

January 30, 2019

Lisa Lavack
[REDACTED]

Tecumseh, Ontario N8N 3M2
[REDACTED]

Mayor Gary MacNamara, Deputy Mayor Joe Bachetti and Honorable Town Councilors:

I write this letter to sincerely encourage and implore you to continue with the proposed bike lanes on Lesperance road. I am a resident of Tecumseh, a daily commuter on Lesperance Road and my house is located on the corner of [REDACTED] and Lesperance.

I am an avid proponent of active transportation and a co-founder of the Tecumseh Windsor Slow Ride, a free, all-ages community bike ride we started last year that quickly became a weekly ride for as many as 100 riders.

Aside from being an avid cyclist, a ride leader and main route planner for the Tecumseh Windsor Slow Ride, I am a mother and a grandmother who strongly promotes living a healthy and active lifestyle. It is encouraging to see so many of our forward-thinking communities and municipalities throughout Essex County realize the importance and advantages to incorporating safe infrastructure for active transportation into their urban planning. Having this bicycle route on Lesperance Road would mean we would establish a safe route directly to our town hall, arena and future sports complex.

Why Maintaining a Centre Turn Lane on Lesperance Road is an Unsafe Idea:

As the traffic engineering study clearly showed, the volume of motor vehicle traffic on Lesperance has significantly decreased over time and there is no longer a need for the centre turning lane from McNorton to Riverside Drive. I have listened intently with an open mind to the opposing arguments from my neighbours on Lesperance Rd. They say they like to use the centre turning lane to back out of their driveways. I would strongly challenge the validity of a **commonly practiced unsafe and illegal traffic violation** as a valid reason to oppose an infrastructure improvement that will increase the safety of vulnerable road users. The Ontario Highway Traffic Act calls for centre turning lanes *only* to facilitate left hand turns and cautions that right hand merging from the centre lanes is dangerous. **I implore this council to take a leadership role in educating the community on the Rules of Road and not to, however inadvertently, support of unsafe practices.**

Further, there are many examples of local streets with heavier traffic volumes that have successfully incorporated single lanes in each direction and bike lanes including Forest Glade Drive that our group often rides on.

Consider the Health and Safety of our Most Vulnerable Residents:

Please also consider the safety of the migrant workers from Bonduelle, many of whom bike down and live on Lesperance Road. **Bicycling isn't an alternate form of transportation for them, it is their *only* means of transportation.** I am not sure what the projected numbers of migrant workers is for 2019, but in 2018 we had over 70 migrant workers living, working and shopping in Tecumseh - and riding bicycles on the streets of our town.

The provincial funding provides a huge advantage to making this improvement to increase the safety of vulnerable road users and enhance the neighbourhood now without detracting or negatively impacting traffic flow.

We need your Progressive Leadership Now:

Throughout history, calls for change and improvements are almost always challenged, sparking debate and resistance from those comfortable with "the way things have always been". I look to you, our elected community leaders, to make the right decision for our town. Make the decision that will not only promote safe options to increase active transportation and promote healthy, active lifestyles, but also to add to the overall curb appeal of our historic Lesperance Road. Make the decision based on reason and common sense. I want you to know that if you proceed with this proposal, I can assure you that you will see many, many cyclists of all ages utilizing this safe passage and coexisting with the motor vehicle traffic without issue.

I imagine a very near future that children can safely ride their bikes with their families to Slinky's for ice cream or alternately to town hall or the new Sports Complex. It is within your power to make this vision of the future a reality. It is also within your power to set a precedent and design a future for our town that encourages people of all ages to unplug, put the phone down, put the iPad down and get outside and get active!

Please have the fortitude and resolve to make the right decision in the best interest of the community that you serve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "L. Lavack".

Lisa Lavack

The Tecumseh Windsor Slow Ride:

The Tecumseh Windsor Slow Ride is an all-ages community group bike ride through the streets of Tecumseh and East Windsor. We have approximately 50 to 80 riders ride with us each week and it is a great example of our community at it's finest. Our ride is organized and led by volunteers and there is absolutely no cost to any of our riders. The ride is open to people of all ages and abilities. Our ride has been featured in the Shoreline and has grown exponentially since our first ride in April 2018. Our oldest "Slow Rider" is 93 and we have children as young as 6 years old join us week after week. Over the course of last year, our riders have formed new friendships and the feedback from the participants is overwhelmingly positive. The camaraderie and welcoming spirit is evident to anyone who joins our ride, as I am sure the Deputy Mayor and Councilor Dowie can attest to.

Our ride leaders have taken the bike safety course through Bike Windsor Essex and consistently and constantly encourage all our riders to follow all rules in accordance with the Ontario Highway Traffic Act. Our riders come from across Essex county including Kingsville, Lasalle and Amherstburg. I can think of no better way to showcase our town and beautiful streetscapes then on a bicycle. The start of our ride and meeting place is the parking lot in front of Tecumseh Arena where we meet at 7:00pm every Thursday. The typical distance that we ride is between 14 and 17km. We frequently use Lesperance Road to get to our planned routes on the Ginatchio Trail, St. Clair Beach and East Windsor.