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Monday, May 8, 2017

Dear Valued Cycling Partners:

On April 27<sup>th</sup>, Ontario tabled the 2017 Budget. This budget returns the government to balance while continuing to make investments that make everyday life easier for people all across Ontario.

We are very proud that our budget includes an investment of \$50 million for commuter cycling infrastructure in 2017–18 to give Ontarians a safe and low-cost commuting alternative between residential communities, workplaces, major transit stations and other destinations and while enhancing their safety and well-being through investments in infrastructure. This will enable people to take bikes and transit for their daily commute instead of personal vehicles, effectively reducing GHG emissions.

Your advocacy contributed to the creation of #CycleON -- Ontario's cycling strategy -- which serves as a blueprint to help us create healthy, active and prosperous communities that have better cycling infrastructure and safer streets and highways.

At the recent Share the Road Cycling Coalition annual Ontario Bike Summit, we reiterated our government's commitment to implement Ontario's Cycling Strategy, #CycleON. Through #CycleON, the province is working to identify a long-term network of cycling routes across Ontario that will:

- Promote recreational cycling and cycling tourism;
- Connect municipal cycling routes and places of interest;
- Identify areas of provincial infrastructure that should accommodate cycling; and,
- Prioritize future cycling infrastructure investments on provincial highways.

The draft network we've identified includes over 8,000km of cycling routes that connect the regions of the province – and the people that live there providing access to major communities and destinations. We invite you to view and submit comments on the draft network at [www.ontario.ca/cycling](http://www.ontario.ca/cycling). The comment period has been extended until May 26, 2017.

Over 70 per cent of Ontario's population resides within 5km of these cycling routes. The province-wide network has the potential to enhance tourism and recreation opportunities across the province. And in urban areas, the network is also an opportunity to look at developing routes that will serve both recreational and commuter routes in the years to come.

It was around this time last year that our government announced our commitment to provide \$10 million under the Ontario Municipal Cycling Infrastructure program to 37 cities and towns across the province that are working to build new or improve their existing cycling infrastructure in ways that make sense locally. This includes urban, suburban and rural communities like Brampton, Niagara, Ottawa, Chatham-Kent, Kingston, and Thunder Bay among others.

In 2015, we also announced an additional commitment of \$15 million for routes along provincial highways so that cyclists have a connected and continuous network.

The cycling investment in Budget 2017 builds on the recent cycling initiatives that the government has made. This unprecedented investment promotes cycling and walking as part of a healthy, active lifestyle while making commuter cycling easier and safer.

Last month, we were pleased to introduce Ontario's first Cycling Tourism Plan: Tour by Bike. It's no secret that cycling tourism in Ontario is experiencing rapid growth as more people realize what a fun and healthy form of transportation cycling can be. Ontario is home to an extensive cycling and trails network that stretches across the province, connects our communities and offers unique views of our urban and rural landscapes. Through this plan, we will continue to work to increase and promote cycling as a tourism draw in Ontario communities. Tour by Bike builds on the work we began with the Tourism Action Plan and the Strategic Framework for Tourism in Ontario.

We all have the same goal. We want to continue making Ontario a safe place to cycle, and to stand out as a world-class cycling destination. Our work to date has positioned us well as we move forward with the Tour by Bike and our new commuter cycling infrastructure investment. Of course, your input and collaboration is invaluable to this process. We are excited to keep working with you, and look forward to continuing to grow cycling in Ontario together.

All our best,



Eleanor McMahon  
Minister



Steven Del Duca  
Minister