

Item 5.1

Mayor Holder, Councilors, and members of the Civic Works Committee

Budget time is an incredibly stressful time, which is readily apparent to everyone that participates. One thing that is consistently apparent is that staff and council are working hard to create a vision for the city for the next few years that is reflective of future needs of the city.

It was heartening to see so many individuals and groups taking part in the budget process at the public participation meetings (PPM). Some had more specific requests, others with more general comments. The Cycling Advisory Committee (CAC), unlike other groups, had no specific business case or line item that was being addressed, and as such and out of respect to councils and staff's time, we opted to not speak at the second PPM.

As stated at the first PPM however; the CAC still has doubts, given the evidence from other municipalities, that the budget being spent on cycling will not result in meaningful steps towards the Cycling Master Plan (CMP). As well, whether its execution and evaluation will be accurate and efficient without a city staff member whose primary responsibility is to active transportation.

One thing that was clear at the PPM's was that there is a rapidly growing community calling for more investment in quantity and quality of cycling infrastructure in the city. Both London Cycle Link (LCL) and Western Active Transportation Society (WATS) put forward a bold plan to take what is in the CMP and to amplify it with a much shorter timeline. They have correctly identified that the biggest hurdle to more people cycling in this city is a lack of citywide contiguous network that is protected and safe for all cyclists aged eight to eighty year round.

What is being suggested is in line with numerous council directives, while also being in line with the overall aims of the CMP. The CAC looks forward to continued conversations with LCL and WATS, and hopes that council and staff will take a deep look into their ideas to help advance cycling and perhaps even supercede the goals of the CMP.

Lastly, to the citizens of London: It is your voice that empowers council and staff to create and execute a vision of the future of London. You have started to speak out about the needs of cyclists in London and the powerful reasons why cycling can be a tremendous tool for the city both economically and environmentally. Yes, the budget is a natural annual cadence of the city; but it is important to continue to remind not just today, but at every step of the way in the future the importance of cycling in all its form in creating a vibrant city for all those that call London home. The hardest and most important thing you can do is to continue to respectfully show up and remind and work with all involved, the needs and hopes that you want to see reflected in your city.

Sincerely,
Jamieson Roberts
Chair, City of London Cycling Advisory Committee