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**Dave Mitchell, Chair - City of London Cycling Advisory Committee**

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**City of London, Civic Works Committee**

Dear Committee Members,

Our committee would thank you for your continued commitment to providing safe infrastructure to cyclists in London. At the March 7th PPM the project moved forward with a condition of a compatible rapid transit route and our committee would encourage this project not be delayed but proceed as outlined in the March 7th 2017 staff report that was supported by the CAC at our Dec 14th, 2016 meeting.

It was good to hear the other opinions at the PPM. While we understand a solution that would have no impact would be ideal the reality is anything attempting to modify the downtown core will come with compromise. We find City staff has done an exemplary job of finding a solution that minimizes impact to businesses/residents and will do so in a cost effective and timely manner.

We most definitely agree that the Dundas corridor would be a beneficial route but the pushback the committee has heard so far in regards to on-street parking would pale in comparison to that challenge. Again a testament to the thoughtfulness of the work City staff has done.

Certainly studies have shown the value to local business that cyclist traffic would bring, we just don't feel that the first attempt at a protected cycle track should try to tackle that until we've had some experience to fortify the position. Ideally, business would reach out to the City.

As parking is the most logical of the arguments against the proposed cycle track let us look at the nature of the loss. The small number of local businesses that rely on on-street parking for their customers all appear to have daytime business hours and parking lots of some sort around or behind their establishments. In all likelihood those spots are rented to downtown workers, but if a business requires parking should they be dependant on city spots they

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have no control of the availability of? Certainly if automobile transportation demands required another lane of traffic in the planned areas the first thing to go would be the parking spots. We also hope that that Downtown Parking Strategy would help reduce the impact long term.

Another large complement of the parking spots are actually part of an existing bike lane that are permitted to be parked in on Sundays mornings for church-goers.

Is the safety provided by a cycle track that would be available to cyclists 100% of the time less valuable than parking availability that ranges from 2% to a maximum of 29% hourly utilization?

A committee member asked about the connections to the rest of the city. This is a first phase pilot project which really will set the foundation of the Cycling Master Plan and its objective to do just that. We need to start somewhere, and a central thoroughfare is as good a place as any. In fact, we'd argue it is the best place to start.

One of the reasons we think it is the best starting place is from a financial perspective. This project dovetails with work on a corridor that will be happening regardless. There were committee concerns that this might be a step in the wrong direction with the uncertainty of rapid transit routes. At this point none of us know when or what the rapid transit solution will look like, but we do know that moving this project ahead will, in a year's time, make London cyclists safer. It is also designed such that even if the 'soft' infrastructure pieces (ie concrete barriers) were to be removed to make room for a rapid transit route we would have both the benefit of experience and insight from that period but also the completion of hard infrastructure pieces like transit islands, road widenings and tree removal already taken care of.

The core of the city has one of the highest concentrations of employees and workplaces that would benefit from a cycle track, which in itself could alleviate a number of the challenges that will present themselves as other key infrastructure projects move forward.

None of us have a crystal ball that can predict the future of London, but we can all agree that we are more than likely to grow. With growth comes increased transportation demands. This council has taken the lead in some of the most dramatic and future proofing initiatives in a lifetime. Encouraging a safe, supported alternative means of transportation with a long list of added benefits would be in the interest of all Londoners.

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Top reasons to support the project / concerns:

- It is the best option given the multiple considerations outlined in staff reports, Jan 10 & Mar 7, 2017 and endorsed by Council, Jan 17, 2017
- It enhances safe mobility choices for cyclists, especially those who commute into the downtown core
- It takes advantage of a current funding opportunity
- It integrates with existing and future cycling routes within the downtown, the TVP and from multiple parts of the city, which is a key feature in the CMP
- Parking impacts will be incorporated into the Downtown Parking Strategy solutions. Lost parking impact analysis indicates parking can be accommodated with the current on and off street parking supply with typical parking vacancy buffers spots
- It would be unfortunate to delay this project since the development of the BRT could be several years in the future. If it is decided to put the BRT line along Queens Ave, this project will have already provided some of the infrastructure changes such as road widening, tree removal, etc. If this is the case, the cycle track concrete barriers and flexible bollards would be removed and new cycle route considerations undertaken.

**Dave Mitchell**