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To: Canadian Counsel of Motor Transport Administrators

The OPP Provincial Traffic Safety Program is itself well regarded and award winning. Members of Middlesex OPP detachment have taken the profile of that program and tailored it to help reduce carnage and tragedy on roads throughout the communities they serve.

Building on the adage what is 'predictable is preventable', Middlesex OPP set about using collision data, taking into account environmental factors to identify traffic 'hotspots'. They then created a project plan based on the principles of the Crime Prevention Through Environment Design (CPTED) concept to reduce serious crashes in various areas of Middlesex. The result was a Collision Prevention Through Environmental Design program, requiring public education, awareness and participation as well as support and continued partnerships with municipal and county public works and transportation specialists.

The partnerships developed throughout the program continue to be a key component of the program's success.

The multi-faceted approach to traffic safety has not only attracted interest from regional detachment and traffic managers, it has been presented in various venues across Canada garnering interest and success.

From this, I recommend the Middlesex OPP Detachment as a candidate for the CCMTA Police Partnership award.

Sincerely,

Inspector J.D. Stephens  
Detachment Commander  
Ontario Provincial Police  
Middlesex County

## **Project Overview**

In 2008 the Middlesex County Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) initiated a collision reduction project after concerns were noted regarding the number of fatal motor vehicle collisions that were occurring within the County.

To understand why such a large number of collisions were occurring officers began by examining five years of collision data and visiting multiple collision scenes. Police had historically used enforcement and education to target poor drivers. Roadway design was traditionally the responsibility of engineers and in many cases the police and engineers worked independently. The public sector was rarely involved.

This project brought the police, engineers, road departments and the community together, working towards the common goal of collision reduction. New partnerships with the public sector offered educational opportunities as well.

The program has now developed into a tremendous success.

## **Four E's (Enforcement, Education, Engineering and Environment)**

The project began by using proven crime prevention strategies and adapting them into an innovative new approach to collision reduction coined "Collision Prevention Through Environmental Design."

The unique component of this project was to incorporate the environment into collision reduction strategies. The environment has been applied to traffic calming measures in the past but has never concentrated on collision reduction. This project endeavoured to highlight the environment as the key factor in the reduction of serious crashes in Middlesex County.

During the collision data analysis, one of the key findings was the condition of the At Fault Driver and overwhelmingly, inattentiveness was noted. Inattentiveness is defined as a lapse in focus on the roadway by a driver. This later would become a key focus in the Collision Reduction Strategy.

## **Involving the Community**

One of the best ways to determine what is happening in a community is to involve the community members themselves. In this project, Middlesex OPP designed a survey to incorporate the local communities in the analysis of collisions. The survey was designed to target specific collision locations as noted from the Collision report analysis.

Citizens who resided in the area of those locations were asked to participate in the survey, which was distributed with the assistance of local Community Policing Committee members. Themes that the survey inquired on included, perceived awareness of collisions and persons involved and perceived causes of collisions. Respondents also had the opportunity to offer safety suggestions.

The survey of citizens living in Middlesex County shows that citizens are quite aware of the fatal and serious personal injury motor vehicle collisions occurring within the county. Every respondent to the community survey knew of the serious collisions occurring in their own local municipality. And the majority of the citizens surveyed knew someone involved in the collisions.

The results from the surveyed citizens with Middlesex County illustrate some opinions which mirror some of the results noted from the collision report analysis. This indicated that the community was an important partner in developing the collision reduction strategy.

A second community partnership has evolved with our local fire departments. All volunteer fire departments with Middlesex County have received training on police response to collisions which included the Middlesex Collision Reduction strategy. This training allows the fire departments to work in partnership with the police and provide feedback as to their observations for changes and/or improvements to the roadways.

## **Public Sector Partnership**

Based on the study findings, it is not surprising that motorists require additional visual cues to continually refocus their attention on the roadway. The data from the traffic collision reports clearly indicates that drivers are inattentive. As such, there is a need to implement the best strategies available in order to refocus the driver on the task of driving.

Middlesex OPP officers are also members of the London-Middlesex Road Safety Committee whose main goal is to promote road safety. This committee is comprised of representatives from the Ministry of Transportation (MTO), London-Middlesex EMS, London-Middlesex Health Unit, City of London Engineers, local police agencies, Young Drivers of Canada and 3M Canada. The members of this committee continue to be

important partners in road safety. 3M Canada has been instrumental in training Middlesex OPP officers in traffic safety, including information on the technology behind signage and pavement markings. This educational partnership continues to develop and has been a positive aspect of the Middlesex Collision Reduction Strategy.

As previously stated, one of the main findings in the study was that of driver inattentiveness. The educational training provided by 3M Canada proved that in order for motorists to have adequate visual guidance on the roadways, newer more advanced technologies need to be implemented. Therefore, improvements to pavement markings and signage became key to the projects goals.

Middlesex OPP officers are now able to monitor their county roadways, provide feedback as to their observations and report any need for changes to support a reduction in collisions. These observations are then shared with the appropriate road authority.

### **Local and County Road Authorities**

The Middlesex Collision reduction strategy continued in its partnerships by bringing together police, engineers and municipal roads supervisors.

Middlesex County is comprised of several municipal roads departments. Middlesex OPP has garnered partnerships with Middlesex County and all the municipalities in the OPP policed area including Adelaide Metcalfe, Lucan Biddulph, Middlesex Centre, Newbury, North Middlesex, Southwest Middlesex and Thames Centre.

Prior to this project, engineers and police traditionally worked separately in their efforts to reduce collisions. This project brought the police, engineers and road departments together, working towards the common goal of collision reduction.

Consultation between our agencies had proven to be a tremendous asset to the reduction of traffic concerns throughout our county.

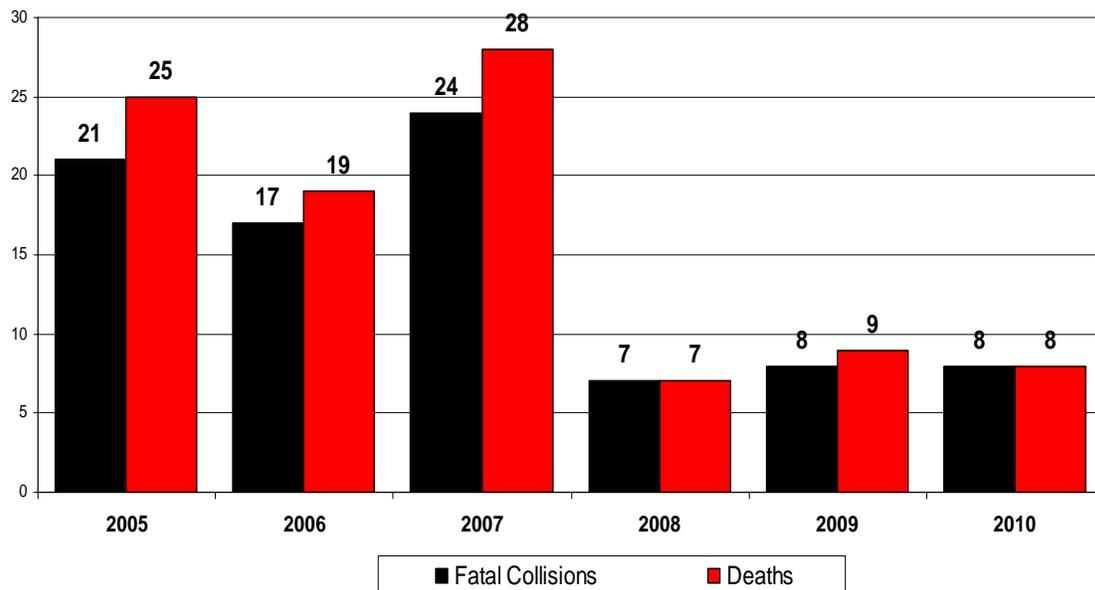
Some of the many traffic concerns discussed focus on environmental cues including conformity, ditch maintenance, view obstructions and enhancement in signage and pavement markings.

Police officers, roads departments and members of the public are encouraged to observe for deficiencies and report them to the appropriate roads department for remedy.

## Successes

The Middlesex OPP detachment is proud of the success their program as experienced. There is no question that a key component of the Middlesex Collision Reduction Strategy is the multiple partnerships that have been developed. Without these partnerships the project would not have the successes it has today. The successes continue as Middlesex County as seen in the following chart. The detachment has experienced a 68% reduction in the number of fatal motor vehicle collisions since the implementation of the Collision Reduction Strategy.

### Middlesex County Fatals



The proven success of the Middlesex Collision Reduction Strategy is demonstrated in the implementation of the program province-wide for all OPP detachments. The implementation of this program will allow for new partnerships to develop and will no doubt significantly decrease the number of serious and fatal motor vehicle collisions in the Province.

This program is forever evolving as interest in the project continues to grow. Middlesex OPP is proud to share their successes in a continuous effort to make Ontario roads safer.

If Middlesex OPP is successful in achieving this award, Inspector John Stephens, Detachment Commander would be accepting the award.