reference bicycle-specific traffic signal infrastructure, improved street crossings separate to intersections, neighbourhood traffic calming treatments to slow down traffic while prioritizing cycling and walking safety, air pump stations, bike repair stations and lighting in remote areas that have cycling lanes. Complete Streets approaches are not specifically stated to reduce the amount of space for vehicles, either by eliminating or reducing the width of vehicles lanes and reallocating

that space toward other uses. For example, rapid transit lanes and corresponding connected cycling routes are expected to be a consideration in London in the near future.

Recognizing the Ministry's plan supports municipalities over a 3 year period as they develop and implement municipal official plans and transportation-related plans that support cycling, the timing is excellent for London as it defines priority projects during its process of adopting a new official plan and updating its Bicycle Master Plan. The bicycle plan was first developed in 2005 to guide the development of a long term, City-wide, on and off-road commuter and recreational bicycling network. London's bicycle network includes shared on-road signed bicycle routes (no lane demarcation), a multi-use pathway system and in boulevard bicycle paths (identified lanes). London is fortunate to have a number of multi-use pathways for citizens to use for commuting and recreation.

Question 2: MTO is considering requiring that projects must be listed in a municipal planning document, such as an official plan, cycling plan and/or active transportation plan, or asset management plan, in order to be eligible for funding. Are there legitimate exceptions to this that the Province should consider?

Referencing high profile municipal policy documents such as the above seems very appropriate in funding new cycling infrastructure strategies so that they reflect the goals and priorities to shape growth and development of a city over a 20 year period.

With respect to exceptions, it is of note that safety should be a high priority with new infrastructure. Some cities may not have cycling master plans or active transportation plans but they may have road safety plans or Transportation Demand Management planning strategies to support the reduction of vehicle use during peak periods.

As a note, London has recently established a Road Safety Strategy (2014-2019), in collaboration with the County, based on a comprehensive review of a 4-year traffic collision history (2008-2011) combined with the findings of public input collected by the City. This document ties in with the City's Transportation Master Plan. Cyclists are one of the target strategies with emphasis on police enforcement on road crossing, collision data accessibility from London Health Sciences Emergency Departments, continued expansion of bike lanes yearly by the City and Share the Road signage and education by the County, City, and Middlesex-London Health Unit.

Question 3: MTO will be guided in its evaluation of proposed projects by a number of considerations, including a project's ability to:

- increase ridership levels
- improve connectivity of (local and recreational) cycling networks and to other transportation modes, particularly transit
- improve rider safety and security
- be cost effective
- enable and demonstrate partnerships
- support innovation and collection of cycling-related data/research

Other: _____

Please prioritize the list of evaluation considerations in order of importance to you or your organization. Are there any other considerations that the Province should make in its evaluation of projects?

- *improve rider safety and security*
- *improve connectivity of (local and recreational) cycling networks and to other transportation modes, particularly transit*
- *increase ridership levels*
- *be cost effective*
- *support innovation and collection of cycling-related data/research*
- *enable and demonstrate partnerships*

In terms of evaluation, it could be a consideration to assess whether a project has impact on lower vehicular traffic speeds and volumes and alleviating congestion, therefore, potentially reducing fossil fuel usage and air pollution. Also to evaluate public

acceptance of the new project installation, administrative effort and required maintenance, and types of ridership using the installation may be valued.

2. CYCLING SKILLS TRAINING FUNDING PROGRAM

1. Are there additional factors that contribute to successful training in Ontario that MTO should consider?

Recognizing MTO is aware that many municipalities and community-based organizations currently offer cycling training programs ranging from teaching children how to ride a bike to coaching adults on how to cycle defensively on city streets, our committee agrees with the existing factors MTO has identified to build on education including:

- *availability of training instructors*
- *convenient scheduling and duration of courses*
- *availability of cycling training programs in communities of all sizes*
- *ability of training programs to address the needs of a diverse Ontario*
- *public awareness of available training programs*

2. How can cycling education/training be made more convenient (e.g. time involved and locations it is offered) and responsive to the diverse needs of Ontario's communities?

Public education is an integral part of the services offered in a community. Consistent with the Chief Coroner's Cycling Death Review, it is important that ongoing investment be made in cycling education programs in order to close the existing knowledge and skills gap by both youth and adults whether on a bike or in a vehicle.

In more than two thirds of the cases, the Coroner's report showed the cyclist was partly responsible for the accident—by disregarding traffic signs, entering the curb lane too quickly after being on the sidewalk, or travelling against traffic. These issues need to be challenged and resolved not just with education but enforcement.

Our committee would suggest promoting cycling training in schools through links to curriculum and offering it in the workplace suitable to learning and work schedules to make the process more convenient but not just in a classroom. Being on a bike reinforces the learning. A number of cities across Ontario have service groups that promote bike rodeos and/or municipal or NGOs that offer CAN-BIKE programs that range from learning to ride to building confidence in busy traffic. Paying a fee is frequently a barrier for participants in taking trainings so strategies need to be in place to help support a variety of users. Another barrier is the expense of the trainers being trained and the risk insurance required on site for both participants and the trainers themselves. Arranging subsidized training could provide greater participation levels and more trainers.

Lastly, not everyone can afford a bike. As well, some have had the experience of having a bike stolen so insight to bike kitchens, police auctions, bike restorations etc. can help to provide more access to used bikes and parts for those that cannot afford to buy a new bike or to replace a stolen one with a new bike. These agencies offering other options can in turn also have information for the public on available trainings in their community.

Cycling training involves motorists as well. Our committee supports MTO encouraging drivers to learn the rules of the road related to cycling by adding more cycling content to driver-testing materials as well as promoting use of helmets by cyclists of all ages. These actions can make highways and streets safer in all communities in Ontario. London has a Brain Injury Association program that partners with lawyers to provide a number of free helmets to elementary schools each year. This could be replicated elsewhere.

Education is also enhanced with the establishment of reliable and sustainable municipal funding sources for upkeep of bicycle pavement markings and signs to make it easier for cyclists to have good visibility on city streets and to be seen on city streets.