

# WHEN ONTARIO BIKES, ONTARIO BENEFITS



A Green Paper for an Ontario Bicycling Policy  
Share the Road Cycling Coalition | March 2010

# Our partners include:



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## **Foreword – Toward an Ontario Bicycling Policy**

The dream of building a bicycling-friendly Ontario is shared by cyclists, policy makers, and community leaders across the province. Indeed, the topography of our province lends itself well to cycling, from the flat landscapes of southwestern Ontario to the hilly climbs of the Ottawa Valley to the shores of Lake Superior and the vistas of the north.

Of course, this dream is about much more than exploring scenic roads, paths and trails by bike. It is about truly leveraging the very real potential of cycling to address some of the greatest challenges we face as a province today.

The need to reduce carbon emissions and smog in our cities, to promote healthy and active lifestyles for Ontario families, and to increase the efficiency of transport for greater numbers of people require that bicycling be an integral part of transportation policy and planning across the province.

Even so, this dream remains elusive for Ontarians: our province currently has no provincial cycling policy and, as a result, has no strategic, comprehensive plan to integrate and increase the use of cycling for transport and recreational activities. This leads us to ask: Why and how have other jurisdictions embraced cycling – and what do these jurisdictions have that Ontario doesn't?

If we look at the most bicycling-friendly jurisdictions in the world it becomes clear that while possessing so many natural attributes, Ontario lacks the tools critical to provide adequately for the needs of cyclists. Municipalities such as Amsterdam and Copenhagen and North American cities such as Portland, Montreal, San Francisco and Seattle are supported through multi-level policy frameworks which have enabled these jurisdictions to embrace the full potential of cycling to help create healthy, vibrant and economically thriving communities.



As this Green Paper points out, the time has come for the Ontario government to take an active role in setting policy direction and the application of resources required to reap the benefits of the potential solutions which bicycling offers.

When it comes to creating a Bicycling Policy for Ontario and implementing the recommendations outlined in this report, spending and investments will be required.

With the advent of the Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) and the application of this tax to bicycles and bike parts the Ontario government will realize an additional \$20 million annually. This amount represents the provincial component of the tax according to data from the Bicycle Trade Association of Canada (BTAC).

We recommend that the government of Ontario redirect this \$20 million in revenue to an Ontario Bicycling Investment Fund (OBIF). The OBIF would create a means by which the Ontario government could begin to address the active transportation/cycling deficit which currently exists in our province. It also represents a good start in terms of an equitable share of transportation resources in Ontario. By comparison, the Ministry of Transportation for Ontario (MTO) spends \$105 million a year on its Road User Safety Program, \$464 million on Provincial Highways and \$1.1 billion on Policy and Planning.

Creating the OBIF begins to level the playing field with other provinces and neighboring jurisdictions. Indeed, the Ontario government need only look to the province of British Columbia and Bike BC (\$31 million), and the province of Quebec's investment in La Route Verte (\$200 million) to see that Ontario is lagging behind these provinces.

In order to reap the rewards inherent in investments in bicycling – increased mode share, decreased congestion, cleaner air, a healthier Ontario – the Ontario government must begin to play a direct role and to invest in encouraging recreational and utilitarian cycling in Ontario.



## **The Share the Road Cycling Coalition**

The Share the Road Cycling Coalition (the Coalition), an Ontario-based provincial bicycling advocacy organization, has been leading the development of an Ontario Bicycling Policy as an essential step to creating a bicycling-friendly Ontario.

Work began on the Coalition in 2006 following the death of OPP Sergeant Greg Stobbart, the husband of Eleanor McMahon who founded the organization in her husband's memory. Greg was killed while on a training ride on his bicycle in Milton, Ontario.

The senseless nature of this tragedy, coupled with the knowledge that enhanced infrastructure, legislation, education and awareness might have prevented it, began a journey for safer roads for cyclists.

This journey included meetings in communities across Ontario with municipal leaders and officials, cycling advocates, law enforcement, bicycling retailers, economic development and tourism officials – in short, those whose responsibilities include building healthy and safe communities. Discussions focused on what these communities need to further encourage bicycling, and how the Share the Road Coalition can assist in those efforts.

Visits to other provinces (notably British Columbia and Quebec), the United States and Europe to research best practices, were part of this environmental scan.

The latter revealed the extent to which other provinces and international jurisdictions are embracing cycling as a mainstream mode of transportation. This environmental scan research also laid bare what is needed to create a cycling culture – legislation, data and research mechanisms, political champions, infrastructure funding – leading to some powerful lessons on how to build the critical constructs lacking in Ontario.

Meetings across the province underscored the fact that communities are lacking the tools to create the kind of healthy, active and safe places to live so critical to the quality of life of their citizens.



Other observations included the need for sharing best practices between municipalities in the areas of cycling master planning, education, health promotion, law enforcement and bicycle-friendly designs. Further, the individuals and organizations who support the development of cycling within their communities – either as a volunteer or as part of their work advising local governments – consistently expressed a desire to learn from colleagues in similar disciplines.

From Sault St. Marie to St. Catharines, from Windsor to Markham, from Huntsville to Ottawa and north to Sudbury and Red Lake, a number of municipalities have either already embraced bicycling as a mainstream mode of transportation, a means of creating wealth through tourism or as a way of improving the health of their residents. But the progress is uneven, and an increasing number are expressing interest in learning best practices. In particular, those communities with fewer resources want to learn from their colleagues who have been successful in designing and implementing effective cycling master plans, programs and initiatives. Many are unaware how to secure resources or how best to navigate the public consultation process.

The idea for the 2009 Ontario Bike Summit was rooted in this qualitative research. Another important impetus was the recognition that closing these gaps in knowledge and funding required the support of the provincial government. Stakeholders, including municipal leaders, had told us they wanted the provincial government to play a more direct role in creating a bicycling-friendly Ontario. But what kind of role should the government play, and how should priorities be defined?

Since the province does not currently have a public policy framework – a Provincial Bike Policy – which outlines and provides for provincial support for cycling, the development of a Bicycling Policy for Ontario was viewed as a priority.

The process for developing a Bicycling Policy for Ontario meant supplementing existing qualitative research with quantitative data – including data which makes the case for enhanced participation and investment by the province. Fortunately there is ample



research pointing to the benefits of cycling investments in other jurisdictions, including Quebec, but there is very little data of this sort available in Ontario.

(Indeed, there is a need for more data in Ontario overall. In addition to data which captures the inherent benefits for our health, our environment and our economy, there is a need for more data which quantifies the potential for Ontario, identifies gaps and establishes targets such as increased mode share.)

This approach to policy development mirrors that taken by Cycling England, as outlined by the organization's Chairman, Phillip Darnton, a speaker at the 2009 Ontario Bike Summit. One of the key reasons for continued under-investment in cycling, he pointed out, is that the economic benefits of cycling are not fully understood. Consequently, cycling is not viewed as a mainstream mode of transportation.

Making the case for an enhanced role for government must therefore include an evidence-based approach to address these benefits directly and must be part of the policy process leading to the creation of an Ontario Bicycling Policy and on an ongoing basis, as policies and programs are developed and implemented.





## Why Create a Bicycling Policy for Ontario?

Clearly, promoting the use of bicycles to combat climate change, reduce obesity, tackle congestion and provide alternatives in the face of rising fuel prices requires a shift in our transportation policy and thinking.

Our aim is to help make bicycling a mainstream mode of transport to help tackle those challenges – and to get people taking more bicycle trips, more safely and more often.

The experience of jurisdictions such as Quebec demonstrates that even modest investments to encourage cycling will result in greater usage rates. Those investments reap significant return in the form of measurable net benefits for the economy, health and environment.

A Bicycling Policy for Ontario will articulate the role of bicycling and outline the government's plans for:

- Improving cyclists' safety and mobility;
- Working with municipalities to give them the tools they need to encourage bicycling at the local level; and
- A vision for the future which includes leveraging the positive economic benefits of bicycling – including promoting bicycle tourism and congestion mitigation.

Positive examples of effective public policy in this area include Quebec's Bicycle Policy, initiated in 1995 and updated in 2008. This policy incorporates overall government objectives – reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and congestion – with bicycling viewed as a net contributor.

By focusing on a gradual increase in the use of bicycles as a mode of transport – particularly for short, utilitarian trips – and setting measureable targets for this as well as road safety



promotion and improvements in cycling transport, the policy enables the Quebec Transportation Ministry to channel its efforts, and those of its partners, towards specific results.

'With this revised edition of the Bicycle Policy, the Ministère des Transports intends to further pursue its support of this active mode of transportation. As transportation, in Québec, is considered to be a major cause of greenhouse gas emissions, we must continue to promote bicycle transportation as a solution for the health of our people and our cities. That is why the new bicycle policy continues the efforts undertaken in 1995 and places even more emphasis on the use of a bicycle as a true mode of transportation, particularly in urban settings. With the support of our municipal partners, this new policy will work to improve the conditions of use of bicycles in Québec and, in this way, promote their use.'

- Julie Boulet, Québec Minister of Transport, on the release of the revised Quebec Bicycle Policy in 2008

The importance of effective policy is reflected in the role it has played in the development of other bicycling-friendly cultures.

As pointed out by Martijn J. Te Lintelo (Senior Advisor of Mobility Policy, Department of Public Space, City of Nijmegen, the Netherlands) at the 2009 Toronto Bike Summit, one of the critical factors for bicycling success in the Dutch transportation system is "a broad, durable and long-term cycling policy, firmly embedded in overall transport and traffic policy." Citing the city of Groningen (which has a cycling mode share of 60%) as an example, he added: "Groningen is evidence that policy is the very essence of things, as it is [evidence of] vision, willingness, endurance, long-term thinking and planning."

But for Ontario, what should that policy look like, and what should it include? What do key stakeholders – municipalities, planners, cycling advocates, law enforcement – want their provincial government to address as a priority, and how should they be consulted?



## **Creating the Framework for an Ontario Bike Policy**

In order to find some answers about what a Bicycle Policy for Ontario should include, the Coalition decided to consult key stakeholders through an online survey, prior to the Ontario Bike Summit. The data were then consolidated into four key areas for recommended action by the province.

Leveraging partnerships with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Ontario Professional Planners Institute, law enforcement traffic officers across Ontario, cycling advocates and community-based participants meant that the survey would include credible representation from experts who would add value to the policy development process.

The survey was sent to Summit attendees, and further input was sought from participants during breakout sessions. The array of suggestions and solutions they provided, together with data from the stakeholder survey and a robust poll of Ontario residents conducted just prior to the Summit, provide the backbone for the Green Paper on Bicycling in Ontario.

The data generated indicate clearly that the need for increased investment in cycling at the provincial level has never been greater. While bicycle infrastructure development and promotional programs have often been left to local governments, several emerging issues create a strong case for provincial leadership and involvement.

### **Why Cycling Matters**

‘Cycling is enjoyable, efficient, affordable, healthy, sociable, and quiet and a non-polluting form of transportation.’

- Ontario Bike Plan 2008

There is growing recognition that cycling contributes to reducing obesity, traffic congestion, and climate change; improves quality of life by enhancing social cohesion and inclusion; enhances economic development through tourism and leisure and combats rising transportation costs.



Cycling is non-polluting, efficient, causes less wear and tear on our roads and is a healthy alternative to motorized forms of transportation. There are significant studies demonstrating the economic cost of inactivity – cycling is an attractive opportunity to integrate physical activity into daily life.

Some powerful statistics thus emerge in a variety of policy areas as to why cycling should be increased as a mode of active transportation and recreation:

**Climate change:** Transportation is one of the largest single sources of greenhouse gas emission, at 26%. Emissions in the Transportation sector rose by about 48.8 Mt, or 32.8% from 1990 to 2005 (Environment Canada).

**Smog:** A 2008 Ontario Medical Association report concluded that air pollution causes 9,500 premature deaths a year in Ontario. The areas with the highest numbers of smog-related deaths in Ontario were Toronto, with 2,130, Peel Region with 700, and York Region with 590.

**Congestion:** A November 2009 OECD report cited that congestion costs the GTA economy \$3.3 billion per year.

**Health care:** In Ontario 51.6% of the population is overweight, 20.3% of people smoke and 50.2% are physically inactive. Physical inactivity is a serious public health concern since inactivity contributes to the population burden of chronic disease, disability, and premature death from heart disease and stroke – the leading causes of death in Canada.

Regular physical activity reduces these risks dramatically. A 2000 study of 30,000 20-92 year olds from the Archives of Internal Medicine found that cycling to work decreased mortality risk by 40%.



**Transport efficiency:** Each Canadian makes an average of 2,000 car trips of less than 3 km each year. For distances up to 5 km, cycling is recognized as the fastest of all modes from door to door (Environment Canada).

In 2005, approximately 86% of Canadians traveled to work by car as drivers or passengers. Of those, 57% of residents lived less than a five-kilometer drive from work (Statistics Canada).

**Costs:** Cycling is cheap and efficient. It costs an average of \$7,000 per year to own and operate a motor vehicle and \$150 annually for a bicycle (Health Canada). The social cost of driving is very high (congestion, pollution, collisions).

**Key findings: 2004 National Transportation Survey, Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute**

- Canadians would like to walk and cycle more. Many have increased the amount they have done so in the past year and there is a certain willingness to increase the number of trips to routine destinations to more active modes.
- While some factors cannot be controlled (health and weather) there are many changes or improvements that can be made that Canadians agree would help them to choose walking and cycling more. These include improvements to safety, routes (in terms of existence, linkages, aesthetics and maintenance) and tax incentives.
- Canadians feel that governments have a role to play in supporting active transportation, both in terms of spending and through taking responsibility in other ways.



## The Ontario Bike Summit: Research and an Action Plan for Ontario

Despite the numerous advantages to cycling, a number of barriers remain. Identifying those barriers is a good first step to eliminating them, and setting priorities to create a bicycling-friendly province.

The Coalition hired opinion research firm Strategic Communications, Inc. (Stratcom) to conduct a poll of 1000 Ontarians from August 14-20, 2009. The poll probed Ontarians on issues ranging from attitudes towards cycling to cycling habits and frequency and included Ontarians who cycle now, as well as those who do not. For those who cycle now, their motivation and cycling habits were explored.

Highlights include:

1. Sixty percent (60%) of Ontarians say they would prefer to cycle more often; they indicate that the primary reason they do not ride more often is they are “worried about safety on the road.”
2. Another main reason cited for cycling less often is: “not enough bike routes to where I want to go” (39%).
3. Although 94% of respondents rode bikes as children, only 6% are frequent users today (i.e. riding every day or almost every day).
4. Twenty four percent (24%) of Ontarians ride their bikes occasionally (either weekly or monthly) while 70% say they never or rarely cycle – which includes both those with (38%) and without (32%) bikes.



5. When asked why they ride, 33% say they ride for a variety of reasons, both utilitarian (shopping, commuting, errands) and for pleasure; while the majority (63%) say they ride for pleasure and recreation.
6. Looking at who rides a bike, Ontarians in the 34-49 age range are the most likely to have a bike, but also are most likely to say they rarely or never ride it.
7. Men are more likely than women to ride bikes frequently or even occasionally.
8. Nearly 3 out of 4 Ontarians say that their motivation for cycling was to get exercise; half say their motivation is to reduce pollution from cars and buses; 57% say they do so for the feeling and experience cycling provides; and 41% say that they do not drive or own a car.
9. A greater percentage of people ride for pleasure and recreation outside the city of Toronto than within it. Ontarians living in urban and suburban areas are much more likely to ride their bike for shopping/going to work and for pleasure.

This data quantifies what many people who don't bicycle now tell us, and points to areas for focus and attention.

One of the most notable findings is the large proportion of individuals who cycled as children but do not cycle now. This could provide a clue to improving the health and activity levels of children. We know that fewer children are cycling today. One of the reasons for that could be that their parents have ceased to do so. Encouraging parents to bicycle again, and to promote cycling as a family activity, could play an important role in changing the habits of the next generation.



# Active Transportation Stakeholder Survey – Policy Priorities for the Ontario Government

## Survey Background

As a second step in developing a framework for bicycling policy in Ontario, we wanted to gather the opinions of experts in the fields of municipal affairs, planning, advocacy, law enforcement and economic development.

Over 450 responded to the online survey conducted during a two-week period (September 1-15, 2009), which covered a number of topics related to active transportation (primarily bicycling and walking). The respondents were on lists from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), the Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI), the Ontario Provincial Police (officers across Ontario responsible for traffic enforcement, education and awareness) and the Share the Road Cycling Coalition's list of cycling organizations and advocates from across Ontario.

A large portion of respondents have been involved with policy or planning in a professional capacity. More than one out of three are personally involved with cycling advocacy. More than 80% say they cycle recreationally; more than one in three bicycle to work. Nearly half have been involved in active transportation issues for six years or more.

## Key Findings

Respondents were asked for their impressions of the current levels of support in their municipality, and across the province more broadly, for active transportation (bicycling and walking).





Nearly three-quarters (73%) agreed that a significant increase in support is required across Ontario, while a corresponding number of over two thirds of respondents (68%) agreed that more support is required in their own municipality.

## **Quantifying the Barriers**

In terms of the barriers to improving bicycling, respondents cited a lack of infrastructure and/or funding for infrastructure improvements (both municipal and provincial) and actual or perceived lack of safety on the roads, as their top concerns. On the latter point, this data mirrors the findings from the earlier Ontario-wide poll which found that the number one reason Ontarians do not cycle is because they are afraid to do so.

Fifty percent (50%) of stakeholder survey respondents said that the greatest barrier to improving bicycling was a lack of municipal infrastructure funding; forty two percent (42%) said a lack of provincial infrastructure funding was the greatest barrier. Forty one percent (41%) cited a lack of safety on the road.

Other key concerns included the need for awareness and education programs for motorists and cyclists and the need for more political champions for cycling at both the municipal and provincial level.

In terms of defining who is responsible for breaking down the barriers to active transportation/bicycling, the majority of respondents (52%) cited governments – both provincial and municipal – as being primarily responsible. Secondly, policy makers and planners were viewed by 22% of respondents as having a key role to play.

In terms of changes and improvements with respect to cycling, stakeholders responded that the situation has improved at the municipal level, but are less satisfied about provincial progress in the recent past.



## Defining a Role for the Ontario Government

'Quebec has been deeply involved in a range of programs to promote cycling, increase its safety, coordinate local efforts, and fund infrastructure improvements. By comparison, Ontario provides virtually no funding, planning or program coordination for cycling.'

- Cycling Trends and Policies in Canadian Cities. 2005

Respondents to the survey were asked to prioritize the most important specific policy or legislative priorities that the provincial government should pursue to improve cycling in Ontario.

The highest-ranking priorities for the Ontario government were:

1. Funding for bicycling infrastructure: 86% (provincial and municipal funding).
2. Education programs for cyclists and motorists: 74% (bicycle safety, safe routes to school, and programs for motorists).
3. Public awareness and promotion campaigns to enhance safety: 71%.
4. Legislation and policy to promote cycling: 62% (creating political champions, research, policy interventions, and bicycle friendly legislation).

These four priority areas, working together, represent an effective framework for policy and action by the provincial government. They mirror what has worked in other provinces and other countries.

By creating a list of priorities, experts in cycling from across Ontario are telling the government what its priorities should be in terms of encouraging cycling in Ontario.



## 1. Investing in Infrastructure

When it comes to defining a role for the province in improving cycling, funding for infrastructure and infrastructure related projects was cited as the number one priority by 86% of respondents.

Regions around the globe who have invested in bicycling infrastructure have seen a beneficial impact on their economies. Quebec is a perfect example where government investments have enabled bicycling tourism to generate an important, measurable impact on the economy. These impacts were quantified by Quebec's leading cycling organization, Velo Quebec, in partnership with the University of Quebec in 2001. Based on a reasonable growth scenario, estimates are that following the inauguration of the Route Verte in 2007, the amount spent annually by users will increase to \$134 million. This spending will generate over \$38 million in government revenues and help support 2,861 jobs.

Investments in bicycling infrastructure also contribute to quality of life, safety and livability at the community level. A report on the economic impact of investments in bicycling infrastructure by the League of American Bicyclists in June 2009 cites the example of Portland, Oregon which has been designated a Platinum-level Bicycle Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists, in part for its investments in infrastructure.

Portland saw \$90 million in bicycle-related activity in 2008. Recognizing the importance of bicycling to Portland, Mayor Sam Adams has proposed setting aside \$500,000 specifically for bicycle programs and projects to "provide more Portlanders an affordable option for getting around the city." As a result of policies to encourage bicycling and maintain urban density, which reduce auto-dependency, Portland residents save on transportation costs and have more money to spend on things they value. Compared to the distance and time spent commuting to work in the median American city, Portlanders travel 2.9 billion fewer miles and spend 100 million fewer hours (on the road), saving \$2.6 billion a year.



These examples demonstrate how investments in initiatives such as paths, paved shoulders, and trails can have on the local economies by attracting visitors, residents and businesses.

Statistics from the Bicycle Trade Association of Canada highlight that the bicycle market has been growing steadily in Canada for the last five years. This potential has attracted the attention of the U.S. Department of Commerce. A 2008 report highlighted the growth of bicycling in Ottawa – citing infrastructure improvements as contributing significantly to this growth:

‘Canada's capital city, Ottawa, has the fourth largest number of bicycle commuters in the country and boasts facilities that are already among the top 10 percent in the world in an urban setting. With city council's recent approval of a twenty-year master plan for an additional 2,500 kilometers of on-an-off road cycling paths, local businesses are expecting a boost for Ottawa's already booming cycling industry. U.S. manufacturers should therefore consider Ottawa as a destination for exporting bicycles, parts, accessories and other bicycle related supplies.’

Finally, improving conditions for cyclists by investing in infrastructure is good for all riders.

A 2009 study in Portland which appeared in the Journal of Public Health Policy found that a disproportionate share of the bicycling occurred on streets with bicycle lanes, separate paths, or bicycle boulevards and concluded that the data support the need for well-connected neighborhood streets and a network of bicycle-specific infrastructure to encourage more bicycling among adults. This can be accomplished, it noted, through comprehensive planning, regulation, and funding.

Substantially increasing the amount invested in cycling would still represent only a tiny increase in overall government budgets. The Federal Highways Administration in the U.S. determined in 2002 that between 1998 and 2001 the average annual amount spent for roads and bridges was more than \$50 per person, while the average annual amount spent on pedestrian/bike projects was \$0.87 per person.



The Ontario Bicycling Investment Fund would address one of the most fundamental issues identified by municipal leaders – the need for a specific fund to enhance the built environment. The Fund would serve to provide a sustainable source of infrastructure (and other programmatic) funding to municipalities to assist with shifting driving trips to bicycling.

While existing funding frameworks such as the Federal Gas Tax funding allocated under the Building Canada Plan have been created to address the province’s infrastructure deficit, feedback from municipal leaders states that an investment fund focused solely on Active Transportation/Cycling would serve to help municipalities adjust to the desire of citizens for enhanced transportation and recreation choices.

In particular, this Fund would include resources for municipalities to improve roadway design and facilitate cycling on roads, including maintenance of cycling facilities and cycling lanes. Issues such as repairing potholes, keeping bike lanes free of debris, having bike-friendly drain grates, etc. are important day to day bicycling infrastructure needs. Further, feedback highlighted the provision of funding and know-how in order to connect off-road and on-road facilities are seen as critical to broadening the use of mass transit and the functionality of existing bicycle facilities.

‘Regions that have invested in bicycling have seen a beneficial impact on their economies. Québec has seen a measurable impact of bicycle tourism on its economy. To draw tourists and encourage cycling, Quebec developed a network of 2,702 miles of bicycle paths and roadway routes called La Route Verte which is promoted as the “best bicycle route in the world.” In 2000, when only part of the route was complete, La Route Verte cyclists spent a total of \$95.4 million, corresponding to approximately 2,000 jobs and \$15.1 M in tax revenue for Québec and \$11.9 M for the Government of Canada. In 2005, bicycle tourists spent \$83 a day, more than other tourists’ average of \$66.’

- “The Route Verte, Economic Spin-offs” and “Bicycling in Quebec in 2005” (Velo Quebec)



## 2. Education Programs for Cyclist and Motorists

Funding and supporting education programs (school-based bicycle and road safety for children; cycling and motorist education initiatives) were cited as a priority for the Ontario government by 73% of respondents to the stakeholder survey commissioned by Share the Road in September 2009.

The importance of the education of bicyclists and motorists and its contribution to cycling has been well documented:

‘Traffic education must be comprehensive, including both cyclists and motorists. And it cannot be limited to vehicular cycling training courses for adults but must start with schoolchildren, as in northern Europe, at an age young enough that children can cycle to school on a daily basis and continue cycling for the rest of their lives.’ (Pucher et al., 2009)

This section of the Green Paper will deal with recommendations regarding cyclist and motorist education separately. In the latter category, bicycling education for young people – including both curriculum-based learning and other programs – has its own section.

### Cyclist Education Programs (General)

Since bicycles are considered as vehicles under the Highway Traffic Act, riders are responsible for following the laws that apply to them; simply knowing how to ride a bicycle is not the same as knowing how to operate one safely and legally.

Bicycle education, like driver education, is an important component of any comprehensive strategy to encourage cycling. Bicycle education can increase safety levels by helping riders become aware of their responsibilities as road users. Education sessions can also teach valuable lessons on riding skills, bike maintenance as well as being a venue to meet fellow riders.



Stakeholders in communities across Ontario stressed the need for enhanced resources for local cycling education programming. An example they cited is the CanBike cycling education program developed in partnership with and utilized by bicycling advocates and education experts, public health officers, and law enforcement across Ontario.

Over the years as government support for public health programs has diminished, programs such as CanBike have suffered. Consequently, the number of instructors has dwindled, while demand has increased. Communities understand the importance of cycling education to encouraging non-cyclists get on a bike and get active. Increased funding would serve to build the capacity of CanBike, increase the number of instructors and ensure that the program is more widely available.

An effort led by the Ontario Cycling Association and supported by officials from across Ontario including the Share the Road Cycling Coalition is currently under way to re-invigorate CanBike. Since one of the major barriers to growing CanBike province wide is financial sustainability, a resource development strategy, which will include an approach to the provincial government, is currently being developed.

## **Cyclist Education Programs – Children**

The numbers of children travelling to school by bicycle has fallen dramatically over the last three decades and bicycle education is an essential requirement in any effort to reverse this trend.

In 1971, some 80% of Canadian children aged 7 and 8 walked to school. In 1998, only slightly more than a third of children aged 5 to 13 walked to school at least half the time (Kino-Québec, 2005), and in 2004, barely 14.5% of 6-year-olds walked or biked to school (Desrosiers and Eid, 2007).



In the United States, the National Safe Routes to School Partnership notes that the percentage of U.S. students who walk and/or bicycle to school has declined from approximately 50% in 1969 to only 15% today. Concerns about safety are seen as the main reason for this drop.

Children are the most vulnerable group of road users. In recognition of this fact, children's bicycle education is an important part of the school curriculum in countries with high rates of cycling participation and safety. Jurisdictions such as the Netherlands have invested a great deal in understanding how children (specifically aged 4-12) learn and process information with respect to road and cycling safety.

In the United States, the 2005 Safe Routes to School legislation provided \$612 million in funding to all 50 states and the District of Columbia to help communities improve infrastructure such as sidewalks and bike paths, and to support education, encouragement and enforcement programs that make it safer and easier for children to walk and bicycle to schools.

In the Netherlands, their process includes both curriculum-based learning and situational training as outlined in the May 2009 paper from the Institute for Road Safety Research – “Traffic Education of Children 4-12 years old”:

‘Education at school can provide part of the training, but seeing the practical exercise needed, this forms only a fraction of the total training required. Recent psychological research (see Dragutinovic & Twisk, 2006) has shown that children can already learn important traffic skills from the age of 5, and that traffic education can speed up the learning process...’

Finally, for the 4-14 years old age group, for which the Dutch Ministry of Education is responsible for traffic education as part of the primary school curriculum, the training objectives include: children know the traffic rules and the meaning of road signs; they can apply this knowledge in the traffic situation in their immediate environment; children are capable of safely participating in traffic as pedestrians, cyclists, and as independent users of public transport.





In 2006 the Dutch Ministry of Education carried out a questionnaire study among teachers about the traffic education offered in primary schools (Van der Schoot, 2006). Eighty five percent (85%) of the teachers who responded give traffic education lessons once a week to 10 year olds, with lessons lasting slightly over half an hour on average.

In terms of results, the same paper outlines that over the past two decades, road safety has improved more for children than for the rest of the population. In the mid-1980s, the number of fatalities among children was approximately 120 and in recent years it has been approximately 35. This is an annual reduction of 3.3%. In the other age groups, there was an annual reduction of 2.4%.

In Texas, the Texas Bicycle Coalition has developed curriculum-based materials which it provides to schools across the state. The Texas SuperCyclist curriculum is a comprehensive bicycle safety education course for 4th and 5th grade elementary school teachers and their students. Field instructors train and certify teachers in school districts across Texas so that they may, in turn, train their students in bicycle and pedestrian safety education. Curriculum materials include "Master Pages" – homework and safety information that teachers photocopy for students to take home and share with family members.

Other jurisdictions around the world are embracing cycling education as a means of encouraging cycling and enhancing safety. Ontario needs to do the same – particularly if we are to begin to change the habits of future generations. The fact that a large percentage of stakeholders in the survey highlighted education programs provides impetus for the province to examine how it can best add value to enhancing cycling and road safety education.

Curriculum-based learning which is complemented by bicycling tests, in the same vein as driving tests measure learned skills, is seen as a critical step forward in standardizing cycling education in schools in Ontario and encouraging children and their parents to consider cycling to school as a viable option.



It is important to note that there is ongoing and significant activity in Canada with respect to providing resources, information, programming and research on Active and Safe Routes to School. In Ontario, this work is led by Green Communities Canada and in the various provinces by autonomous organizations including Velo Quebec.

For the most part, activities have focused on walking to school and so an approach to enhancing road safety and cycling education for children in Ontario would build upon the excellent work already being done by existing approaches and frameworks through Green Communities Canada and their partners, by adding bicycling to this mix in a concerted way.

## **Motorist Education**

Available research suggests most car-bicycle collisions are caused by motorist error. A study of Toronto police collision reports by Dr. Chris Cavacuiti of the University of Toronto concluded that cyclists are the cause of less than 10% of bike-car accidents.

Educating motorists to share the road involves a series of measures including effective training, awareness campaigns and enforcement.

In Ontario, critical training instruments such as the Driver's Manual, driver training and the driver's exam need to be updated to highlight the importance of sharing the road with cyclists.

Education and awareness campaigns have been effective in reducing the rates of drinking and driving. The same approach should be undertaken to educate the motoring public about the rights and responsibilities when it comes to sharing the road with cyclists.

In Chicago, the "Drive with Care" campaign is an excellent example of a comprehensive initiative designed to raise awareness. A peer-to-peer social marketing campaign, its goal is



to cut the number of crashes in half through education, targeted enforcement and street design adjustments. The campaign includes a “Drive with Care Pledge” – a personal commitment to driving without distractions and with courtesy, with the intent of stigmatizing reckless driving.

The campaign was so successful it was expanded to include high schools, offering educators and parents a free customizable module. It was funded through a traffic safety grant from the Illinois Department of Transportation.

### **3. Public Awareness and Promotion**

‘A strong marketing campaign combined with the necessary facilities can help promote cycling as an everyday, convenient vehicle for short urban trips.’  
(Collins in Davies et al., 1998)

Public awareness and promotion campaigns were cited by 71% of respondents as a critical instrument for the Ontario government to include in its overall efforts to encourage cycling. Implemented in conjunction with the provision of physical infrastructure, special facilities for cyclists and effective land-use planning, the “softer” components addressed here include information provision, public relations and promotional campaigns.

The prevailing ‘car culture,’ in which the car is the dominant mode of transport, is a significant barrier to encouraging cycling and walking. In order to promote alternative modes of travel, there is a need to break down entrenched attitudes while simultaneously improving the physical environment which is often discouraging to walking and cycling (Oja and Vuori, 2000).

Further, cycling is often dismissed as a mode of transport due to concerns based on safety, image and, in some locations, inconvenience of weather. This shows the need for encouragement which goes beyond the provision of cycle routes and instead focuses on



understanding and allaying such perceptions and increasing awareness (McClintock, 2002; CTC, 1995).

The creation of a pro-walking and cycling culture is paramount to promoting and encouraging cycle use. Cycling must be recognized and accepted as a desirable transport mode among the public, professionals and transport providers if they are to be encouraged. Communication programs, incentives and regulatory and legal measures are vital in creating such a pro-cycling culture (CTC, 1995).

Cycling promotion is not just about getting people to abandon using cars in favor of bikes, but encouraging people to be more selective in using cars and to use bikes for trips where the bicycle is particularly suitable, for example short trips.

The Bicycle Friendly Communities program of the League of American Bicyclists includes Encouragement as one of the key criteria in its application. Communities must demonstrate achievements in each of the five categories in order to be considered for an award.

This category concentrates on how the community promotes and encourages bicycling through initiatives such as Bike Month and Bike to Work Week events as well as “producing community bike maps, route finding signage, community bike rides, commuter incentive programs, and having a Safe Routes to School program.” Clearly, marketing and promotion campaigns require funding support. The Ontario Bicycle Investment Fund should include funding for initiatives which encourage cycling.

Further to a presentation by Jean Francois Pronovost (Executive Director, Velo Quebec) and Marc Panneton (Cycling Coordinator, Ministry of Transportation, Quebec) at the Ontario Bike Summit, recommendations from delegates stressed the importance of an effective working relationship between government and cycling advocates. This was viewed as critical in ensuring that cycling awareness and promotion initiatives are effective both in terms of their development and execution.

An Ontario Bicycling Policy which focuses on encouraging cycling must recognize the



importance of promoting cycling in terms of changing behavior, and encouraging individuals who do not cycle now to do so. As cited by one Summit participant: “In Quebec and B.C. cycling is cool and normal; in Toronto all we hear is how ‘scary’ it is.”



## 4. Cycling Policy and Legislation

The fact that 62% of respondents to the stakeholder survey before the Ontario Bike Summit said that enhanced legislation and policy development (creating political champions, research, policy interventions, and bicycle-friendly legislation) should be a priority for the Ontario government speaks to its importance in creating a cycling culture.

Under Ontario law a bicycle is considered as a vehicle and cyclists are required to obey the rules of the road. Just as cyclists have responsibilities when using the road system, they also have the right, like other vehicles, to use the road and be shown courtesy and care by other road users.

Existing cyclists need encouragement to remain regular cyclists and new cyclists need to be encouraged through a variety of measures. One such measure is a “Three Foot Passing Law” in existence in a growing number of U.S. states. The essence of the law is the creation of a buffer zone between motorized vehicles and bicycles, placing the responsibility on the motorist by requiring a minimum of three feet when passing. Beyond the fact that such legislation creates an added tool for officers in terms of enforcement, it also provides an excellent platform for education and awareness regarding the need to share the road responsibly.

Such legislation supports the 1998 recommendations of the Regional Coroner for Toronto to provide greater clarity with respect to the relationship between motorists and cyclists in areas such as safety equipment, lane positioning and passing procedures. As noted in the 1998 report:

‘Ontario's Highway Traffic Act presently does little to clarify how bicycles interact with other traffic on our roads. The concept of motorized vehicles yielding to non-motorized vehicles, which in turn must yield to pedestrians, seems to be a common sense rule which should be accepted by all road users. Entrenching this principle in the HTA would clarify the situation, and likely significantly reduce risk of injury and death.’



Targeting workplaces with incentives through legislation is effective in offering realistic alternative transport choices to the car.

Such initiatives operate as a form of 'carrot' incentive to reduce travel by car and manage mobility, focusing particularly on the journey to work. Both employers and staff can benefit from such plans. Three European Union countries; the Netherlands, Belgium and the UK, have now introduced tax breaks for employees who travel to work without using their own car.

The state of Washington introduced trip reduction legislation in 1990. The Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) Law is a state law that requires employers with 100 or more employees to develop and implement an employee commute program to reduce the number and length of drive-alone commute trips made to their worksite. The goal of the CTR Law is to reduce traffic congestion, air pollution, and fuel consumption in the state by encouraging employees to use alternatives to drive-alone commuting.

The CTR law was introduced as part of the Washington State Clean Air Act in 1991. The Washington State Legislature passed the CTR Efficiency Act in 2006 and revised the goals for trip reduction; each city and county must reduce drive-alone trips at major worksites by 10 percent from 2007 levels by 2011.

A 2006 review of the legislation by the State Department of Transportation determined that the employee drive-alone rate at CTR worksites had decreased from 70.9% in 1993 to 65.5% in 2007. The miles of travel to CTR sites have also decreased significantly. Statewide, employees' round-trip commutes to CTR worksites accounted for just over 2.4 billion vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in 2007. Without the changes in employee travel, the commute VMT to these sites would have been 6.7% higher – an estimated difference of nearly 170 million miles.

At the federal level, the United States has several legislative remedies which facilitate infrastructure, encourage cycling in children as a means of creating lifelong healthy habits,



and provide tools for the creation of bicycle friendly communities. In 2009, the U.S. federal government invested \$1.5 billion in bicycle facilities and programs.

Examples of U.S. legislation include: the national Safe Routes to School legislation – building healthy and green habits (\$671 M in 2005); the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETÉ- LU 2005); the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21) – all of which create opportunities for state transportation departments and communities.

The SAFETÉ-LU includes funding for transportation enhancement such as the provision of pedestrian and bicycle facilities and pedestrian and bicycle safety and education activities.

In 2009, Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood, U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Shaun Donovan, and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa P. Jackson announced an interagency “Partnership for Sustainable Communities” to help improve access to affordable housing, more transportation options, and lower transportation costs while protecting the environment in communities nationwide. The Partnership established six livability principles that will act as a foundation for interagency coordination, including the provision of transportation choices and the importance of valuing communities and neighborhoods.

Another important legislative initiative in the U.S. has been the Complete Streets Act, introduced in 2009 and currently before the Committee on Environment and Public Works. The Act requires states and metropolitan planning organizations to consider the needs of all users – including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, children, older individuals, and individuals with disabilities – when building new roads or improving existing roads while using federal funds.

As the National Complete Streets Coalition notes:

‘Instituting a complete streets policy ensures that transportation agencies routinely design and operate the entire right of way to enable safe access for drivers, transit users and vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists, as well as for older people, children, and people with disabilities.





More than 100 jurisdictions spanning all regions of the country have adopted complete streets policies through legislation, internal agency policies, and design manuals.'

In Ontario, Infrastructure Framework Agreements such as the Building Canada Plan recognize the importance that "quality, modern public infrastructure that contributes to long-term economic growth, a clean environment and strong communities." Both the province of Ontario and the federal government "agree on the need for long-term planning to strategically address infrastructure needs in priority areas."

In keeping with a Complete Streets approach, funding agreements such as the Building Canada Plan and the federal gas tax funding provisions need to incorporate all road users. The Ontario government should demonstrate leadership by developing a complete streets policy, and it should encourage the federal government to do the same.

An example of provincial policy which incorporates this thinking is the Quebec Bicycle Policy which stipulates that all provincial infrastructure projects, including roadway projects, must incorporate the needs of cyclists in their design. Moreover, the plan introduces uniform bikeway design and traffic control standards.

Finally, the existence of champions – particularly political champions – is critical to effective legislation, policy development and to legitimizing cycling.

One such champion is United States Congressman Jim Oberstar (D-Minn.), Chair of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee (T&I) who in 2009 proposed a six-year, \$500 billion transportation bill that would significantly increase funding for bicycling programs from the current five-year, \$286 billion total. In particular, Chairman Oberstar's bill would boost the Safe Routes to School program and it would also give more money to cities to spend on transit and alternatives to single-passenger car use, such as bicycling.

The Oberstar bill, which has already been approved by the T&I Committee, would also provide significantly more money for many of the key bike facility funding programs. It would create an Office of Livability inside the Department of Transportation that would be



charged with the job of making sure that transportation projects improve health, while reducing road congestion and vehicle miles traveled.

Highlighting federal support, at the 2009 National Bike Summit, U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood said: “I am committed to investing in programs that encourage bikes to coexist with other modes and to safely share our roads and bridges. And there’s strong support in Congress for these goals as well. In the Department of Transportation, bicyclists have a full partner in working toward livable communities.”

With respect to policy and planning, it is important to recognize that the Ontario government has made significant progress with MoveOntario 2020 – the rapid transit action plan for the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA). The implementation plan for “The Big Move” initiative contains many excellent suggestions for enhancing active transportation and cycling in the GTHA.

The fact that bicycles have been incorporated into this significant planning process indicates that the province has the potential to incorporate this kind of planning on a province-wide basis. In support of this, a number of the recommendations in the Green Paper reflect those made in the “Big Move.”



## Conclusion

The provincial government, with their critical role in setting transportation, environment, education, health and health promotion policy, must play a prominent role in the design and delivery of bicycling public policy.

The task of adapting our transport infrastructure to meet the challenges that Ontario faces is beyond the capability of municipalities alone. It also requires provincial assistance to make cycling a safe, attractive option for more Ontarians. There has never been a better time to place cycling on the agenda to position Ontario on the road to a healthy, sustainable future.

Other jurisdictions around the world, including the U.S., are embracing cycling as a solution, and are creating legislated remedies to incent and encourage cycling by individuals, organizations and communities.

Ontario is behind other jurisdictions in North America when it comes to support for cycling. Unlike other provinces it lacks a Bicycling Policy, a critical first step in outlining the role that the government intends to play in this burgeoning area.

The Green Paper on Bicycling was developed as an important first step in the creation of a Bicycling Policy for Ontario. The implementation of the policies, initiatives and programs it recommends are seen as critical to the enhancement of bicycling in Ontario. It was created to underscore the potential for positive change and benefit to our province when sustainability, climate protection and public health are at the centre of our province's transportation policies.

As this Green Paper demonstrates, there are many simple yet effective measures that the province of Ontario can access in order to address many of the critical challenges facing our society. Further, it presents an overview of the key policy areas that should be considered



in preparing the kind of critical policy instrument which will serve as a statement of intent and direction – a Bicycling Policy for Ontario.

Leadership involves making choices. Choosing to incorporate bicycling as part of a multi-modal policy approach at the provincial level is an idea whose time has come. This choice has a number of important benefits for our health and our environment.

Within the overall spending envelope at the MTO, investments in bicycling represent a low-cost opportunity. Knowing how to proceed has been a challenge for successive governments. This Green Paper was developed to provide policy makers with the tools they need to leverage the inherent opportunities which investments in bicycling offer to our province.

Our goal is to see bicycling featured in legislation, funding streams and programs to the benefit of all Ontarians and we look forward to working with our provincial and municipal governments and our partners across the province, to this end.



## Recommendations for Priority Areas of Concern

### 1. Infrastructure Recommendations:

- **Give municipalities the tools they need to build safe cycling environments.** The province of Ontario needs to demonstrate flexibility in its approach to accommodate the needs of municipalities as regards active transportation design. (See also the Complete Streets recommendation in the Legislative section of the Green Paper.) In particular this should include the re-consideration of long-term right-of-way needs in transportation facility management.
- **Improve active transportation infrastructure planning on overpasses.** Overpasses continue to be an issue for municipalities and their residents who walk or cycle; they are notoriously unsafe for cyclists and pedestrians. MTO needs to consider these vulnerable road users and must work with municipalities to make these critical points for death and injury safer. This is in keeping with recommendations listed in the Chief Coroner of Ontario's report in 1998 which followed a number of cycling fatalities in the City of Toronto, and has as its objective improving the safety of cyclists in Toronto and in the province: "Recommendation #13 – that the City of Toronto identify potentially dangerous locations for cyclists including high frequency accident locations and cyclist-identified problem areas where site specific improvements can be made to prevent bicycle collisions."
- **The MTO should place an enhanced emphasis on including effective and formalized communications and consultations with active transportation stakeholders as part of its strategic planning.**



- **Encourage innovation, and in particular research into innovative practices and best practice sharing.** To this end, the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) should create an “Active Transportation Infrastructure Innovation Funding Program” – to fund research at Ontario colleges and universities – as currently exists for highway infrastructure innovation. This would encourage basic and applied research into active transportation infrastructure in Ontario and enhance the ability of municipalities to access best in class designs and approaches.
- **The provincial government should amend the Development Charges Act of Ontario to ensure that “growth pays for growth” – including sustainable growth like active transportation.**
- In his 2008-2009 Annual Report the Environment Commissioner of Ontario said: “While its straightforward street grid and relatively flat topography give Toronto the potential to become a great cycling city, this potential is unlikely to be achieved without leadership and support from the Ontario government to develop a cycling infrastructure.” **We urge the Ontario government to support the following recommendation from the Environment Commissioners report:** “... that Ontario ministries that oversee municipal planning encourage municipalities and planners to engage cyclists in their deliberations on planning and uphold the spirit of the Provincial Policy Statement 2005. To facilitate improved planning that promotes cycling and walking in Ontario communities, the Ministry of Environment should consider ordering the Municipal Engineers Association (MEA) to prepare modifications of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment, as it did in 2007 to promote public transit.”
- **The Ontario government should invest in bicycling infrastructure in municipalities and regions across Ontario via a bicycling tourism initiative such as Quebec’s “Route Verte.”** This network should be created via an inter-Ministerial approach involving MTO, the Ministry of Environment, and the Ministry of Tourism and should be developed in partnership with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, as well as bicycling tourism experts and advocates in Ontario. Such an initiative would support



tourism growth potential as outlined in MPP Greg Sorbara's Tourism Competitiveness Study (2009).

- A tourism working group convened by the Coalition has determined that first steps in creating such an initiative should include: **funding research to explore the economic potential of cycling tourism** and working to define pilot projects that would leverage existing tourism initiatives and assets such as the Waterfront Trail and the Bike Train.
- **The Ontario government must improve the integration of bicycles on public transit.** This includes outfitting more buses and increasing the number of buses with bicycle racks and enhancing the availability of trains including outfitting existing train cars and or providing special "bicycle only" train cars. Ontario also needs enhanced bike parking at public transit stations. Well lit, well positioned, secure bike parking at train stations in addition to ensuring access for bicycles on all public transport: trains, metro, ferries and buses are seen as an important priority in terms of encouraging bicycling throughout Ontario and building on existing infrastructure assets.

## 2. Education Recommendations:

### Education for Bicyclists

- **We urge the government of Ontario, in particular the Ministry of Health Promotion, to work with stakeholders to ensure sustainable funding for CanBike.** Feedback on improving CanBike included ensuring that programs are low cost, accessible, limited in terms of time commitment and conveniently located i.e. close to transit routes.
- Special consideration should be given to groups and organizations seeking to educate new Canadians. For example, Culture Link and the Toronto Cyclists Union have a program in place to address new Canadians, but it suffers from a lack of funding.



## **Cyclist Education for Children**

- **The Ontario Government should provide, through Green Communities Canada, enhanced funding in order to accommodate pilot projects which would incorporate Bicycling as part of the Active and Safe Routes to School initiative.**
- **As well, we urge the government of Ontario to invest in research which will serve to quantify the importance of providing safe routes to school, and in particular safe cycling routes to school for children.** This research would serve to make the case for enhanced investments by federal, provincial and municipal governments in active and safe routes to school programs.
- Other countries have invested in research topics which include linking academic performance and cycling/walking to school, the economic benefits, the benefits of physical activity generated the impact of children walking/cycling to school on parental behaviors and corresponding modal shifts, and finally its contribution to overall cycling safety and the rates of cycling. The Ontario government should do the same.
- **The Ontario government, through the Ministry of Education, should institute and formalize road safety and cycling safety education as part of the curriculum.** While existing initiatives like bicycle rodeos and safety villages are seen as helpful, their use is sporadic and inconsistent. Further, these initiatives help with bike handling skills but don't always help with 'real life' on the road decision making. Research has demonstrated the need for curriculum-based learning approaches supported by situational training.

## **Motorist Education - Recommendations**

- **The Ontario Driver's Manual must be updated throughout to increase the awareness of the rights and responsibilities of all vehicles sharing the road – motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians.** The updated manual should reflect the growing prevalence on Ontario's roads and stress the importance of careful, courteous driving. It





should also contain several “situational” examples of how to treat cyclists, given that they are vehicles under the Highway Traffic Act. The Ontario government should ensure that driver training includes education on how to share the road with cyclists, and ensure that the driver’s exam includes questions on cyclists. Suggestions for education tools include a cycling safety video for viewing during classes and on the internet.

- **The Ontario government should work with its policing and other partners, including active transportation and cycling experts, to create television, radio and print public safety announcements as part of an overall awareness campaign focused on motorists to reinforce the importance of sharing the road.** Law enforcement agencies should be encouraged to implement “blitzes” targeted at motorists, focusing on education and awareness and distributing material on how to share the road with motorists.
- **The MTO should work with regions and municipalities in Ontario to ensure the placement of “Share the Road” signage across the province as an effective driver education and awareness tool.**

### **3. Public Awareness and Promotion Recommendations:**

- **Research Funding:** Research is critical to effective marketing and promotion. Research into existing cyclist behaviors, how to encourage enhanced participation, and research into understanding how, why and when car users might be willing to alter their travel habits are excellent examples that can be leveraged and utilized by communities throughout the province. **As such, research should be encouraged and eligible for funding by the Ontario government.** Since the evaluation of promotional activity and strategies is important for future campaigns and for creating and sharing best practices, funding for evaluation should be included and evaluation should be mandatory.



- **In partnership with cycling advocates and the business community, the Ontario government should support the creation of Bicycle Friendly Business programs across Ontario in order to encourage businesses to embrace the creation and promotion of cycling facilities such as bike parking, lockers and showers for employees, bicycle training and repair, bicycle sharing programs.** Employers who encourage cycling should be recognized and best practices highlighted. Such initiatives can be combined with legislation to encourage cycling to work. (See Legislation section for more on this.)
- Supporting community events such as Car Free Sundays and “car free zones” is an important way for the Ontario government to encourage cycling. Such events celebrate community, generate enthusiasm and public support and should be encouraged. As pointed out by Velo Quebec: “people will not throw themselves into a bike lane if they haven't ridden for 20 years, but they will if they ride on Saturday and Sunday.”
- Cycling events such as large public rides, which mobilize community resources and involve a wide variety of stakeholders – for example, local cyclists, Chambers of Commerce and BIAs, cycling retailers, local officials and politicians – in their development and execution are excellent ways of raising awareness via cross pollination and should be encouraged.
- **Signage, symbols and logos are an important tool for expressing a common vision and encouraging safety.** While signage may be a regional and municipal responsibility, establishing a common provincial symbol (i.e. Share the Road, way-finding signs) is viewed as desirable and this is an area where the Ontario government can provide leadership and support.
- **The Ontario government should, in partnership with the Share the Road Cycling Coalition, establish a “Share the Road” license plate for purchase at MTO locations.** The option to purchase these plates could be promoted to those willing to support the “Share the Road” principle with part of the revenues distributed to bicycling advocacy



initiatives such as education and awareness initiatives. Such initiatives are in place in a number of U.S. states.

#### **4. Bicycling Policy and Legislation Recommendations:**

- **The Ontario government should pass “Complete Streets” legislation to ensure that all users of the transportation system, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, children, older individuals, and individuals with disabilities, are able to travel safely and conveniently on and across provincially funded streets and highways.** The provincial government should work to urge the federal government to adopt similar legislation.
  
- The Ontario government should amend the Highway Traffic Act (HTA) to:
  - Include a “three foot” (one meter) passing law. This amendment should also reinforce recognition that people on bikes are vulnerable road users. Motorists found guilty of failing to comply with this legislation and other offences involving bicyclists should be required to undertake mandatory cycling education programs in addition to prescribed fines and other penalties.
  - Permit two-way access by bicycles on one-way roads.
  - Legislate the creation of “safe cycling zones” in the same vein as “community safety zones,” including the provision for greater fines for speeding in these zones. Lowering speed limits and or adding ‘speed bumps’ in designated zones and neighborhoods has contributed to traffic calming in many cities in Europe, encouraging the numbers of cyclists – particularly children and families – by working to ensure their safety. Such measures should include enhanced awareness, education programs as well as heightened fines and enforcement programs to ensure compliance.
  
- **As recommended in the Big Move, the Ontario government must ensure that Official Plan policies to support active transportation be adopted.** Where appropriate, the bonusing provisions under the Planning Act should be used to require that any



application for major commercial, employment or multiple residential development, particularly in a mobility hub, provides appropriate facilities for cyclists and pedestrians such as secure bike storage, showers and change rooms.

- **The Ontario government should change the Municipal Act to permit municipalities to fast track or by-pass provincial approvals needed to build new bike lanes.**
- **The Ontario government should pass Trip Reduction legislation in support of the province's 2014 GHG reduction targets and to incent employers to reduce vehicle dependency.**
- **The Ministry of Transportation should broaden its Climate Change Action Plan to include enhancing the use of bicycles as a mainstream mode of transportation.**
- **The Ontario government should increase the funding for and awareness of the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Municipal Grant Program** established in June 2008 to provide financial assistance to Ontario municipalities for the development and implementation of TDM-related initiatives. Many municipalities are not aware of the program's existence. This increase in funding should be an interim step before this funding is incorporated into the Ontario Bicycling Investment Fund.
- **The Ministry of Transportation (MTO) should establish an Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) position focused solely on Bicycling and Active Transportation.** This would enhance the development of expertise within government – particularly within MTO – to address needs such as active transportation planning, the ability to provide needed services, and the management of services that continue to be outsourced. This would create a focal point for bicycling and active transportation stakeholders and would send a strong signal that the Ontario government is serious about incorporating bicycling and active transportation into its planning and processes.



- **The Ontario government should consider extending tax breaks for bicycles as a means of incenting alternative transportation.**
- **The Ontario government should implement provincial and municipal tax credits and incentives for employers who promote "bike to work" programs.**
- **The Ontario government should establish a Working Group on Bicycling to provide counsel and advice to government.** This Working Group would act at arms-length from government. It would be a forum for innovation and for dispute resolution in the interest of providing advice to government on creating bicycle friendly communities in Ontario and in the spirit of similar constructs at the State level in the U.S. Its first step would be to put priorities from the Green Paper into action. This Working Group would be led by the Share the Road Cycling Coalition and be comprised of stakeholders having an interest in promoting bicycling in Ontario. Members could include: municipal representatives (including the Association of Municipalities of Ontario), planners and engineers, the bicycling industry, bicycling advocates, law enforcement, bicycling tourism experts, economic development representatives (i.e. Chamber of Commerce representative) and government officials (MTO, Ministry of Health Promotion, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Tourism).



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