



Administrative Report

Office of the Active Transportation Coordinator/CWATS Chair

To: Warden McNamara and Members of Essex County Council

From: Diana Radulescu
Active Transportation Coordinator/CWATS Chair

Date: Wednesday, February 02, 2022

Subject: 2022 CWATS Annual Update

Report #: 2022-0202-ISD-R04-DR

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide County Council with a summary of the County Wide Active Transportation System (CWATS) initiatives which occurred in 2021 and those which are proposed for 2022.

What is CWATS

Background and Overview

The 2012 CWATS Master Plan outlines the framework to develop a continuous and connected multi-modal transportation network that builds upon and supports existing and planned active transportation routes. Network implementation priorities were established in the Master Plan based on partnerships with the CWATS Committee and key regional stakeholders. The partnership to build active transportation infrastructure and develop associated programs between the County and the local municipalities is seen as the best and preferred approach.

The CWATS Master Plan was adopted by Council in 2012 and work on the implementation of the plan has been ongoing. An update to the CWATS Master Plan is underway to reflect changes in active transportation over the

past 10 years, and incorporates current best practices. The update is discussed in more detail later in this report and in Appendix A.

CWATS is more than a proposed network of on and off-road pedestrian and cycling facilities; it has been the guiding document to recommend, promote and accommodate safe walking and cycling, create connected communities and recognize and promote the economic, health and quality of life benefits that active transportation offers.

Infrastructure Built to Date

Since the initiation of CWATS, approximately 427 km of cycle tracks, bike lanes, multi-use trails, paved shoulders and signed bike routes have been implemented throughout the County. A map of the built CWATS Infrastructure with a County Financial Contribution (2013-2021) is attached as Appendix B.

As of the end of 2021, the following infrastructure has been installed across the CWATS network:

- 5.2 km of dedicated bike lanes;
- 7.9 km of separated cycle paths;
- 87.8 km of multi-use trails;
- 128.7 km of paved shoulders; and
- 197.7 km of signed routes.

A map of the Total CWATS Network Built to Date (2013-2021) is attached as Appendix C.

2021 Education and Encouragement Programs

CWATS has developed coordinated and comprehensive partnerships and programs in order to engage members of the public and targeted demographics.

Alongside the ongoing programs which are listed in Appendix A, the 2021 programs included:

Community Education & Engagement

- **Social media campaigns launched:**
 - #WhatsCWATS – education on facility types on network and rules of the road
 - #CWATSSstories – human interest stories of users on CWATS network

 - **Continued online promotions as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Online events including:**
 - Bike to (and around) Work Day (May)
 - Bike Month Photo Challenge (June)
 - Rethink Your Drive Contest (October)
 - The first annual Rethink Your Drive Contest challenged residents of Essex County to replace short-distance vehicle trips with any form of active transportation. In total, 407 kms were travelled by participants, 1251 minutes of physical activity were logged and 0.82 tonnes of greenhouse gases were saved by not driving.

 - **CWATS presence at outdoor events:** such as Amherstburg Open Air, Kingsville Open Streets, Kingsville Fire Festival, Kingsville Santa Claus Parade, LaSalle Night Market and Bike Kingsville Community Rides.

 - **Safety & Skill Education:** CWATS partnered with Bike Windsor Essex and local municipalities to deliver the following classes across the region: Ride With Confidence; Kids Ride Safe; Families Ride Safe; and Bike Repair Pop Ups.

 - **Cycling Tourism:** CWATS partnered with Tourism Windsor Essex Pelee Island (TWEPI) to secure an Ontario By Bike 2022 Magazine advertisement promoting cycling tourism in the region.

 - **Ontario Active School Travel:** CWATS continues to support the Windsor Essex County Health Unit (WECHU) in promoting active and safe routes to school. In 2021, a comprehensive School Travel Plan was piloted at 6 schools across the region (3 in Windsor and 3 in the County). 'Walkability' and 'bikeability' audits were completed with key partners in attendance. The results of these audits will be included in a series of reports that will provide recommendations on School Travel Planning. A School Travel Charter will be signed by partners in 2022.
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Evaluation & Equity – Monitoring Program(s)

- CWATS continued the annual manual and automatic active transportation traffic counts. The 2021 traffic count report is included as Appendix G.

Equity & Encouragement

- **Bike Locker Program:** A regional bike locker pilot program was launched in 2021. Bike lockers provide cyclists with the highest security in bike storage. Lockers have been installed at key destinations around Essex County. In 2022, CWATS will increase promotion of bike lockers and partnerships with municipalities to enhance usage.
- **Winter Wheels:** In 2021, CWATS funded a pilot by Bike Windsor Essex which aimed to remove barriers to winter cycling in Essex County and Windsor to equity-seeking groups through education and provision of winter tires. 12 residents from across Essex County and 18 from the City of Windsor were accepted into this program.
- **Agricultural Worker Active Transportation Needs Assessment:** In partnership with WECHU CWATS began an Agricultural Workers Active Transportation Needs Assessment. A survey will be delivered to workers in Spring 2022 and an assessment will be completed in Fall 2022.

CWATS Programs

CWATS Core Infrastructure Program

A CWATS Committee has existed since 2012. It is chaired by the County and is comprised of representatives from the seven lower tier municipalities, WECHU, Ministry of Transportation, City of Windsor, Municipality of Chatham-Kent and Essex Region Conservation Agency. The Committee's mandate is to ensure that local jurisdictions coordinate plans in the development of active transportation projects. Identification of projects under individual municipalities' jurisdiction as regional priorities enhances the implementation of the CWATS network.

Projects are identified as County (Urban) and County (Rural) segments in the CWATS master plan. County (Rural) segments exist outside of County

Official Plan settlement areas. County (Urban) Segments are cost shared with the respective municipality using County/Local 40/60 cost-sharing formula. County (Rural) Segments are not cost shared and the County is responsible for 100% of cost.

The construction of new CWATS facilities is coordinated through an application process to the CWATS Committee. All requests are reviewed according to specific criteria. All projects that have a municipal contribution are required to secure Local Council support.

County Council approved \$1,455,000 toward CWATS infrastructure in 2022 which is shown in Table 1. The 2022 applications for shared projects, Leam-22 and Lake-9, were supported with a local municipal council resolution. Kings-2 was identified as a County Rural (100% County funded) project. A map of 2022 CWATS projects is included as Appendix D.

Applications for CWATS core infrastructure projects are submitted in September of each year. Local municipalities have noted the prescribed CWATS application process timelines are challenging. In response, the CWATS Committee recommended a pilot program for 2022 whereby members can continue to apply for CWATS Core infrastructure projects throughout the year, as long as projects are discussed and voted on by the Committee. This program will have \$302,905 available to be applied to by municipalities.

Also new to the CWATS Committee is the Drainage Act process. To date no CWATS project has required a drainage report. In 2021, the County began the municipal drainage process on CWATS segment Leam-1 (County Road 18 from County Road 31 to the Greenway). The 2012 CWATS Master Plan identifies paved shoulders on this segment. Existing paved shoulders continue westward on CR 18 from CR 31 and eastward from the Greenway. Given existing municipal drains in this section, the high usage of this road by agricultural workers and other users, the County has begun the municipal drainage process which will manifest in 2022. This process will be charged to the funds being reserved in the CWATS Core additional projects in 2022.

Table 1 – 2022 CWATS Infrastructure Program – County (Urban) and County (Rural) Segments

CWATS ID	Road Name	Facility Type	Limits	Segment Type	Length (km)	Cost (\$)	Total Local Share (\$)	Total County Share (\$)
Leam-22	CR 20	Multi-use path	Cherry Lane to Regatta Dr	Urban	0.2	54,000	32,400	21,600
Lake-9	CR 2	Paved shoulders	Moison Creek West to Stuart Lane	Urban	1.2	448,095	265,857	179,238
Kings-2	CR 34	Paved shoulders	CR 18 to Highway 3	Rural	0.5	150,000	0	150,000
Total urban and rural projects						\$652,095	\$298,257	\$350,838
CWATS Contribution to ERCA’s Acquisition of the CASO Corridor						\$500,000	0	\$500,000
Available for Additional Projects in 2022						\$302,905	To be determined	To be determined
Total-rounded (CWATS Infrastructure Program)					1.9	1,455,000		

Paved Shoulder Program

The CWATS Master Plan outlines where paved shoulders should be added across the County. In 2016, County Council supported the recommendation to realize economies of scale by aligning paved shoulder projects on County roads with the County’s road rehabilitation program.

A map of paved shoulder projects that align with the 2022 Rehabilitation Program are provided in Appendix E. Total project costs of \$2,800,000 to complete 15.8 km of paved shoulders have been approved in the 2022 Infrastructure Services Budget.

Municipal Partnership Program (MPP)

The Municipal Partnership Program (MPP) was established to support local municipalities with the implementation of AT programs. This program follows an application process by municipalities where funding is matched (up to a maximum of 50%) by the County. The County continues to work with local municipalities and partners through the CWATS Committee to identify candidate projects throughout the year. This program is funded through the CWATS budget and allocates a total amount of \$100,000 per year for eligible projects.

In 2021, four applications were supported by the CWATS committee. The municipalities of Essex, Tecumseh, Amherstburg and Kingsville all successfully implemented programs and outreach supportive of CWATS initiatives. Examples include bike repair stations, bike racks, wayfinding signage, social media campaigns, positive cycling reinforcement initiatives with OPP, and cycling education programming for all ages.

The submission deadline for 2022 Municipal Partnership Program applications was in January 2022. The CWATS Committee will subsequently review, discuss and approve projects for 2022.

Financial Implications

The funding requests to support an ambitious 2022 program are provided as follows:

Table 2 – 2022 CWATS Proposed Program Costs

Description	County Cost (\$)
2022 Active Transportation Network Plan – County (URBAN) and County (RURAL) projects	\$1,455,000
2022 Municipal Partnership Program (MPP)	\$100,000
2022 CWATS Consulting Services	\$95,000
2022 CWATS Supportive Partnership Programs	\$100,000
2022 CWATS Education & Encouragement	\$100,000

Description	County Cost (\$)
2022 CWATS Monitoring & Evaluation	\$150,000
2022 CWATS Lifecycle Management Programs	\$100,000
Total-rounded Cost	\$2,100,000

The actual costs of each project and program will be reviewed on a periodic basis in order to provide information on how the implementation is progressing and to identify issues that may require direction and/or decisions from County Council.

CWATS Policy Updates

OTM Book 18: Cycling Facilities

In 2021, the Ontario Traffic Manual Book 18: Cycling Facilities was updated as a result of rapid growth in active transportation infrastructure since the original publication in 2013. The current update builds upon lessons learned, integrates global best practices, enhances route and facility selection processes and explores innovative design solutions. These updated standards will be integrated in the CWATS Master Plan Update.

CWATS Master Plan Update

A comprehensive, phased update to the existing CWATS Master Plan is underway. The update is intended to confirm the vision and approach, apply lessons learned, review and integrate the most current best practices of active transportation. The Update will also respond to current community trends, emerging design guidelines, supportive legislation, best practices, and recommendations from the updated 2021 OTM Book 18.

The CWATS Master Plan Update was initiated in March 2018 with an anticipated completion date in 2020. The study timeline has been extended to respond to County staff direction, to provide the opportunity for additional consultation, and to accommodate unforeseen circumstances, specifically the COVID-19 pandemic. The update is now intended to be finalized in 2022.

Multiple consultation touch points were held with the public and with the CWATS Committee from 2019 to 2021. These allowed the study team to gather valuable feedback as well as continued support for CWATS and the Master Plan Update. In August 2021, the CWATS Committee attended a workshop on the Network chapter and provided comments on the draft Network map. From November 2021 to January 2022, County of Essex staff presented a CWATS update to all seven lower tier municipal councils with a goal of gathering feedback on the proposed Network and Phasing. Local councils noted their appreciation of the level of detail in the presentations, the opportunity to receive an update on CWATS in general, and the Master Plan Update.

The Implementation chapter will be drafted and discussed with the CWATS Committee. Maintenance and operation standards will also be reviewed.

A final draft of the CWATS master plan is expected to be completed in 2022, undergo a final round of public consultation and be presented to County Council and lower tier councils for approval.

Recommendation

That Essex County Council receive the report for information.

Respectfully Submitted,

Diana Radulescu

Diana Radulescu, Active Transportation Coordinator/CWATS Chair

Concurred With,

Allan Botham

Allan Botham, P.Eng., Director, Infrastructure & Planning Services

Concurred With,

Mike Galloway

Mike Galloway, Chief Administrative Officer

Appendix Number	Title
Appendix A	CWATS Annual Report (2021)

Appendix Number	Title
Appendix B	Built Infrastructure with County Financial Contribution (2013-2021)
Appendix C	Total CWATS Network Built to Date (2013-2021)
Appendix D	2022 CWATS Infrastructure Location Plan Map
Appendix E	2022 Paved Shoulder Program Map
Appendix F	Tables with associated contributed costs by Municipality
Appendix G	CWATS Counts Active Transportation Monitoring Program 2021
