

Good Morning.

My name is John Ennis and I am here on behalf of CAA South Central Ontario's 1.8 million members.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the staff report regarding the Ancaster Transportation Master Plan that is before you today.

CAA is a not-for-profit membership based organization with over 11,000 members in Ancaster, and over 100,000 members in the city of Hamilton.

Our members are motorists, transit users, cyclists and pedestrians. As a membership based association, we are concerned with mobility, transportation infrastructure, traffic safety and environmental issues that affect our members.

CAA participated as a stakeholder in the public consultation process for the Ancaster Transportation Master Plan by providing comment on the alternative scenarios presented by city staff at the Public Information Centre held on December 8, 2010.

We recommended that the city move forward with Scenario 12, which is the scenario being recommended by staff in this report, but in addition to the improvements listed in Scenario 12, we recommended that Highway 403 access improvements and dedicated bike lanes be added to the plan.

*[Highway 403 Access Improvements:]*

With respect to Highway 403 access improvements, we commented that adopting a combination of Scenario 12, along with the recommendations related to Highway 403 access improvements in Scenarios 2 and 3, would be the best course of action to address the transportation issues affecting the residents of Ancaster; highway 403 access improvements would certainly go a long way to resolving many of Ancaster’s transportation issues.

The report before you today notes on pg 4 that, “...ramps are not listed under the Ancaster Transportation Master Plan recommended projects, since they have not yet been approved by the MTO.” CAA recognizes the jurisdictional challenges involved with the issue of Highway 403 access improvements. Given that the city’s hands are essentially tied on this issue, I would suggest to the committee that recommendations “c)” and “d)” of this report, which address the Highway 403 issue, are a positive step in helping to ensure the issue is quickly resolved.

*[Bike Lanes:]*

With respect to bike lanes, CAA called for the use of dedicated bike lanes on new infrastructure projects as proposed under scenario 12, which called for bike lanes on Garner Road.

Ensuring that bike lanes are dedicated by building a physical barrier to separate motorists and cyclists is an important traffic safety feature given the city is promoting more active forms of transportation. For the safety of all road users, we maintain that dedicated bikes lanes should be considered. I understand that the Ancaster Transportation Master Plan is a high level plan and this particular recommendation may be too specific at this point in the planning process, but please take it into future consideration.

In developing a position on the proposed plan, CAA considered three criteria:

- Will the plan improve safety?
- Will the plan improve the environment?
- Will the plan improve mobility?

CAA’s position is that the Ancaster Transportation Master Plan, as developed by city staff, will do all three.

Clearly, there is no perfect solution to resolving the transportation issues that face Ancaster. Developing a solution that works is complicated because of Ancaster’s unique character, history, and geography.

Developing a solution is further complicated by the fact that addressing the source of many of Ancaster’s transportation problems, mainly traffic infiltration caused by access and capacity issues on Highway 403, is the responsibility of the provincial government. This is unfortunate, and as an advocacy organization, CAA will be advocating on behalf of our members for a resolution to this issue.

In closing, the Ancaster Transportation Master Plan proposed by staff takes a balanced approach to transportation planning; it takes into consideration past planning documents, future transportation needs of Ancaster and it is sensitive to the socioeconomic characteristics of the community. Perhaps most importantly, from a city-wide transportation perspective and for you as councillors, it considers how Ancaster’s transportation infrastructure fits into the broader transportation network of the city of Hamilton.

After reviewing the staff report that is before you today, we are satisfied with the recommendations and we encourage you as a committee to adopt the recommendations put forward by staff.

Thank you.