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Report of the Cycling Master Plan Working Group

We would like to provide an update with regards to the status of the report that was presented at last month's meeting. At the October CAC meeting, the working group tabled the Cycling Master Plan report by the working group, and we would like to read the results of that report into the official record.

1. At the Civic Works Committee meeting on October 22, 2019, the following motion was passed: "CAC report BE REFERRED to the Civic Administration for consideration and action, as appropriate."
2. At the Council meeting on October 29, 2019, the following motion was passed: "That Item 2.9 of the 14th Report of the Civic Works Committee BE AMENDED to add the following new part c):
'c) the initial staff report related to the Climate Emergency Declaration BE DIRECTED to the Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee.'"

We would like to point out that the amendment referenced by Council was not related to our report, but another report from staff. The portion of the Civic Works report relating to our report was passed as submitted. In the Council meeting, our report received overwhelmingly positive feedback from both staff and Councillors, specifically with comments thanking us for our work. The working group did take note of the feedback offered by Councillor Morgan regarding the implementation of a work plan for this committee. This advice is received and will be taken into account in future work of the working group.

In addition to the public support that the report received, a letter was sent by Vélo Canada Bikes to Mayor Holder, copied to the Civic Works Committee. While they noted that they do not normally take the time to weigh in on local-level policy decisions, they felt that our report deserved "a second look for national significance". While the full content of the letter is attached, we want to highlight one short passage from the letter:

"The Cycling Advisory Committee's work is indeed a shining example. We intend to share the report across Canada with like-minded groups and committees as an inspiration. We know that there are numerous cities like yours and groups like theirs that will get a head start by reviewing its structure, methodology and recommendations. The people of London must consider themselves extremely lucky to have such a body able to contribute so meaningfully on what is likely very limited if any resources."

The working group is completely satisfied with the actions taken by the Civic Works Committee and Council with regards to this report. The report has been received by staff and we look forward to hearing their feedback, and providing any further input as requested. We expect that staff is going to further engage with us on the basis of this report, which will provide a real opportunity for consultation with regards to the Climate Emergency declaration and Vision Zero policy, as they relate to cycling.

We plan to have another working group meeting where we will invite city staff and other committees that may be impacted by this report. We plan to schedule this for the New Year.

We also have received a verbal invite from Dan Foster, Chair, Transportation Advisory Committee, to give a presentation. Mr. Foster read the report and has questions. He has put those wheels in motion and will wait for TAC's formal request.

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October 29, 2019

His Worship Mayor Ed Holder,

On behalf of Velo Canada Bikes, a nationally incorporated member organization committed to seeing best practices in cycling adopted everywhere in Canada and Canada's voice for recreational and transportation-focused cycling at the federal level, we would like to offer an unusually strong endorsement of the report and work put forward by London's Cycling Advisory Committee on October 16th 2019.

This important and unique piece of policy development is a remarkable example of citizen involvement, evidence-based decision-making and clear determination. It demonstrates how the City of London must take action if it wants to achieve key climate change goals shared not just by its citizens, but by all Canadians and people all over the planet.

London is not alone. Like many cities and provinces across Canada, the status quo in transportation planning is insufficient and has been for decades. Like many cities, the current path being taken will not be enough for London to meet its own climate targets, let alone be seen as a leader across Canada. We think this is an opportunity.

Normally, Velo Canada Bikes does not take the time to weigh in on local-level policy decisions, but we are a nation in search of leadership. These are unusual times. Importantly, a few of our directors and members felt strongly that this report was special and prompted us to take a second look for national significance. They felt we should view not just as the work of another passionate group, but as a message of hope and something of a first.

We agree.

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The Cycling Advisory Committee's work is indeed a shining example. We intend to share the report across Canada with like-minded groups and committees as inspiration. We know that there are numerous cities like yours and groups like theirs that will get a head start by reviewing its structure, methodology and recommendations. The people of London must consider themselves extremely lucky to have such a body able to contribute so meaningfully on what is likely very limited if any resources.

What they are demanding is no longer groundbreaking. Creating a network of cycling infrastructure suitable for all ages and abilities with a sense of urgency is indeed quite possible. Around the world, whether it is Seville, Spain, or Montreal, Quebec or Calgary, Alberta you will find examples where a motivated government body has been able to lead the way. Each time, the average person has always responded, leading to drastic increases in ridership. This should no longer surprise anyone. No matter where you are in Canada, the latent demand for safe cycling is high and always the same.

We strongly urge you to implement the recommendations of the report and, further, to build on its spirit. Something special is clearly happening in London. We urge you to take advantage of this opportunity to leverage your advisors and set London apart as a leader. Give other cities across Canada hope that we can, when we need to, act quickly and decisively to create, in the words of your local advocacy organization, "a world worth living in" where safe streets are the norm, where more money is spent locally and where you - and people across Canada - can look forward to a future of improve our health and well-being, forever.

Please consider Velo Canada Bikes as your ally in this struggle. We see our role as helping all municipalities, provinces, first nations, and federal government departments and agencies find ways to work together to make a Bike Friendly Canada happen for us all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anders Swanson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Anders Swanson, Chair

Cc:

Councillor P. Squire (Chair, Civic Works Standing Committee)

Councillor S. Lehman

Councillor S. Lewis

Councilor E. Pelosa

Councillor M. van Holst

Ben Cowie, City of London Cycling Advisory Committee