

March 8th, 2023 Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee Meeting Agenda Item
Strategic Plan Public Participation Meeting

Cities across Canada are facing a growing challenge: how to balance the needs of a growing population with the need to reduce traffic congestion and the associated environmental and economic costs. One solution to this challenge is to invest in safe and connected cycling infrastructure. As a new Council, I implore you to explore the economic benefits of such an investment, focusing on the cost of road maintenance and car traffic congestion.

One of the main economic benefits of investing in cycling infrastructure is a reduction in the cost of road maintenance. According to a study by the City of Vancouver, the cost of maintaining a road used by a car is about \$0.16 per kilometer, while the cost of maintaining a road used by a cyclist is only \$0.03 per kilometer. This is because cyclists cause less wear and tear on the road surface, reducing the need for expensive repairs and maintenance.

In addition to reducing the cost of road maintenance, investing in cycling infrastructure can also reduce the economic cost of car traffic congestion. According to a report by the Pembina Institute, traffic congestion in Canadian cities costs the economy billions of dollars each year. This cost comes from a variety of factors, including lost productivity, increased fuel consumption, and increased greenhouse gas emissions.

Investing in cycling infrastructure can help to reduce these costs by providing an alternative mode of transportation that is not subject to the same traffic congestion as cars. A study by the University of British Columbia found that cycling can be up to 10 times faster than driving during rush hour in urban areas. By providing safe and connected cycling infrastructure, cities can encourage more people to choose cycling as a mode of transportation, reducing the number of cars on the road and the associated economic costs of congestion.

Furthermore, investing in cycling infrastructure can also have positive economic impacts on local businesses. A study by the Toronto Centre for Active Transportation found that cyclists tend to spend more money at local businesses than drivers. This is because cyclists are more likely to stop and shop at businesses along their route, while drivers are more likely to bypass these businesses in favor of larger shopping centers.

In conclusion, investing in safe and connected cycling infrastructure can have significant economic benefits for a Canadian city such as London. By reducing the cost of road maintenance, reducing the economic cost of car traffic congestion, and supporting local businesses, cycling infrastructure can provide a cost-effective solution to the growing

challenge of balancing the needs of a growing population with the need to reduce traffic congestion and associated costs. Therefore, cities should prioritize and increase their investment in cycling infrastructure.

“We can’t do this! London is a car city!” Nevertheless, my fellow citizens that aren’t giving up their car travel still have a reason to support cycling infrastructure. The more people on bikes and not in their way will only serve to clear the roadways of competing traffic that is slowing them down each day. A true win-win-win solution if there ever was one.

Kind Regards,

Andrew McClenaghan

Owner, London Bicycle Café

Former Owner, Digital Echidna, Large Business of the Year 2019