



Provincial Bicycling Organization Releases Polling Data Highlighting Support for Active Transportation in Metrolinx's The Big Move

Results Also Highlight Ontarians' Support For Government Investment in Infrastructure And Initiatives such as Active and Safe Routes to School Programs

(Toronto, Ontario – May 27, 2012) – The Share the Road Cycling Coalition today released the organization's annual polling data on the eve of the organization's 5th Ontario Bike Summit, an annual gathering of politicians and policy makers from across North America.

This year's event is being held in partnership with the Toronto Centre for Active Transportation's (TCAT) 6th Annual Complete Streets Forum. The Complete Streets Forum opens on May 27th followed by the Ontario Bike Summit on May 28 & 29, both at the Hyatt Regency Toronto, 370 King St. West in Toronto.

The poll was conducted by Strategic Communications Inc. of Toronto with a representative sample of 1523 adult Ontario residents over the period of May 14 to 17th, 2013. Included in the data is timely information that shows that a majority of Torontonians would like to see funding for active transportation included in Metrolinx's \$30 billion Big Move. 71 per cent of Torontonians surveyed agree that walking and cycling infrastructure investments should be included in The Big Move.

"It is critical that bicycling and walking are not forgotten in The Big Move given the important role they play in the daily lives of citizens in Toronto and the GTHA," said Eleanor McMahon, Founder and CEO of the Share the Road Cycling Coalition. "Ontarians want livable, safe communities and as a result, support for this kind of investment is clear. We trust that Metrolinx and municipal politicians will hear Ontarians' unequivocal support for investments in bicycling and pedestrian infrastructure and keep that front and center as they make important decisions regarding The Big Move."

"Over 600,000 Ontarians are cycling daily, including 182,000 in Toronto. Ensuring their safety, and encouraging Ontarians to cycle more given its numerous benefits to society benefits everyone." McMahon added.

Of those who support the inclusion of active transportation in the Big Move, 79 per cent of Torontonians support Metrolinx funding being allocated to transit; 66.4 per cent support funding cycling/bike paths; 65.7 per cent support funding walking/pedestrian infrastructure; 62 per cent support funding roads and 58.4 per cent support funding highways.

Nancy Smith Lea, Director Toronto Centre for Active Transportation (TCAT) noted the cost-effectiveness of bicycling and walking infrastructure: "Active transportation is the most cost-effective transportation option available to us. We could build the entire 4,500 kilometers of new walking and cycling infrastructure proposed in the Metrolinx Big Move for the same cost as building 18 kilometers of new road," she noted. "We have a very serious, yet solvable, transportation problem in the Toronto region. Active transportation isn't just a nice-to-have add-on. Walking and cycling are important transportation options in their own right and play a critical role in getting people to and from public transit."

The annual poll surveys Ontarians' attitudes towards bicycling, asks them how often they cycle, and solicits their opinions on how governments – provincial and municipal – should work to encourage bicycling in municipalities and provincially.

The 2013 results show that Ontario is at a tipping point when it comes to Ontarians' support for cycling infrastructure and education. It also shows that there is a significant pent up demand across the province by people to bicycle more. Given imminent decisions regarding The Big Move, the poll also focused on issues of particular interest and concern to Toronto and the GTHA.

Insights for Torontonians include:

- 69 per cent agree that investment in the Pan Am Games should include cycling infrastructure such as more bike lanes and paths that would be used by visitors and athletes and serve as a legacy resulting from the games.
- 85 per cent would support the provincial government investing in the development of active travel plans to promote walking and cycling to school. 89 per cent of those in the GTA believe the same.
- 68 per cent support the City of Toronto making a financial contribution so that BIXI remains a sustainable part of the City's transportation network.
- 73 per cent agree that bike-share programs "are part of a public transport system that can reduce gridlock and contribute to the livability of Toronto".
- 68 per cent support the City of Toronto making a financial contribution to BIXI "such that it remains a sustainable part of the city's transportation and transit network and continues to provide transportation options".

Province-wide trends show that bicycling is on the increase and support for cycling remains strong:

- 5.1 per cent of Ontarians say they ride a bike daily or almost daily, up from 4 percent in 2012.
- 31.2 per cent of Ontarians report riding weekly or monthly up from 28 per cent.
- A majority of Ontarians – 68 per cent -- would prefer to cycle more often. This number is up from the 58 per cent of Ontarians surveyed in 2012.
- 70 per cent of Ontarians believe that cyclists need more bike lanes or paved shoulders and 78 per cent believe that more people would cycle if there was more and better cycling infrastructure.
- 76 per cent of Ontarians agree that "cycling gets people out of their cars, means fewer cars on the road, and provides more transit choices and that is a good reason for provincial support of cycling in Ontario".
- 73 per cent agree that health benefits and reduced healthcare costs for Ontario and that is a good reason for provincial support of cycling in Ontario.
- 71% agree that cyclists are taxpayers too, have a right to use the roads, and a portion of provincial funding to roads should be earmarked to meet cyclists' needs.
- 89 per cent believe that the Ontario government should fund local active school travel efforts, including the development of school travel plans for schools across the province.

About the Share the Road Cycling Coalition

The Share the Road Cycling Coalition is Ontario’s cycling advocacy and policy organization created to unite cycling organizations from across the province, work with and on behalf of municipalities to enhance their ability to make their communities more bicycle- friendly and advocate for an enhanced provincial role. Core to the organization’s mission and mandate are safety, education and awareness campaigns.

About the Toronto Centre for Active Transportation

The Toronto Centre for Active Transportation, a project of the registered charity Clean Air Partnership, advances knowledge and evidence to build support for safe and inclusive streets for walking and cycling. TCAT believes that active transportation plays a critical role in creating environmentally and economically sustainable cities.

For Information on the Ontario Bike Summit: www.sharetheroad.ca

For Information on the Complete Streets Forum: www.tcat.ca

[Click here](#) to view a fact sheet with more polling data.

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