

DEFERRED until the completion of the Central Box Municipal Class Environment Assessment, which is expected to be completed in early 2016
As ADOPTED by Council at its meeting held March 29, 2016 [CR205/2016]

/AC

Windsor, Ontario March 29, 2016

REPORT NO. 353 of the
ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC SAFETY
STANDING COMMITTEE
of its meeting held February 17, 2016

Present: Councillor Chris Holt
Councillor Bill Marra (Chair)
Councillor Hilary Payne
Councillor Paul Borrelli

Absent: Councillor Fred Francis

That the following recommendations of the Environment, Transportation and Public Safety Standing Committee **BE APPROVED**:

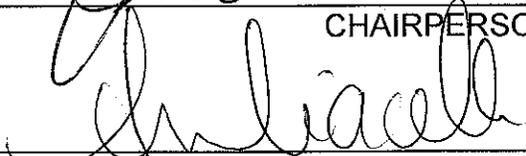
- Moved by Councillor Holt, seconded by Councillor Payne,
- I. That the report of the City Engineer in response to CQ54-2015 and CQ62-2015 dated February 3, 2016, **BE RECEIVED** for information; and further,
 - II. That the speed limit in the area of the Central Box **BE REDUCED** to 50km/hr from the current limit of 60km/hr; and further,
 - III. That WC-24 signage and sharrows **BE INSTALLED** in the Central Box area.
- And,
- Moved by Councillor Payne, seconded by: Councillor Holt,
- IV. That Administration **REPORT BACK** with a funding source to be used to implement the use of painted directional arrows in addition to the standard diamond and bicycle painted symbols on Dougall Avenue in both directions.
- Carried.

S 32/2015 ST2016

Clerk's Note: The report of the Project Administrator dated February 3, 2016 entitled "Response to CQ54-2015 and CQ62-2015" is **attached** as background information. Administration submitting the **attached** memo dated March 14, 2016 as additional information.

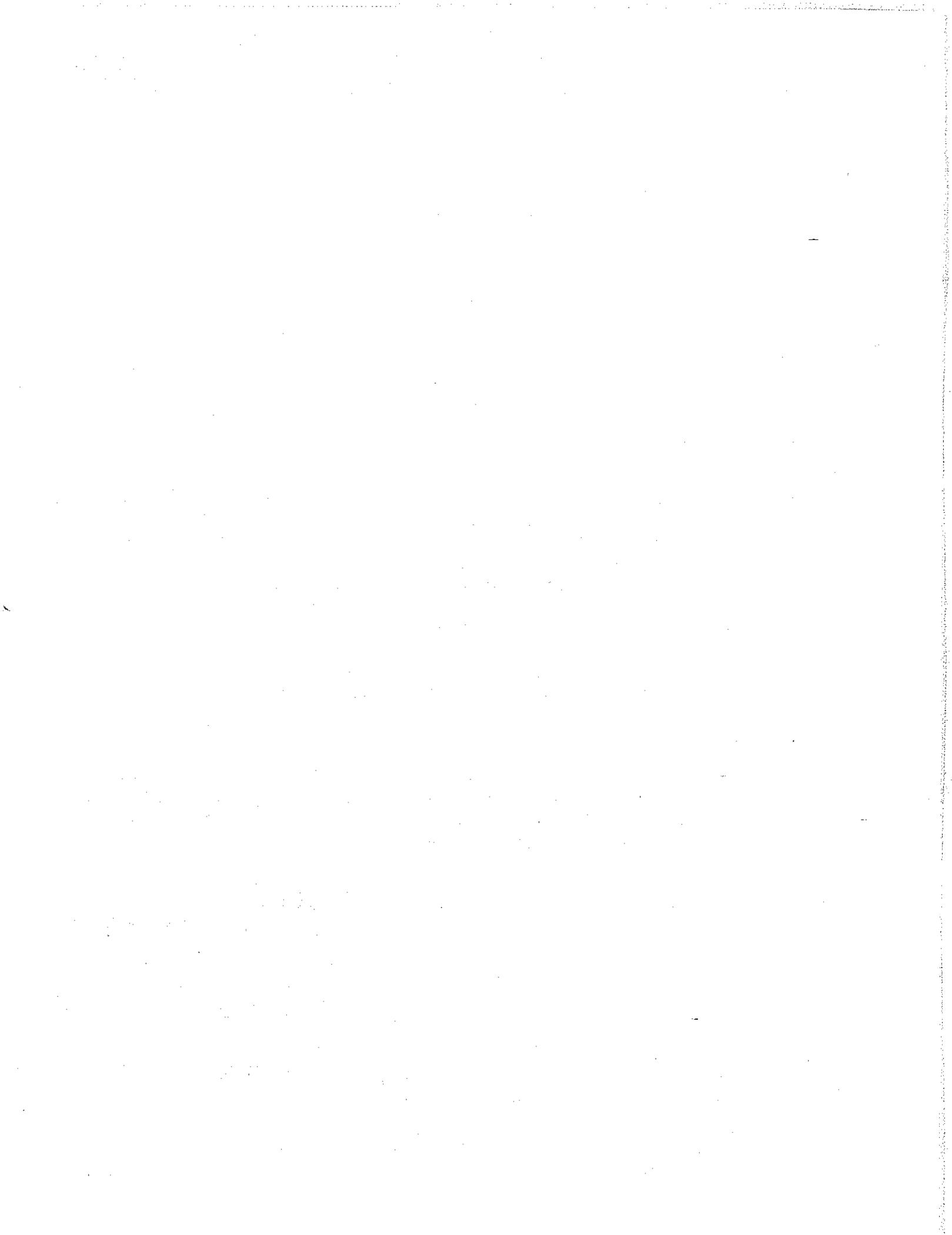


CHAIRPERSON



SUPERVISOR OF COUNCIL SERVICES

NOTIFICATION:	
NAME	CONTACT INFORMATION
Lori Newton, Bike Friendly Windsor	Lori.newton@me.com
Amy Farkas, Windsor Bicycling Committee	afarkas@me.com





Public Works - Operations

MISSION STATEMENT

"Our City is built on relationships – between citizens and their government, businesses and public institutions, city and region – all interconnected, mutually supportive, and focused on the brightest future we can create together"

REPORT #: S 32/2015	Report Date: 2/3/2016
Author's Contact: Andrew Dowie Project Administrator (519) 255-6100 ext. 6472 adowie@citywindsor.ca	Date to Council: February 17, 2016
	Clerk's File #: ST2016

To: Mayor and Members of City Council

Subject: Response to CQ54-2015 and CQ62-2015 - Wards 1 and 10

RECOMMENDATION:

That the response to CQ54-2015 and CQ62-2015 **BE RECEIVED** for information.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

N/A

BACKGROUND:

Members of Council have asked the following questions which are generally relevant to the area subject to the Central Box Environmental Assessment:

CQ54-2015: Asks in light of the size and scope of the Environmental Assessment (EA) being conducted for the Central Box and the lengthy timelines predicted for work to begin on the stretch of Dougall Avenue from Eugenie to Grand Marais, and considering the number of inquiries regarding safety that the WBC (Windsor Bicycling Committee) receives with respect to this area, I am asking Administration to produce a report with some suggestions for immediate infrastructure investments that can be made to improve cycling and pedestrian safety on that stretch of Dougall Avenue. Examples are increased signage for both drivers and cyclists, designated street markings, painted street markings, merging warnings coming off the expressway. While a long term solution is coming through the central box

study, we can and should be looking to improve safety in that corridor as it is one of the main north-south corridors in the city.

CQ62-2015: *Asks that due to the high traffic flow conditions on Dominion Blvd. corridor, it is requested that Administration look into traffic calming and other measures (such as speed limits, electronic signs etc.). This will hopefully mitigate the present danger confronting cyclists, pedestrians, and e-bike users as well as motorists. Proactive measures are needed here to promote safety and well being and quality of life for residents.*

Council has adopted various planning documents and policies over the past several decades for the layout and function of this area, most notably the South Cameron Secondary Plan.

The Bicycle Use Master Plan (BUMP) adopted by Council in 2001 laid out a series of routes earmarked to accommodate cyclists. Formal consultations for BUMP lasted for over a year and included discussions with various stakeholders through:

- cycling tours on May 2 and 3, 2000;
- public open houses on May 3, 2000, July 13, 2000 and November 22, 2000;
- a Bicycle User Survey, conducted in the field, circulated at public events and posted on the BUMP website;
- a statistically valid Public Attitude Telephone Survey of a random sample of Windsor area residents;
- a dedicated webpage that provided updates of the study as it progressed;
- opportunities for residents to submit their comments; and
- a series of Monthly Newsletters.

The Central Box Municipal Class Environmental Assessment that is currently under way is the most recent study incorporating a technical review of these routes.

Municipalities in Ontario, through the Municipal Engineers Association, have agreed to the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process to act as a streamlined and consistent approach to dealing with the overall impact of municipal infrastructure projects. It is understood by the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change to be a reasonable mechanism for the City of Windsor to fulfill its responsibilities to the public for the provision of municipal services in an efficient, timely, economic and environmentally responsible manner that requires public consultation and-engagement.

The Municipal Class EA is a consistent and easily understood process for planning and implementing infrastructure projects and offers the flexibility to tailor the planning process to each specific project taking into account the environmental setting, local public interests and unique project requirements.

The Class EA process also provides a decision-making framework that enables the requirements of the EA Act to be met in an effective manner. The alternatives to a parent Class EA would be: to undertake individual environmental assessments for all municipal projects; for each municipality to develop their own class environmental assessment process; and/or, for municipalities to obtain exemptions. These alternatives would be extremely onerous, time consuming and costly. Two decades of experience have demonstrated that considerable public, economic and environmental benefits are achieved by applying the Class EA concept to municipal infrastructure projects.

DISCUSSION:

In responding to these Council Questions, Administration acknowledges the interest of members of Council and residents in achieving specific results quickly and effectively.

The fundamental question for Administration to respond to as part of these questions is whether there is feasible implementation of short term solutions for the identified issues that can be developed outside of the environmental assessment process, and whether risks can be effectively mitigated by building temporary infrastructure. The Central Box Municipal Class EA was developed in part to address the needs of those who are reliant on these facilities for active transportation, but are not being accommodated by the present day design.

Dougall Avenue from Ouellette Place to West Grand Boulevard

Dougall Avenue, averaging 42,700 vehicles per day, is one of Windsor's busiest roads. Significant challenges exist to cyclist and pedestrian travel in this corridor. The location of the road pavement on Dougall Avenue is offset in the right-of-way, with the east curb set at the property line. The concrete walls of the CN Rail overpass also preclude active transportation access in a safe and secure manner.

A similar Council Question to CQ54-2015, being CQ87-2008, "*Asks that Administration look at the prices for installing a sidewalk on one side of the street from Dougall at the E.C. Row, northbound.*" The review undertaken as a result of that question determined that:

- *The existing distance between the face of curb and the abutment wall varies between 0.6m to a maximum of 0.9m,*

- *Although this surface is concrete, it is not a sidewalk,*
- *The minimum sidewalk width is 1.5m,*
- *An additional 0.5m is recommended when the sidewalk is immediately adjacent the face of curb, and*
- *An additional 0.6m is recommended to accommodate a lateral obstruction (the abutment wall).*

The following conclusions were made:

- *The pinch point at the rail overpass cannot be readily modified to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists. The overall width available cannot accommodate 4 lanes of traffic and sufficient separation for the bridge support columns and abutment walls, and sidewalks.*
- *Although this location was identified as problematic in the Bicycle Use Master Plan (BUMP), a possible solution was not identified therein.*
- *Opportunities to direct pedestrians and cyclists to a grade crossing at this location will not be supported by the rail company, as trains are frequently parked or stationary for extended periods of time, creating an unsafe scenario.*
- *This location, known as the Central Box, is in queue for an Environmental Assessment, following the finalization of the border solutions currently being investigated. It is suspected that part of the solution will include recommendations to reconstruct the rail bridge to provide sufficient width to accommodate proper lane widths and access to pedestrians and cyclists.*
- *Cost estimates to pursue tunnelling options are in the range of \$1,000,000 based on recent solutions utilized in London, Ontario. It was felt that it would be premature to recommend an expenditure of this magnitude in the absence of a completed environmental assessment.*
- *Constructing a sidewalk or multi-use trail that would direct users to this location is not desirable in the absence of proper accommodations through the pinch point.*
- *Signage indicating "Boulevard Narrows Ahead" has been installed in advance of this location to advise pedestrians and cyclists to use an alternate route due to the narrow path at the rail crossing.*
- *Opportunities to connect South Cameron on the west side of Dougall Ave. to the existing multi-use trail on South Cameron on the east side of Dougall Ave. are currently under investigation. While this is certainly not a direct connection from*

South Windsor to the Downtown area, it does present the safest path given the existing constraints.

Bicycle facilities are contemplated in the Bicycle Use Master Plan (BUMP) for Dougall Avenue south of Ouellette Place. The specific means of incorporating these facilities will be addressed as part of the Central Box Municipal Class Environmental Assessment.

It is well understood that there are no direct alternative routes for active transportation users to consider. However, alternative routes do exist, although they are known to be inconvenient. North-South travel can avoid Dougall Avenue and particularly the CN Overpass by deviating via a shared pathway on South Cameron Boulevard to Howard Avenue and by way of a multi-use trail constructed on Howard Avenue from Grand Marais Road to South Cameron Boulevard. This option results in an additional 2.2 km of travel for cyclists between West Grand Boulevard and Grand Marais Road.

At the present time, the road lacks the physical space required to provide a safe passage for pedestrians in the Dougall corridor. The limited cross-section at the grade level of the railway overpass leaves no meaningful width for pedestrian travel, and existing clearance from the abutments to vehicles is of minimal spacing.

The introduction of interim measures intended to improve the situation could limit the size of the area that is deemed to be unsafe, but inviting pedestrians use to an area known to be especially unsafe is not likely to provide any improvement from a risk management perspective. These circumstances are in part why the Central Box Municipal Class Environmental Assessment was initiated, in order to develop a satisfactory solution to these issues and to identify solutions that have been historically difficult to resolve.

Administration has requested of the Consulting Engineer that the final report for the Central Box Municipal Class Environmental Assessment offer interim and long term solutions. **Administration recommends waiting for the completion of the Central Box Municipal Class Environmental Assessment which is expected for early 2016.**

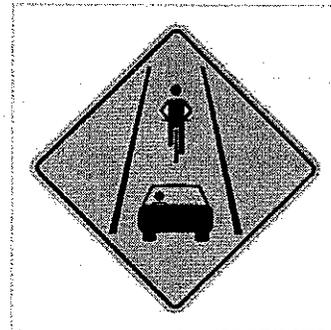
As of the writing of this report, the following recommended measures for Dougall Avenue under the Central Box Municipal Class EA have been developed:

- A raised centre median is proposed along Ouellette Place and on Dougall Avenue to reduce conflicting turning movements and improve safety.
- Bike lanes and sidewalks are proposed on the portion of Dougall Avenue north of the Ouellette Place intersection, and sidewalks are proposed on both the east and west sides of Ouellette Place.

- A traffic signal is proposed to facilitate left turns, and the stop controlled right turn onto Dougall Avenue is converted to a standard right turn at the new signalized intersection to: improve sightlines, reduce merging hazards, and to provide a safer Active Transportation crossing.
- A proposed multi-use trail extends along the west Dougall Avenue boulevard from South Cameron Boulevard to the new signalized intersection, including a tunnel under the CN Rail crossing.
- The channelized ramps at the E.C. Row Expressway are converted to standard right turn lanes to improve sightlines, eliminate weaving hazards, and provide a safer Active Transportation crossing.
- A proposed extension of the raised median at West Grand Boulevard reduces conflicting turning movements to improve safety and reduce the frequency of collisions.

One option that Council could consider as an immediate response would be reducing the posted speed limit to 50km/h. The speed limits of both Dougall Avenue and Ouellette Avenue are currently posted at 60km/h. The analysis performed by the Central Box Municipal Class EA demonstrated no material impact to traffic operations with such a reduction. While a lower limit can reduce the potential impacts of motor vehicle collisions with pedestrians and cyclists, there is likely to be a lack of compliance with such a limit owing to the existing road design.

A second option that Council could consider is the introduction of WC-24 signage on Dougall Avenue in both directions. This signage would advise motorists that they are not to pass cyclists from within the same lane and that single file travel must be respected. It is cautioned that this sign on its own as a warning sign would not be enforceable and may instill a false sense of security for cyclists. It is further cautioned that use of this sign was evaluated by Stantec Consulting and was not supported through their analysis.



However, enforcement tools to ensure appropriate separation between motorized vehicles and cyclists have been recently adopted through amendments to the Highway Traffic Act. Drivers must leave a one-metre distance when passing cyclists or face a \$110 fine and two demerit points.

Dominion Boulevard from Totten Street to West Grand Boulevard

Dominion Boulevard averages 15,400 vehicles passing daily for this segment, growing to 22,300 north of the E.C. Row Expressway and 21,400 south of the E.C. Row Expressway. Under the South Cameron Secondary Plan, the section of Dominion north

of Northwood is designated as a local road anticipating the construction of an Alexandra Avenue diversion. As long as this diversion is not constructed, Dominion Boulevard is the de facto collector road expected to handle most traffic volumes. Simply put, as the planned main north-south route for the area, there are no other routes where traffic can be diverted to.

Through the Traffic Calming Policy, a residential local or collector road (based on Official Plan schedules) with 50 km/h speed limit or lower, with length longer than 150 m, and that has not been evaluated for traffic calming in the last 5 years, can be considered.

The section of Dominion Boulevard within Ward 1, together with Longfellow and McKay from West Grand to Cabana Road West has already been subject to a traffic calming evaluation. This evaluation was completed in 2013 and was received by Council as part of M146-2013, Report No. 109 of the Environment, Transportation & Public Safety Standing Committee (February 20, 2013). Technical justification was found for an electronic speed limit sign. Resident support for the sign did not meet the minimum requirement, however, and was not carried forward. A sidewalk was also constructed on the east side of Dominion Boulevard from north of Cabana Road to Roselawn Drive.

The section of Dominion Boulevard within Ward 10 is not recommended for independent Traffic Calming evaluation as it is being considered more fully as part of the Central Box Municipal Class Environmental Assessment, with recommendations forthcoming as part of the final report.

Between Northwood Street and Norfolk St., the Bicycle Use Master Plan contemplates bicycle facilities on Dominion Boulevard, and becomes part of the planned Alexandra Avenue diversion. The planned construction of Alexandra Avenue as a full road is being evaluated as part of the Central Box Municipal Class Environmental Assessment. At the time of writing of this report, the corridor is not being recommended to proceed as a new collector road and the possibility exists to create a dedicated bikeway. However, property owners wishing to develop their lands would require the full construction of a road on this land in the future.

The construction of bicycle facilities on the present alignment of Dominion Boulevard is a new concept being brought forward as part of the Central Box Municipal Class Environmental Assessment.

As of the time of writing of this report, the following measures for Dominion Boulevard under the Central Box Municipal Class EA have been recommended:

- A local road with a multi-use trail in the north boulevard is proposed to be constructed between Dominion Boulevard and Longfellow Avenue (north of Northwood Public School) utilizing property owned by the City of Windsor. This

will help reduce congestion at the intersections to the north and south (Ojibway and Northwood).

- A proposed off-road multi-use trail within the Alexandra Avenue right-of-way utilizes property currently owned by the City of Windsor, improves neighbourhood connectivity for Active Transportation, and encourages access to future parklands at the junction of South Cameron and Ojibway planned by the City.
- The existing right of way along Dominion Boulevard from Northwood Street to Ojibway Street is converted to an urban cross section (curbs and storm sewers), and pavement is widened to three lanes within the existing right of way to include on-street bicycle lanes and a continuous two-way centre turn lane to facilitate driveway access. For this recommendation, preparatory work is required to construct a storm water disposal outlet that would allow for ditch closure and full reconstruction the road.
- Dedicated left turn lanes are proposed on all approaches at the Northwood Street and Dominion Boulevard intersection, corner radii are increased to improve turning operations and pedestrian and bicycle crossings are improved.
- Pavement is widened on Dominion Boulevard from Northwood Street to West Grand Boulevard within the existing right of way, and part-time on street parking is removed to increase capacity and accommodate bike lanes.
- Left turn lanes are proposed at Dominion Boulevard at Grand Marais Road West and Dominion at Labelle Street along with signal timing adjustments to improve intersection operations and reduce collision frequency.

Administration recommends waiting for the completion of the Central Box Municipal Class Environmental Assessment which is expected for early 2016.

Closing the drains along Dominion Boulevard north of Northwood that will allow for bicycle lane implementation is planned to follow once further residential development of the area is completed, with costs assessed to subdivision construction through development charges. Ultimately, Council would fund these drain enclosures from the capital budget with revenues drawn from these development charges. This work is of neighbourhood benefit and would not be assessed to Dominion Boulevard properties as a local improvement to local property owners. Expediting construction earlier than what is required for development would require that the municipality absorb the full cost to build whereas awaiting development will allow for the project to be self-funding.

It is not believed that reducing the speed limit below 50km/h would be effective in improving conditions for active transportation users. A reduction to 40km/h is not likely to be respected by motorists unless there are physical changes to the road. A defined road edge provides a narrowing effect encouraging adherence to the speed limit by

drivers. In addition, the potential for further improvements to pedestrian travel is minimal given right-of-way limits in the urbanized areas south of Northwood Street and the existing separation of the sidewalks from the drains in the rural cross-section areas north of Northwood Street.

Unlike at Dougall Avenue, there are suitable alternative routes for cyclists nearby in addition to the presence of sidewalks:

- North of Northwood, alternative routes to Dominion Boulevard using adjacent corridors with fewer vehicles, such as Longfellow Avenue northerly to South Cameron St. and ultimately to Totten Street, can act as an interim route for cyclists. However, the road geometrics on Longfellow Avenue would not support the addition of signage in accordance with the Ontario Traffic Manual Book 18 for protected cycling facilities.
- South of Grand Marais Boulevard to Cabana Road, a north-south cycling couplet could be created from both McKay Avenue and/or Longfellow Avenue, diverting at West Grand.
- Pedestrian overpasses across E.C. Row Expressway at Mark Avenue and Academy Drive, as well as uninterrupted local corridors such as Randolph Avenue inclusive of trail segments, supply alternate routes to the use of Dominion Boulevard.

General Considerations

The Central Box Municipal Class Environmental Assessment is already incorporating efforts to improve upon these noted areas, while giving proper consideration of alternatives and the consultation with the public required by the Environmental Assessment Act. The EA will supply interim and longer term solutions for each of these areas. Constructing facilities without undertaking the appropriate consideration of impacts is contrary to the Environmental Assessment Act.

The second Public Information Centre for the Central Box Municipal Class Environmental Assessment was hosted on December 1st, and a final report is expected in early 2016 that will recommend both interim and long term solutions for these issues.

Administration recommends that the Central Box Municipal Class Environmental Assessment, to be concluded in the 2016 calendar year, be the authoritative direction of Council with respect to planning and funding of improvement to these corridors.

RISK ANALYSIS:

All construction projects have inherent risks. Proper project design, planning and administration minimize and/or eliminate the risk. In recognizing these risks resulting

from the present day conditions of each of the Dougall, Dominion and Ouellette corridors, Administration recommended in early 2014 the initiation of the Central Box Municipal Class Environmental Assessment.

Undertaking major improvements requires careful study and public consultation prior to implementation. Attempting to construct new facilities outside of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment risks excluding the public from a process that has been set up to ensure an appropriate level of consultation.

There is a risk to public health and safety as well as a liability risk to the Corporation where the pedestrians and cyclists are invited to enter areas known to lack means of safe passage. Until suitable and reasonable alternatives are implemented, it is recommended that pedestrians and cyclists be discouraged from using these areas. If required, appropriate signage would be implemented that would advise pedestrians and cyclists of risk. Administration does not support creating a false expectation for pedestrians and cyclists that safe passage can be provided in these locations.

The recommendation proper does not carry additional risk but if Council's preferred direction differs, there would undoubtedly be site-specific risks to initiating new construction.

FINANCIAL MATTERS:

There are no additional financial impacts as part of the report recommendation.

Should Council direct further consideration of any of these improvements, Administration will provide a follow-up report to establish direction for the improvements that Council wishes to bring forward.

CONSULTATIONS:

The Managers of Transportation Planning, Risk and Insurance and Traffic Operations Divisions were consulted with respect to the authoring of this report.

CONCLUSION:

The Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process provides the best possible consideration of options and impacts of works being considered, and it is recommended that Council complete the Central Box Municipal Class Environmental Assessment prior to constructing new works within the study limits.

APPROVALS:

Name	Title
Josette Eugeni	Manager of Transportation Planning
Dwayne Dawson	Executive Director of Operations
Mark Winterton	City Engineer
Helga Reidel	Chief Administrative Officer

NOTIFICATIONS:

Name	Address	Email
n/a		

APPENDICES:

1. Central Box PIC #2 - Dougall / Ouellette Avenue Recommendations
2. Central Box PIC #2 - Dominion Boulevard Recommendations
3. Dougall / CNR Overpass Cross-Section

Dougall-Ouellette Avenue Corridor Preliminary Recommended Strategy

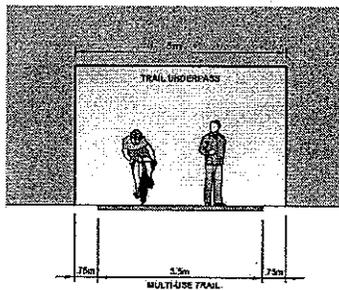
Recommended options were combined to form the preliminary Recommended Strategy

A **raised centre median** is proposed to reduce conflicting turning movements and improve safety (see **Plate 5**).

Bike lanes and sidewalks are proposed on the portion of Dougall Avenue north of the Ouellette Place intersection, and **sidewalks** are proposed on both the east and west sides of Ouellette Place (see **Plates 5 and 6**).

A **traffic signal** is proposed to facilitate left turns, and the stop controlled right turn onto Dougall Avenue is converted to a standard right turn at the new signalized intersection to: improve sightlines, reduce merging hazards, and to provide a safer Active Transportation crossing (see **Plate 6**).

A proposed **multi-use trail** extends along the west Dougall Avenue boulevard from South Cameron Boulevard to the new signalized intersection, including a tunnel under the CN Rail crossing. (see **Plate 6A**).



The channelized ramps are **converted to standard right turn lanes** to improve sightlines, eliminate weaving hazards, and provide a safer Active Transportation crossing (see **Plate 7**).

The proposed **extension of the raised median** reduces conflicting turning movements to improve safety and reduce the frequency of collisions (see **Plate 8**).

Signal timing adjustments as well as encouraging higher use of alternative modes of transportation (TDM) are also proposed as part of the overall strategy.

