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Canada Bikes Submission to Canada Transportation Act Review

Introduction

While the current review mandate and parameters appear to be primarily concerned with long haul freight, supply chain and logistical issues in the context of competitive transportation systems, there is a significant opportunity to integrate the benefits of walking, biking and transit.

The 2001 Transportation Act Review states “Walking, biking and using public transit could replace some urban mobility, reducing congestion and environmental impacts.” Half of all Canadians who commute to work live less than 7.6 km from their workplace¹ - a reasonable cycling distance, especially when using an electric bicycle for longer distances. In particular and in today’s context, cycling, including e-bikes, can replace a significant amount of urban personal and freight transportation² delivering large-scale benefits including lowering healthcare and travel costs, emissions and congestion. The potential value of cycling is significant. In the EU-27 it is estimated to be about \$300 Billion³. A study of British cycling projects determined that the benefit to cost ratios had a median of 19:1 and was as high as 32:1 with much of the benefit coming from improved health⁴. By comparison, most road projects have a benefit to cost ratios of 2:1 or 3:1 with most of the benefits coming from a few minutes of time savings per trip.

In the remainder of our submission, we indicate how cycling can play a role in specific sections of the Discussion Paper.

1 From Statistics Canada 2006 Census Topic-based tabulations - Commuting Distance

<http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/tbt/Rp-eng.cfm?LANG=E&APATH=3&DETAIL=0&DIM=0&FL=A&FREE=0&GC=0&GID=0&GK=0&GRP=1&PID=90655&PRID=0&PTYPE=88971,97154&S=0&SHOWALL=0&SUB=0&Temporal=2006&THEME=76&VID=0&VNAMEE=&VNAMEF=>

² ECF estimates that 25% of all goods and 50% of all light goods could be moved by cycle in urban areas. <http://www.ecf.com/news/cargo-bike-crazy-the-potential-of-delivering-goods-by-bike-2/>

³ http://www.ecf.com/wp-content/uploads/ECF_Economic-benefits-of-cycling-in-EU-27.pdf

⁴ Value for Money: An Economic Assessment of Investment in Walking and Cycling www.apho.org.uk/resource/view.aspx?RID=91553

5. STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE

In March 2014, the federal government launched a 10-year, \$53 billion New Building Canada Plan to fund infrastructure projects in partnership with other levels of government and the private sector.

Roads

- For road projects funded through the Building Canada Plan and other federal funding sources, ensure that these projects support cycling and in urban settings, ensure that the only complete street projects, which include sidewalks and bike lanes physically separated from traffic, are funded.
- Increased infrastructure funding with a program focused on active transportation, recreation and tourism.

Passenger Rail

- Improve bike storage on passenger rail and transit services so that it is convenient and does not require boxing of bikes.
- Expand passenger rail services. Cycle tourism⁵ will be enhanced if more passenger rail is available.
- Establish secure bike parking at passenger rail stations for those who wish to leave their bike at the station for the duration of their trip.

Airports

- Safe cycling routes to airports and especially on airport property.
- Bike boxing/de-boxing stations inside all airports.
- Secure bike pay parking for those passengers who wish to leave their bike at the airport. for the duration of their trip.
- Secure bike parking and other facilities to encourage employees to cycle to work.

Ferries which fall under federal jurisdiction

- Ensure that there are safe cycling routes to ferry terminals and that ferries have convenient cycle parking facilities.

Ports

- Ensure that all public road projects funded by ports have safe and convenient cycling facilities that are physically separated from traffic.

⁵ The ECF has determined that **Cycle Tourism** alone in the EU delivers \$63 Billion in economic benefits in 2012 (about half the size of the oil and gas sector in Canada) <http://www.ecf.com/wp-content/uploads/studiesdownload.pdf> p.36-7

Cycle Tourism and a National Cycling Network

We have had a national rail network since shortly after confederation and have had a national road network for about 100 years but we have still to develop a national cycling network. A national cycling and walking trail network will provide commuting and recreational opportunities for citizens and will make Canada a go-to destination for cycle tourism. This could provide huge economic benefits for Canada.

For example, Oregon estimated that in 2012, cycling tourists contributed \$400 million to their economy while cycle tourism in Europe is worth over \$60 billion per year. Québec's Route Verte, a province-wide network of cycling routes, has proven to be very effective in attracting tourists from around the world and nearby states and provinces. In 2006 it is estimated that Route Verte users spent \$134 million supporting over 2,800 jobs. This economic activity is estimated to generate more than \$36 million in tax revenue for the provincial and federal governments⁶.

The Trans Canada Trail (TCT) is not yet complete, but there is currently a campaign to have this trail completed as a walking trail by 2017 - the year of Canada's 150th birthday. By making the TCT cyclable along its entire route would dramatically enhance cycle tourism in Canada.

A cross Canada rail network has helped to create Canada and a national road network has helped to build the country. It is now time to add a national walking and cycling network in order to enhance tourism and to provide healthy transportation options for Canadians.

9. THE ENVIRONMENT

Achieving high standards for sustainable transportation contributes to protecting our shared environment and can bring about economic benefits as well.

Cycling is environmentally friendly as the mode of transport which and should be a key part of a sustainable transportation system.

- Cycling is silent and produces no pollution or GHG emissions
- Cycling is highly sustainable since both entry costs and ongoing costs are extremely low in comparison to driving, transit or urban freight delivery
- Cycling infrastructure is economically and environmentally low cost
- Cycling causes negligible deterioration of transportation infrastructure

10. ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION

Ensuring the accessibility of the transportation network for persons with disabilities will continue to be an important objective in light of Canada's aging population.

We agree that Canada's transportation network should be accessible for people with disabilities. Safe and convenient pedestrian and cycling paths can be used by people with mobility scooters or

⁶ **Route Verte** (no date) *Economic spin-offs*.
www.routeverte.com/rv/index_e.php?page=retombees_e
<http://www.routeverte.com/ang/facts.lasso?page=retombees>

wheelchairs or for people using hand-cycles. As cycle paths are built explicitly for wheeled vehicles with intersection improvements, smooth surfaces and lanes, they are often safer, more comfortable and more convenient for users of limited mobility than sidewalks. As well, electric bicycles are increasing being used by people with physical challenges that make walking or riding a pedal-only powered bicycle difficult or impossible.

The transportation network should also be accessible for persons who choose to ride a bike. This includes all those who ride to school or work, cycling tourists or anyone completing some of their trips by bike. Those who make some of their trips by bike offer enormous benefits to society by:

- Improving personal mental and physical health, and well-being, through exercise
- Improving the health of others through reduced noise and pollution
- Significantly reducing healthcare system costs
- Reducing motor vehicle congestion
- Significantly reducing infrastructure costs
- Reducing motor vehicle collisions, injuries and fatalities
- Helping Canada to reach its GHG emissions reduction targets
- Increasing jobs and spending in the local economy
- Increased productivity in the workplace

By getting more people riding bikes, these societal benefits will increase. However, to get more people cycling, cycling infrastructure will have to be safe and convenient and cycling will have to be integrated into the transportation system.

11. REGULATION, HARMONIZATION AND TRADE

A transport sector that is slow to implement innovations today risks limiting a country's global competitiveness in the future.

Motor vehicle crashes incur high social costs. From research conducted by Transport Canada in 2007:

“The 613,000 motor vehicle collisions occurring in Canadian jurisdictions in 2004 resulted in social costs of \$63 billion”⁷.

Canada could be a world leader in building safer trucks and light vehicles. Transport Canada can lead the way by legislating vehicle designs which are safer, especially for preventing or mitigating crashes involving vulnerable road users like pedestrians and cyclists.

⁷ Analysis and Estimation of the **Social Cost of Motor Vehicle Collisions** in Ontario
www.tc.gc.ca/media/documents/roadsafety/TP14800E.pdf

Improved Design Standards for Motor Vehicles

- Improved design standards for trucks
 - The Transport Canada study quoted above shows that collisions involving larger trucks represent 7% of all collisions, 18% of fatal collisions and 15% (\$3 billion) of the social costs. Design standards for trucks must be improved to include:
 - Sideguards
 - Improved mirror design to remove blind spots
 - Cab design to improve visibility
 - Crash avoidance systems - especially with respect to vulnerable road users
- Improved design standards for light vehicles
 - Front airbags to protect vulnerable road users
 - Crash avoidance systems - especially with respect to vulnerable road users

Design Standards for E-bikes

Current design standards should be improved to meet Canadian needs while harmonizing with other jurisdictions. The definitions and standards for e-bikes, and the types of infrastructure where they may be used, are in dire need of a separate consultation process to meet various societal needs, including safety and other public policy issues, while providing clear direction for business. Learnings from other jurisdictions and European standards can be utilized in this process. This will improve safety for cyclists and pedestrians and the overall health of Canadians.

Preparing for a Driver-assist and Driverless Future

Driverless vehicles are already operating on North American roads. This technology will completely revolutionize road transport and Transport Canada must prepare for this future now. Of particular interest to us is how driverless and detection technology will interface with those travelling by foot or by bike. With proper standards and policies, driverless vehicles could greatly reduce or eliminate fatalities. Driverless technology could free up significant road space, especially on multi-lane roads which could then be allocated to make cycling lanes which are separated from motor traffic.

Zero Traffic Fatalities Policy

Currently, close to 2000 people die on Canada's roads every year and many more get seriously injured. We strongly support Canada's Road Safety Strategy's vision of making our roads the safest in the world. As such, Canada should follow jurisdictions like Sweden and British Columbia⁸ by implementing a policy of working towards having a road transportation system which has zero traffic fatalities and serious injuries.

⁸ British Columbia Road Safety Strategy 2015 and Beyond - Page 37
www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/osmv/shareddocs/RoadSafetyStrategy.pdf

Conclusion

Cycling provides significant economic, social and environmental benefits to society and provides a low-cost healthy mobility option for many Canadians. Greater economic benefits can be achieved by encouraging more people to cycle. This can be done by making Canada's transportation systems, especially the road network, more inclusive for cycling and for vulnerable road users and by providing better support services for cycling. We encourage the Canada Transportation Act Review Panel to add a cycling component to the review process.

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