

## How to Contact Us:

To be added to our mailing list for this study or to submit your comments on the County of Essex's "County Wide Active Transportation Study" (CWATS), please contact:

### Jane Mustac, P.Eng.

EA Coordinator  
Corporation of the County of Essex  
360 Fairview Avenue W.  
Essex, Ontario  
N8M 1Y6

Phone: 519-776-6441 ext. 397  
Fax: 519-776-4455

[jmustac@countyofessex.on.ca](mailto:jmustac@countyofessex.on.ca)

or

### Dave McLaughlin, MCIP, RPP

Senior Project Manager  
MMM Group Limited  
100 Commerce Valley Drive W.  
Thornhill, Ontario  
L3T 0A1

Phone: 905-882-4211 ext. 6520  
Fax: 905-882-7277

[mclaughlind@mmm.ca](mailto:mclaughlind@mmm.ca)

We look forward to receiving your ideas on how we can improve conditions for active transportation in the County of Essex.

Thank you for your interest in the County-Wide Active Transportation Study (CWATS). We hope to see you at our Public Information Centre (PIC) on May 13, 2010, from 3-7 p.m. in the Council Chambers at the County of Essex's offices.



Malden Road, LaSalle

## Where Do We Go From Here?

The first phase of the CWATS is to establish an understanding of the existing context for active transportation in the County of Essex. This includes reviewing existing policies and initiatives, mapping existing and previously proposed AT routes as well as design guidelines. We will also complete an environmental scan and document the results in the form of benchmarking report, which will be posted on the County's CWATS webpage.

With the existing context established, we can begin to move forward and build the Master Plan. We will meet with stakeholders and the public to confirm the proposed Vision for a County level Active Transportation strategy as well as a set of draft route selection principles that the team will then use to select and assess potential routes for the formal AT plan.



Network barriers, opportunities as well as key attractions and destinations will be identified and reviewed with the public, stakeholders and the steering committee and then a candidate route map will be prepared and presented for public comment. Once the public have had an opportunity to comment on the candidate route network the team will refine it and then investigate each of the candidate routes in the field in the spring and early summer of 2010. Following the field investigations the team will refine the route network and prepare a recommended draft route network. In addition, the team will prepare a set of policy recommendations and an implementation strategy, including a cost estimate and phasing plan for the next 30 years. All of this information will be assembled and documented in the form of a CWATS Master Plan Report which will then be presented to the public at a second public open house, expect to be scheduled for the fall of 2010.

## We need your input and suggestions as we begin this study!

Complete the survey or take a few minutes to review the following questions and then Email or Mail in your responses and any other ideas you have that you would like the study team to consider.

1. What are your top three suggestions for improving pedestrian and cycling conditions in the County of Essex?
2. Do you consider yourself primarily:  
 Recreational walker (e.g. for leisure)       Recreational cyclist (e.g. for fitness)  
 Utilitarian walker (e.g. to go shopping)       Utilitarian cyclist (e.g. to go to work)  
 Both of the above       Both of the above
3. Where are some of the key barriers to walking and cycling in the County of Essex or your local municipality and what do you think could be done to overcome these barriers?
4. In your opinion, what could the County, Local Municipalities and the Essex Region Conservation Authority do to encourage you and your family to try active transportation or active recreation more often and reduce your use of your motor vehicle?
5. Do you have any other comments for the Study Team?

Please note that all information submitted to the study team, with the exception of personal information, will form part of the public record of this study. Materials and publications produced for this study can be made available in an alternative format upon request. This newsletter has been designed using a variety of graphics design software and has been published in Adobe's Portable Document Format (PDF) for ease of public access. This newsletter is also available in a text only MSWord format for use with text to speech (TTS) voice synthesizing software.



## Newsletter No. 1

This is the first in a series of newsletters designed to invite your input and inform you about the County of Essex's County Wide Active Transportation Master Plan Study (CWATS).

In January 2010, the County of Essex retained the MMM Group in association with Transactive Solutions and McMahon Communications to assist County staff in the development of an Active Transportation Master Plan. The study is being guided by a steering committee that includes representatives from the seven local municipalities in the County as well as the Essex Region Conservation Authority (ERCA), City of Windsor and the Municipality of Chatham-Kent.



Cycling in Windsor

## WHY IS THE COUNTY OF ESSEX UNDERTAKING AN ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN?

The County has initiated a **County Wide Active Transportation Study (CWATS)** that will support and strengthen the active transportation plans of local municipalities. It will outline a comprehensive network of on-road corridors and off-road trails to connect County and selected local roads to improve connections between regional and local systems and to promote active transportation.

Active transportation in the County of Essex means:

- **Active Commuting** which involves journeys to and from work;
- **Active Workplace Travel** which includes trips during working hours such as the delivery of materials or attending meetings;
- **Active Destination Oriented Trips** which includes trips to and from school, shops, visiting friends and running errands; and
- **Active Recreation** which involves the use of an active transportation mode for fitness or recreational pursuits, such as hiking and cycling.

The CWATS will build upon and consolidate the existing active transportation studies across the County and its seven local municipalities as well as identify appropriate connections to Chatham-Kent and the City of Windsor. This study will focus primarily on non-motorized modes (hiking, cycling, walking, etc.) on County roads and select local roads and will identify priorities for network implementation projects over the next 25 years, suggest how best to partner with local municipalities, determine appropriate levels of funding for operations and maintenance, review the current standards, by-laws, and programs for trails, cycling and walking and introduce a program for public outreach (promotion and education).



Chrysler Greenway

A comprehensive, multi-faceted set of strategies that build upon policies already established in the County's Official Plan, Local Municipal Official and Transportation Plans and the Regional Transportation Master Plan are needed to accommodate the projected growth for the Windsor Essex Region and provide a more sustainable active transportation network.

The CWATS was initiated in January of 2010 and is expected to be completed by September (2010).

## CWATS Objectives:

The following objectives have been prepared to guide the study:

- Consult with the public, key stakeholders, the Essex Region Conservation Authority, Local Municipalities in the County, City of Windsor, Municipality of Chatham-Kent, local tourism industry and other partners that could have a role in facilitating and promoting active transportation in Essex County.
- Build upon, enhance and improve connections to existing and previously proposed active transportation facilities in the County.
- Recommend actions to improve conditions for walking, cycling and active transportation in the County of Essex for people of all ages by providing an on-road corridor and off-road trails system which integrates a number of facility types for both recreation and utilitarian use and make the best use of publicly owned lands, regardless of jurisdiction.
- Identify the elements of an Active Transportation network that are appropriate for the County of Essex, that will improve consistency and coordination throughout the county, and will provide appropriate connections to the neighbouring municipalities of Chatham-Kent and the City of Windsor.
- Develop a cost effective and practical implementation strategy that will identify priorities, annual costs, and best practices for facility design and support an improved active transportation network.
- Identify and recommend strategies and programs that the County as well as local municipalities can lead, or partner with others, to encourage more people to walk and bicycle more often for utilitarian and recreational purposes.
- Identify roles and responsibilities for the County, Local Municipalities, ERCA and other partners in facilitating walking, cycling and active transportation.

## A Proposed Vision for Active Transportation in Essex County

A County Wide Active Transportation Study should be guided by specific objectives, but it should also present and be guided by a vision that establishes a target (i.e. where we want to be in 30 years) and guides the successful implementation of the Plan (i.e. the steps we must take to get there). The following draft vision / goal and objectives for CWATS have been prepared based on consultation with County Staff as well as the Study Team.

*“The County of Essex and its seven local area municipalities support active transportation (walking and cycling) and in association with the Essex Region Conservation Authority, City of Windsor and Municipality of Chatham-Kent and other partners, are working together to foster a safe, comfortable and bicycle and pedestrian friendly environment by encouraging people of all ages and abilities to engage in non-motorized activities for everyday transportation and recreation. Residents and visitors are able to travel and experience the urban and rural areas of the County by way of a connected network of on and off-road pedestrian and cycling facilities.”*

## The Active Transportation Network - Route Process

The following proposed network development approach involves a set of iterative steps to establish a recommended active transportation network for the County of Essex. The pedestrian system and cycling network development approach includes:

- *An inventory of existing conditions:* which compiles and digitally maps existing or previously planned active transportation facilities (pedestrian and cycling) in the local municipalities, the County of Essex and the Windsor-Essex Region, made up of both on and off-road facilities, in order to establish a base condition.
- *A route selection process:* which includes a set of principles and supporting qualitative and quantitative criteria for determining the preferred route and facility types; and
- *Selecting Candidate Routes and Finalizing Active Transportation System Improvements and the Network:* which involves identifying missing links in the current municipal and County sidewalk system, selecting a set of on and off-road pedestrian and cycling routes and evaluating each for feasibility and for inclusion as part of an improved County-wide active transportation system.

The proposed County Active Transportation Network will be a key outcome of this study, and is expected to consist of on-road and off-road pedestrian and cycling facilities which include, but are not limited to, multi-use trails, bike lanes, signed bike routes, paved shoulders with edge lines and sidewalks.

## Route Selection Principles

The following is a preliminary list of guiding principles that are proposed to be used to develop the network component of the County Wide Active Transportation Study. These principles will be reviewed and refined and then confirmed by the study team based on observations of existing conditions, public consultation and the review of background documents.

- **Safety:** Reducing risks to users and providing comfortable facilities will be key considerations when selecting routes for the network. The confidence and acceptance of the network can be instilled in users by reducing real and perceived risk.
- **Visible:** The active transportation (pedestrian, cycling etc.) routes should be a visible component of the transportation system.

- **Direct / Connected:** The County network should link communities, key destinations and connect with local municipal on and off-road networks.
- **Destinations:** Active Transportation routes should provide access to major destinations in the County and its local municipalities including town and city centres, natural, cultural and service facilities, as well as routes to school, community and neighbourhood parks, shopping facilities and employment areas.
- **Integration with other modes:** The active transportation network should be integrated with other modes of transportation, particularly public transit. Routes should be selected to provide access to transit stops and stations.
- **Attractive and Scenic:** Active Transportation routes should take advantage of attractive and scenic areas, views and vistas.
- **Diverse Experience:** The active transportation network should provide a diverse on and off-road walking and cycling experience throughout the County and local municipalities.
- **Easily Accessible:** Active Transportation routes should be easily accessible from local neighbourhoods within the County and its local municipalities. Every effort should be made to integrate the existing and future routes of the area municipalities.
- **Different routes for different users:** The system should appeal to a range of user abilities and interests. This requires the design of a variety of route types.
- **Cost Effective:** The cost to implement and maintain proposed AT network facilities and supporting programs should be phased over time and designed to be affordable and appropriate in scale for the County and its individual municipalities. Opportunities for partnership funding from other non-local government sources (e.g. Provincial and Federal Governments, Essex Region Conservation Authority and the private sector) should be pursued.
- **Supporting Services and Facilities:** Supportive services and facilities such as benches and bicycle parking should be available along routes and at destinations. Routes should be selected that provide opportunities to develop supporting facilities.



## Existing Context for Active Transportation in the County of Essex

One of the first steps completed for the County of Essex (CWATS) Study was to review the existing context for pedestrian and cycling in the County. The review documents current demographics, active transportation policies and pedestrian and cycling infrastructure networks in the County and at the Local municipal level, and compares the County as a whole to other Counties or regional municipalities in southern Ontario. Documented in the form of a background paper, this existing context analysis presents key findings that provide a baseline for the CWATS to build upon including the current percentage of people who walk or bike compared to driving as a mode of travel.

This existing context report also presents some findings from a 2010 study of walking and cycling behaviour in the United States as well as summarizes key findings from a National Active Transportation Survey undertaken by the Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute in 2004 on behalf of Go for Green and the Public Health Agency of Canada. The following findings are a sample of the useful “benchmarking” information that exists that will be used by the study team in the development of the Essex County Wide Active Transportation Master Plan.

- Most Canadians (78%) walk as a leisure or recreational activity
- Few walk to work (70% never do)
- 60% of Canadian adults own or have use of a bicycle
- 82% of cyclists ride for leisure or recreation
- Very few cycle to work (76% never do)
- About 27% of adults work at home or telecommute
- 62% travel to work by car most of the time
- 86% own or have regular use of a car
- 11% travel by public transit most of the time or always