



County of
Essex

CWATS Asset Management



Purpose

To review and provide recommendations for the responsibility of Active Transportation (AT) infrastructure, including:

- Ownership
- Maintenance
- Replacement

County Wide Active Transportations Systems (CWATS)

The CWATS Network is the regional network of active transportation (AT) infrastructure. The network includes signed routes, bike lanes, paved shoulders, multi-use paths, and trails.

For the purpose this presentation and report, we are only considering AT infrastructure on County Roads.

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

Types of Facilities

Generally Lower
Volume, Lower Speed
Less Facility
Separation



Generally Higher
Volume, Higher Speed
Greater Facility
Separation

Paved Shoulder



One-Way Cycle Path



Multi-Use Path



Signed Route



Bike Lane



Two-Way Cycle Path



Multi-Use Trail



CWATS Network

Facility	Built to Date (km)	Proposed (km)	Total (km)
Paved Shoulder*	187.3	221.4	408.7
Buffered Paved Shoulder*	10.8	5.8	16.6
Multi-Use Trails	166.5	123.8	290.3
Multi-Use Paths*	19.9	6.3	26.2
Bike Lanes*	17.4	25.6	43.0
Cycle Track	8.3	2.7	11.0
Signed Route*	157.7	65.0	222.7
Total (km)	567.9	450.6	1018.5

* On-Street Facilities



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Background: Asset Management

While the proposed CWATS Network was endorsed, the CWATS Master Plan Update was not adopted by Council.

The Master Plan Update addressed standards for seasonal maintenance but did not address ownership and replacement responsibilities.

To define roles and responsibilities County Administration met with the LMP Administrations. Alternative options were analyzed and discussed; however, a consensus was not attained from all LMPs on a preferred option.

The Recommended Option

- The County would own and replace all CWATS infrastructure within the County right-of-way.
- Day-to-day maintenance responsibilities would be divided
 - LMP maintaining separated facilities
 - County maintaining on street facilities

Facility Type	Ownership	Maintenance Responsibility	Replacement Cost
On Street Infrastructure (e.g., Bike Lane / Paved Shoulder) - On a County Road in a Rural and Urban Area	County	County	County
Separated Infrastructure (e.g., Multi Use Path / Separated Bike Lane) - On a County Road in a Rural and Urban Area	County	LMP	County
Active Transportation Infrastructure – On County Connecting Links (CCL)	LMP	LMP	LMP
Active Transportation Infrastructure - On an LMP Road or land owned by LMPs	LMP	LMP	LMP
Sidewalks – On a County Road or LMP Road	LMP	LMP	LMP
Multi-Use Trails – Owned by ERCA	ERCA	ERCA	ERCA

Note: Active Transportation Infrastructure on LMP roads or land owned by LMPs are included for completeness. However, the focus of this report is on infrastructure on County Roads, both in urban and rural areas, as well as on-street and separated infrastructure.

The Recommended Option Continued

- The County owns all CWATS assets on County roads
- The County plans and funds all future rehabilitation / replacement
- The County maintains on-street facilities
- LMPs maintain separated facilities

Benefits of Recommended Option

- Provides the County with full control over long-term capital planning and replacement timing.
- Eliminates cost-sharing coordination and budget alignment challenges.
- Maintains clear and understandable roles for County and LMP.
- Balances financial responsibility with operational practicality.
- Leaves day to day maintenance of separated facilities with LMPs who have been carrying this out.
- Leaves day-to-day maintenance of on street facilities with the County
- Reflects how maintenance is being delivered today.
- No immediate increase in operating costs is required.

Financial Implications

- The County assumes full responsibility for the replacement of all CWATS infrastructure, increasing capital expenditure.
- Transition to County-level funding would be supported by the LMP through the weighted assessment.
- An annual levy-supported reserve contribution would be required.
- This option improves long-term financial predictability and asset sustainability and removes reliance on LMP budget cycles.
- Additional County effort will be required to support condition assessment and lifecycle planning.



Next Steps

Following approval of the recommendation by Council

- Administration will update the CWATS Master Plan chapter on Maintenance and Operations
- Administration will bring a report to Council with the updated final report for adoption



Thank you!

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