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[REDACTED] Riverside Dr. E.  
Tecumseh, Ontario [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
March 18, 2001

Mayor McNamara and Members of Council,

We reside at [REDACTED] Riverside Drive E. in Tecumseh, Ontario. We are writing to you to ask you and members of council specific questions as they relate to the selection process behind the proposed Riverside Trail facility type and location. We will be making reference to and citing from the Ontario Traffic Manual Cycling Facilities Book 18 which provides the framework for planning a bicycle network. Adhering to this framework for cycling is important to guide bicycle facility selection and the application of bicycle facility designs that are appropriate for a given location or context. The Ministry of Transportation has developed a bicycle type facility selection tool that bridges the gap between route selection and infrastructure design. The tool allows practitioners with the information necessary to design on road and in-boulevard bicycle facilities. It also includes general geometric considerations as well as intersection treatments. Implementation of a selected bicycle network is based on best practices from across North America. The Ontario Traffic Manual Cycling Facilities Book 18 outlines a recommended process including a management structure and a set of steps considered important to support the review, approval, design and implementation of bicycle facilities on or in the boulevard of public roadways. Part of this process is that the engineer document each decision made during the bicycle facility type portion of the process. The steps taken to reach each decision and the rationale behind any compromises made in the selection of the facility type would be included in this documentation. We are requesting a copy of this documentation. We are also requesting that this documentation is made available for public viewing at the upcoming public council meeting.

In urban areas there are typically more frequent conflict points such as driveways, midblock crossings, intersections and on-street parking. These need to be considered when assessing risk exposure in urban environments since they will influence the selection of suitable facility types.

The Town's selected engineer practitioner has completed *step 1* outlined in the facility selection tool and has ultimately selected Riverside Dr. East along the south side of the road for the location, and a two-directional multi-use trail for the facility type.

*Step 2* of the facility selection tool is a more detailed review of site specific characteristics in order to determine the appropriateness of the pre-selected facility type which in this circumstance is the two-directional multi use in-boulevard trail. When we look at the application heuristics we identify several risks and site constraints with the selected facility type.

The more intersections and access points along a bicycle route, the more conflict points that are present. Therefore, locations with increased intersection and access density require careful consideration when selecting a bicycle facility type for the area. Sound engineering judgement must be applied to determine the characteristics of a particular site and a corresponding facility design. The

designer must assess the potential for conflict between cyclists and motor vehicles as a result of vehicles entering and exiting the road. The potential severity and number of conflicts will vary based on cyclist and vehicle turning movement volumes. In each case, the objective should be to avoid or mitigate conflicts to the extent possible.

The proposed trail design falls well below the expectations for a functional and desirable design & location for a two-directional multi use in boulevard facility. **We are requesting a copy of the Practitioner's documented rationale behind the facility type selection to justify and defend their decision regarding the appropriateness of the facility type for this specific roadway location. We are also requesting that this document be made available for public review at the upcoming public town meeting.**

Two-way in-boulevard bicycle facilities should be 4.0 metres wide. Table 4.7 presents the desired and minimum widths for in-boulevard bicycle facilities. It is recommended that practitioners always design to the desired width. However, through the use of sound engineering judgement, a practitioner may consider reducing the width to a value greater than or equal to the suggested minimum, but only for context specific situations on segments or corridors with constrained right-of-way widths.

**Table 4.7 – Desired and Suggested Minimum Widths for In-Boulevard Bicycle Facilities<sup>a</sup>**

Facility	Desired Width	Suggested Minimum
One-Way In-Boulevard Bicycle Facility	2.0 m	1.8 m
Two-Way In-Boulevard Bicycle Facility	4.0 m	3.0 m <sup>b</sup>
Two-Way In-Boulevard Shared Facility	4.0 m	3.0 m <sup>b</sup>
<sup>a</sup> Excludes splash strip (typical width 1.0 metre) where the in-boulevard facility abuts the curb.		
<sup>b</sup> This may be reduced to 2.4 metres over very short distances in order to avoid utility poles or other infrastructure that may be costly to relocate.		

Source: Based on AASHTO Guide for Planning, Design and Operation of Bicycle Facilities, 2012; NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide, 2011

Best practices does allow for the minimum width of 3 metres and a reduction to 2.4 metres for very specific short distance to avoid existing infrastructure that may be costly to relocate. This adaptation is intended so that a small portion of a trail can be adapted so that the entire trail project is not abandoned just because of one utility pole or one obstruction that may be in the way of building the trail. It certainly is not meant for the full length of an entire trail constructed at a less than minimum standard width.

The proposed trail design falls well below the minimum standard width for a functional and desirable design for a two-directional multi use in boulevard facility. **We are requesting a copy of the Practitioner's documented rationale behind the trail width & facility type selection to justify and defend their decision regarding the appropriateness of a multi use in-boulevard trail for this specific roadway location. We are also requesting that this document be made available for public review at the upcoming public town meeting.**

Practitioners should consider several geometric elements including the width, design speed, grade, stopping sight distance, horizontal curvature, crest vertical curves and lateral clear zones.

A proper designed trail would have Town owned property next to the trail edge. In the right location, this adjacent land would allow the Town of Tecumseh to ensure there were no barriers or obstructions in the areas that the Ministry of Transportation outlines as “lateral clear zones”.

The proposed Riverside Trail has many locations where the land butting up to the trail is privately owned. The Town cannot successfully ensure this area stays clear nor can they monitor and maintain the zones as required.

The lack of land creates hazards and increases risk. The proposed trail design falls well below the expectations for safe lateral clear zones for a two-directional multi use in boulevard facility. **We are requesting the Practitioner’s documented rationale behind the clear zones and relative geometry for the facility type selection to justify and defend their decision regarding the appropriateness of the multi-use in-boulevard facility for this specific roadway location. We are also requesting that this document be made available for public review at the upcoming public town meeting.**

Conflict points exist at roadway and driveway crossings, creating operational and safety problems for both cyclists and motorists using two-way facilities.

Obstructions such as parked vehicles, existing & future landscaping and trees on private property, utility poles established & future signage that are in the proposed location does not provide adequate space for cyclists and other trail users either on or off the roadway. These articles will obstruct sightlines and impede the stopping sight distances.

Engineers are to consider these geometric elements and the proposed trail design falls well below the standards for the geometric elements for a two-directional multi use in boulevard facility. **We are requesting the practitioner’s documented rationale behind the sightlines and stopping sight distances and relative geometry for the facility type selection to justify and defend their decision regarding the appropriateness of the multi use in-boulevard facility for this specific roadway location. We are also requesting that this document be made available for public review at the upcoming public town meeting.**

Cyclists come in all shapes and sizes, and have a wide range of ages and skill levels. It is important to consider different user skill levels and trip purposes in the design of bicycle facilities. Children generally require facilities free of conflicts with motor vehicle traffic. Wheelchair users will be seated with lower sightline heights. Some users may have difficulty seeing and others may need more time than others to stop for vehicles at driveways.

Overall bikeway network should be selected, planned and designed with all potential cyclists in mind. The proposed Riverside Trail does not take into account the various skill levels of the intended user and falls well below the standards for avoiding potential conflicts along a two-directional multi use trail in boulevard facility. **We are requesting the practitioner’s documented rationale behind the potential**

**conflict areas and considerations relative for the facility type selection to justify and defend their decision regarding the appropriateness of the two-directional multi use in-boulevard facility for this specific roadway location. We are also requesting that this document be made available for public review at the upcoming public town meeting.**

Based upon the number of fatal flaws that have been highlighted thru the Ministry of Transportation Facility Selection Tool, the Town of Tecumseh is placing an elevated risk to the trail users, motorists and home owners along the proposed location. The Town Council has decided that the risks are minor and can be ignored. **We would like to know if the Town of Tecumseh will take on all liability associated to their poor decision in making this flawed selection choice?**

We are not prepared, nor willing, to be forced to take on the liability for the poor decisions made by the Town Council. We feel that the chosen trail facility type has unsafe compromises on just about every design factor outlined in the Ontario Traffic Manual Book 18 Cycling Facilities as important for the safety of the users and success of the trail.

Every effort should be made to stay as close to the guidelines as possible and in situations where compromises are made the practitioner is to document reasons for departures from the guidelines. We are further requesting documentation that speaks to any compromise made for operational, cost or other reasons based upon the practitioner's sound engineering judgement.

Please provide us with a written explanation regarding the planning decisions made relating to the trail as well as a written document indicating that the town will assume all liability as it relates to all details outlined in this letter if they move forward with an in boulevard multi use trail along Riverside Drive.

We are still waiting for return correspondence in response to our letter and questions given to Council in June 2018. This letter contains different information and questions than the 2018 letter and we expect a reply to both.

We appreciate you taking the time to address our concerns and we look forward to your reply to our questions.

Respectfully,

Karel & Rhonda DeGraaf