

Thank you for giving us the time to speak with you today. We are Board members of CycleWR, a cycling advocacy group in the Region.

CycleWR strongly supports both phase 1 and 2 for the Benton and Frederick Street project. This project will offer a safer and more direct cycling connection from the east section of the Iron Horse Trail to Downtown Kitchener, the Farmer's Market, and the connection to the bike routes north of Downtown Kitchener.

We are also pleased with the reduction of the number of car lanes, as this will encourage travelling at safer speeds, while being able to accommodate the current (and even substantially higher) levels of car traffic. It will also make it easier to cross Benton St via Church St, which is currently a bikeway. This benefits pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.

We do have two suggestions for improvement in Phase 1.

Upgrade buffered (painted) bike lanes to physically separated bike lanes

While we welcome the 1m separation between the car and bike lanes, we are concerned that the road markings suggested for phase 1 might not be enough to reduce cars speeding, doing illegal passes on the right or cutting into the bike lanes when turning right.

The staff report indicates the budget for this project is \$2.1 million, whereas the current estimated cost is only \$1.6 million. Based on "standard" costs shown in the 2020 City of Waterloo Transportation Master Plan, the cost to add precast concrete dividers with flex bollards to this project should be less than \$150,000 - still well within the original budget. Doing this would substantially increase cyclist safety in the timeframe between Phase 1 and Phase 2.

While phase 2 is currently planned for 2032, we would point out the long history of substantial deferral of the Region's road projects. On average the Regional projects listed in Cambridge in the 2014 Regional Active Transportation Master Plan have already been deferred more than 7 years past the planned completion date stated in 2014 - and that average will be even longer when the large number of still unfinished projects are finally completed. We realize that deferral of road projects saves taxpayers money, and that is a good thing - but it also delays cycling infrastructure that is critical for the modal share shift we need in order to meet our greenhouse gas reduction targets. Phase 2 is currently planned for 2032 - but unless there is a major change in Regional procedures, we might realistically expect it somewhere near 2040. That makes an even stronger case to spend a little more money to add concrete dividers now.

Complete the Phase 1 work over the whole corridor, including Charles to Weber

The Phase 1 plan has a gap between Charles Street and Weber Street, with no cycling improvements. The City of Kitchener staff "pointed out the need to provide cycling facilities along the middle section as well, between Charles and Weber Streets". We strongly agree. Leaving a gap in the middle will seriously reduce the number of cyclists who will feel comfortable cycling on this corridor. Studies have shown that up to 65% of the general

population are comfortable cycling when physically separated from cars, but only about 5% are fully comfortable with no cycling facility, as is the current Phase 1 plan between Charles and Weber.

There is one small section (roughly 50 metres southbound just south of King Street) that is only one lane today, and clearly cannot have any cycling facility in Phase 1. The rest of the road between Charles and Weber (including northbound from Charles to King) has two full lanes in each direction. We don't see why this couldn't get the same treatment as the rest of the corridor. This would create a full AAA facility, with only one 50 metre gap in one direction. This would undoubtedly have much higher cycling usage than we would see with the current Phase 1 plan. We believe the small additional cost to add cycling facilities over the entire corridor would definitely be cost-justified.

Those are some brief comments. As mentioned previously, we strongly support the overall project. Thank you again for listening to our input.