



Report to Committee of the Whole

From: Peter Dutchak, Director of Engineering Services

Date: April 22, 2025

Subject: Transportation Master Plan – Cycle Master Plan

Recommendation(s):

THAT the Cycle Master Plan (CMP) developed as part of the Transportation Master Plan be adopted; and

THAT staff be directed to implement cycling facilities as identified in the CMP at the time roadwork is scheduled to be completed on those road sections; and

THAT the 10-year capital plan and annual budgets include the costs associated with the implementation and maintenance cycling facilities as per the CMP.

Introduction:

The County of Elgin is developing its first Transportation Master Plan (TMP) and has recently adopted the Phase 1 Report – Needs and Opportunities in February 2025. One of the TMP's initiatives is to develop a Cycling Master Plan (CMP). This report presents a draft CMP for Council's approval to be formalized within the TMP and incorporated into the Capital Plan for implementation.

Background and Discussion:

Ontario Traffic Manual Book 18 – Cycling Facilities (2021) was developed in association with the Ontario Traffic Council and provides guidance to Ontario municipalities for the uniformity and treatment of cycling design facilities, and is consistent with the Highway Traffic Act regarding municipal roads and infrastructure. A hierarchy of cycling networks compliment each other to create a robust multi-modal transportation system and include:

- Recreational/Touring Cycling Network,
- Local Neighbourhood Cycling Network, and,
- Commuter/Spine Cycling Network.

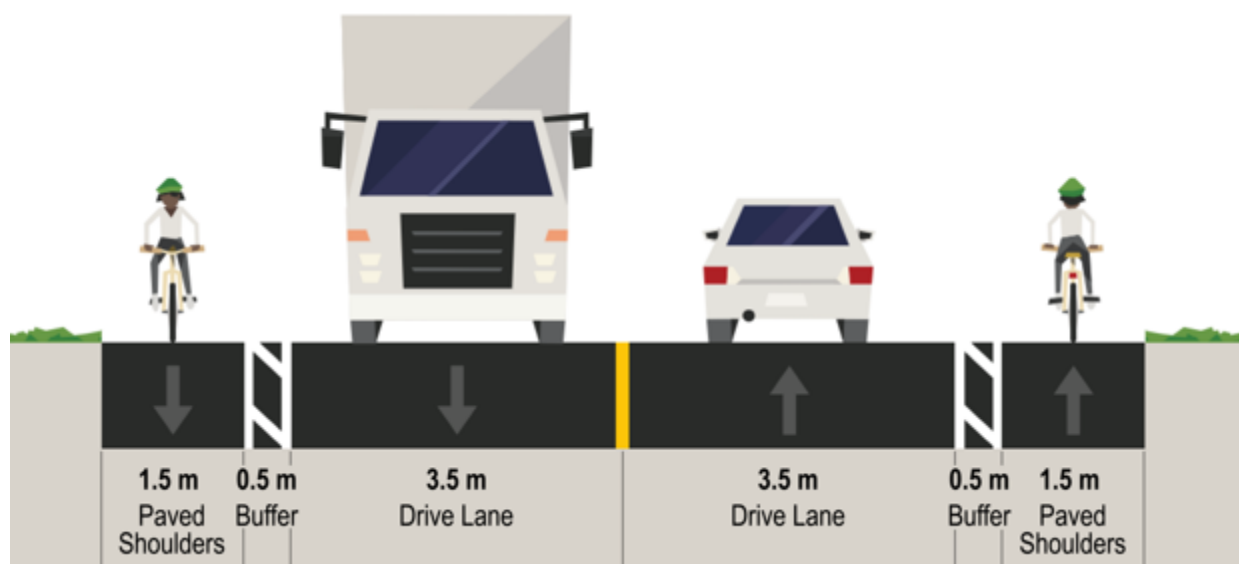
The primary focus and responsibility for the County of Elgin is to provide a 'Commuter/Spline Cycling Network'. These represent longer-distance connections between settlement areas, often along County roads. This provides the core network to which the other two layers of cycling network can connect for an interconnected network

serving a wide range of cyclists and cycling trips of different purposes throughout the County. Once developed, local communities can plan to expand upon their local networks and connect to this regional network over time.

The draft CMP has been developed building upon previous network planning initiatives, including the 2020 County of Elgin updated cycling network, originally developed as part of the 2014 Elgin-St. Thomas Cycling Master Plan. The plan considered: existing designated cycling facilities, interregional trails (Great Lakes Waterfront Trail and Trans Canada Trail), current cycling demand data (Strava GPS data), input from the Cycling Advisory Group (2021-2022), neighbouring community CMP connections, and input from local municipal staff. This data, in the context of developing a regional 'Commuter/Spine Cycling Network' with technical guidance from the Ontario Traffic Manual and expertise from Arcadis Professional Services Inc. has helped to create the draft CMP presented in this report.

The TMPs planning horizon extends from 2034 in the 'Near-Term' to 2054 in the 'Long-Term' and the draft CMP has been developed with a similar staging timeline by creating a near-term 'Priority Plan' and a medium to long-term 'Ultimate Plan'. The 'Priority Plan' builds upon existing facilities and interregional trails to connect most of the populated communities across the County. The 'Ultimate Plan', further develops the 'Priority Plan' by providing connections to planned and existing routes in neighbouring communities outside of Elgin. Staff's focus is on the 'Near-Term's', 'Priority Plan' CMP that can mostly be implemented through planned work on these road sections included within the current 10-year capital plan.

The 'Priority Plan' includes approximately 49 kilometres of existing paved shoulders designated as cycling lanes on Elgin County roads and proposes approximately 131 kilometres of additional County road sections to incorporate cycling lanes. The figure below illustrates a typical road cross section that incorporates paved shoulders as cycling lanes. Lane/buffer widths vary depending on traffic volume and speeds as provided in the Ontario Traffic Manual.



The vast majority of these facilities are buffered paved shoulders that in most cases are relatively easy and cost effective to implement. While relatively inexpensive, there is a significant cost proposed with the addition of these new assets. Collectively, 180km of cycling lanes on County roads has a replacement value of \$10M, amortized to approximately \$600,000 annually assuming resurfacing every 15 years. In addition, once the 'Priority Plan' is implemented, annual operating costs (predominantly for line painting) is valued at approximately \$200,000. Therefore, the total cost of implementing and maintaining the 'Priority Plan' portion of the CMP is estimated to be \$800,000 annually.

The 'Ultimate Plan' CMP builds upon the 'Priority Plan' and adds 67km of additional cycling lanes connecting to existing and proposed cycling routes connecting communities outside of the County. Implementation of the 'Ultimate Plan' will begin after 2035.

It should be noted that paved shoulders provide additional benefits to road users that include less maintenance (shoulder grading) and increased safety (eliminate shoulder drop offs). Staff has also witnessed a number of other users on paved road shoulders that include motorized scooters, e-bikes and pedestrians (where sidewalks are not present). Therefore, the development of regional cycling network infrastructure will enhance community amenities and the resident/visitor experience.

As anticipated regional growth develops the CMP is recommended to be updated every 5 years in order to monitor implementation progress and to allow for revisions ensuring the plan continues to meet Council's needs and that adequate connectivity exists between communities and locally developed cycling networks. The CMP will therefore be a living document that matures with the County's growth and needs.

Financial Implications:

The table below lists the total number of kilometres of roads that are currently planned to be resurfaced, rehabilitated or reconstructed over the next 10 years that are part of the CMP. These road sections will have paved shoulders installed and/or lanes identified and designated as cycling lanes.

Year	Linear kms	Estimated Cost
2025	27.94	\$ 1,397,000
2026	19.43	\$ 990,930
2027	20.68	\$ 1,075,774
2028	17.9	\$ 949,781
2029	18.95	\$ 1,025,604
2030	13.22	\$ 729,797
2031	1.38	\$ 77,705
2032	4.86	\$ 279,131
2033	2.76	\$ 161,689
2034	1.18	\$ 70,510
Totals	128.3	\$ 6,757,922

The 2025 budget has included the \$1,397,000 cost to implement the proposed 28km of cycling lanes along Talbot Line and Fingal Line (both through the Municipality of Dutton/Dunwich). Construction tenders have included these items as 'provisional' and will be implemented with support and approval of County Council.

The remaining proposed costs from year 2026 to 2034 have not been included within the 10 year capital plan and if the CMP is approved, these additional projects and their corresponding costs will be added.

Annual line painting to establish the painted buffer zone is valued at approximately \$1,000 per linear kilometre per year that will equate to approximately \$128,000 annually of additional operational costs per year after these new cycle lanes are implemented.

Advancement of the Strategic Plan:

The development and implementation of a County wide Cycling Master Plan will advance sustainable community growth, community well being and inclusivity.

Local Municipal Partner Impact:

Based upon feedback received, the County's CMP is located almost exclusively on County roads and does not impact the local road network. Each LMP will develop their own CMPs at their own pace and have the ability to provide connections to the regional Elgin County cycling network as they determine to best suit individual community needs.

Communication Requirements:

Once approved, the CMP will form part of the TMP and be published on the County's website. As sections are developed, Engineering staff will work with Communications Staff to advertise Council's progress with the CMP. Opportunities may exist in the future to name sections of the CMP as previously done (Whistlestop Trail, High Wheel Way) or to apply for active transportation facility funding if available to offset implementation costs.

Conclusion:

The development of the CMP is a major initiative of the TMP. A regional cycling network will create opportunities for cycling tourism and provide an enhanced service for residents and visitors across Elgin County. LMPs will be able to build upon the County's regional cycling network and establish connections throughout their local communities. Once approved by Council, the CMP will formally be adopted and implementation of cycling lanes will be coordinated with planned road investments scheduled within the approved capital plan, starting with Talbot Line and Fingal Line through the Municipality of Dutton Dunwich in 2025.

All of which is Respectfully Submitted

Approved for Submission

Peter Dutchak
Director of Engineering Services

Blaine Parkin
Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk