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HEALTHY COMMUNITIES • SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

March 7, 2018

Katerina Minaeva
Senior Policy Analyst
Ministry of Transportation
Policy and Planning Division
Transportation Planning Branch
Environmental Policy Office (Toronto)
777 Bay Street
Suite 700
Toronto ON M7A 2J8

Re: #CycleON: Action Plan 2.0
EBR Registry Number: 013-1837

Dear Katerina,

The Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI) is the recognized voice of the Province's planning profession. Our more than 4,000 members work in government, private practice, community agencies, academic institutions and not-for-profit agencies in a variety of specialties across Ontario. Our members meet strict practice requirements and are accountable to OPPI and the public to practice ethically and to abide by a Professional Code of Practice. Only Full Members are authorized by the Ontario Professional Planners Institute Act, 1994, to use the title "Registered Professional Planner" (RPP).

On behalf of the Ontario Professional Planners Institute, I am submitting our comments on the draft Ministry of Transportation (MTO) and Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and Sport's (MTCS) proposal for #CycleON: Action 2.0. Our submission is intended to provide guidance on advancing cycling infrastructure and programming across the Province.

In your consultation, specific questions were asked to provide comment on for discussion and feedback. OPPI's responses to these questions references and builds on #CycleON: Action Plan 1.0 and advances new strategies:

1) Will the proposed initiatives help us achieve Ontario's goals for cycling?

For the strategic direction of *Design Healthy, Active and Prosperous Communities*, and the specific initiative of "Active and Safe Routes to Schools," we would encourage project initiatives that support local schools and communities targeting children's every day mobility needs to arrive and leave their schools safely each day. This can be done by referencing the Official Plans of local municipalities, working with public health organizations and local school boards. In addition, at the local level, RPPs sit

on active transportation and school committees, and provide input on ensuring safe school areas. The Province would be wise to develop initiatives that take this local context and experience into account.

For the strategic direction of *Improving Cycling Infrastructure*, and the specific initiative of “Invest in new cycling infrastructure for commuting, active living and recreational purposes under the Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) 2017-2021,” we would encourage the Province to continue in this direction and invest in this infrastructure. Cycling infrastructure investments have provided a positive opportunity for smaller communities in Ontario to participate in active transportation and make it part of their daily lives.

Under the specific initiative of “Invest in new parking for cycling,” we recommend, in addition to the Provincial investment in bicycle parking, there needs to be a program to incentivize municipalities to provide short- and long-term facilities, as well as provide for the installation and maintenance of this infrastructure. In order to encourage more people to take up cycling and active transportation alternatives, the Province needs to assist municipalities in this effort.

2) What challenges should we expect to encounter as we pursue the propose initiatives?

Under the strategic direction of *Design Healthy, Active and Prosperous Communities*, and the specific initiative of “Work with municipalities to ensure that active transportation policies are included in their official plans,” it is important within the policy language to differentiate the definition of cycling from active transportation, which includes non-motorized travel, including walking, cycling, roller-blading and movements with mobility devices. Cyclists and pedestrians typically have different design and operating needs for infrastructure (i.e. Ontario Traffic Manual Book 18). Infrastructure for planning for cyclists is lacking, particularly in smaller and rural communities, without sustained funding and support.

For the specific initiative of “Collaborate on guidelines and tools for cycling infrastructure near and around schools,” local municipalities and school boards, in addition to the school population (students, parents and teachers), need sustained support for cycling to school. The roads leading to school zones prioritize the automobile, specifically student drop-offs and parking that promotes driving, counter to easy access for active modes of transportation (including students using school buses). We encourage MTO to assist, not by crafting another guideline for local municipalities and school boards, but through actions such as providing funding to address specific local issues and supporting local municipalities in making school zones safer.

Under the specific initiative of “Develop and implement active transportation policies in the Northern Ontario Multimodal Transportation Strategy (NOMTS),” the realities of travel and life in Northern Ontario are much different than in Southern Ontario, given the climate and physical conditions when applying active transportation initiatives. This is an area the Province can consult with local RPPs and that can provide local context and strategic direction.

For the specific initiatives of “Include cycling infrastructure in Provincial highway construction projects using the Province-wide cycling network as a foundation” and “Develop a program to support municipal implementation of the Province-wide cycling network,” we recommend MTO allow for, and fund, the planning and design of active transportation infrastructure on Ministry infrastructure in partnership with municipalities, including 400-series highway interchanges, to increase cyclist safety and accessibility. Implementing a Province-wide cycling network is a worthy goal to achieve, but MTO must be a partner

and assist when this infrastructure is being funded and built to attain an improved and connected network.

3) Are there other important actions that Ontario should take in the next five years to help us meet our goals for cycling?

In addition to the above comments and feedback, we offer the following additional suggestions that the Province should take into consideration over the next five years:

- **Update the Planning Act to strengthen requirements to support a better cycling environment**
 - Under the strategic direction of *Design Healthy, Active and Prosperous Communities*, we recommend the Province work with municipalities and stakeholders to update the Planning Act in support of cycling infrastructure and programs in reducing single-occupant vehicle trips in the development approval process.

- **Work with municipalities to collect cycling data to track behaviour change**
 - Under the strategic direction of *Promote Cycling Awareness and Behaviour Shifts*, we recommend the Province work with municipalities and stakeholders to develop and fund monitoring programs to gather cycling data to track progress. This may include funding for bicycle counter installation on cycling facilities and/or procurement of third-party cycling data.

Should you have any questions regarding our submission, please feel free to contact me at 416-483-1873 or by email at executivedirector@ontarioplanners.ca.

Sincerely,



Mary Ann Rangam
Executive Director
Ontario Professional Planners Institute