

## Ontario Bike Summit Opens in Hamilton With Release of New Province-Wide Polling Data on Cycling in Ontario

### 68% of Ontarians Cycling Occasionally While 3.2 Million Ontarians (22%) Are Daily Cyclists

(HAMILTON – May 1, 2023) – The Share the Road Cycling Coalition (The Coalition) Ontario’s cycling advocacy and policy organization today released province-wide polling data at the opening of the 15<sup>th</sup> annual Ontario Bike Summit. The data outlines that there is a high prevalence of cycling amongst Ontarians, that the majority of Ontarians want to cycle more often, and that increased investment by governments in cycling infrastructure is something that a majority of Ontarians support.

The poll was conducted by Crestview Strategies (Toronto) with a representative sample of 1000 adult Ontario residents balanced and weighted on age, gender, and region from April 19-22<sup>nd</sup> 2023, with a comparative margin of error of +/-3.1 per cent.

The findings are outlined below:

#### **Ontarians are cyclists – and motorists too**

- 68 per cent of Ontarians (9.8 million people) ride their bike at least monthly.
- Of those, 22 per cent of Ontarians (3.2 million) say they ride a bike frequently (daily or almost daily) and an additional 46 per cent report riding occasionally - weekly or monthly.
- Ontarians are both cyclists and drivers: 87 per cent of Ontario’s 3.2 million frequent cyclists say they also drive frequently, while 85 per cent of Ontario’s 9.8 million occasional cyclists say this is the case.
- The top two reasons for cycling are recreation, with 72 per cent of individuals cycling for this purpose, and exercise, with 65 per cent using bicycles for this activity.
- Shopping and running errands are the reason 16 per cent of Ontarians cycle occasionally (33 per cent for frequent cyclists), with visiting friends also at 16 per cent (34 per cent for frequent cyclists).
- Commuting to work and school is the choice of 11 per cent of occasional cyclists, with frequent cyclists at 20 per cent.
- 8.5 Million Ontario residents (59 per cent) live in a Bicycle Friendly Community, as designated by Share the Road's [Bicycle Friendly Communities program](#)

#### **There is pent up demand for cycling in Ontario**

- A majority (51 per cent) want to cycle more often with 70 percent of regular cyclists and 58 per cent of occasional cyclists, indicating this preference.
- A majority of Ontarians, 65 per cent, expressed their desire to cycle more if there were improved cycling infrastructure.
- The biggest obstacle to cycling more is fear at 48 per cent.
- 61 per cent of respondents stated that they would feel more comfortable cycling if their area had well-connected and safe cycling infrastructure.
- 56 per cent of Ontarians agree that “Where I live, cyclists need more bike lanes or paved shoulders”

#### **There is strong support for action from the provincial government on cycling**

- 66 per cent of Ontarians believe that their government should allocate funds towards cycling infrastructure in order to make cycling a safer and more convenient mode of transportation.
- 65 per cent of respondents felt that such investments would benefit cyclists and motorists
- 57 per cent Ontarians see a need for a dedicated active transportation fund by the provincial government.
- 68 per cent support investments in cycling and bike paths.

- 61 per cent support investments in a new cycling education program that will offer cycling education options to Ontarians of all ages.
- 77 per cent are in favor of investment streams that prioritize pedestrian infrastructure.
- There is strong support, with 92 per cent of Ontarians in favor of plans that promote walking and cycling to schools.

#### **Perceptions related to investments in cycling infrastructure and tax incentives**

- 72 per cent believe investing in proper cycling infrastructure makes it safer for all road users.
- 65 per cent say “investing in cycling is good for my municipality”.
- 58 per cent agree that investing in cycling is good for their city’s business and tourism.
- 55 per cent agree there should be tax breaks and incentives to offset the cost of purchasing a new bicycle or e-bike.
- In terms of voting intentions 42 per cent say they would be more likely to vote for a local or provincial candidate if they make a strong public commitment to road safety and cycling infrastructure funding.
- When it comes to contributions to taxes that fund transportation infrastructure 54 per cent of Ontarians agree that cyclists are contributors, and pay taxes (e.g., through property taxes, sales taxes on bikes).

“This data confirms what we know through our work in communities – that Ontarians are cyclists, and that they want to cycle more often, given the numerous benefits cycling brings in terms of healthy, safe and active communities. In addition, the fact that the data shows that Ontarians are both motorists and cyclists, points to the fact that a false narrative has developed, and that somehow cycling is a divisive issue. This is simply not the case. With Ontario motorists also cycling regularly there is a clear imperative that we all focus on making our roads and our communities safer with investments that will save lives – and lessen congestion,” said Ed McMahon, Board Chair, Share the Road Cycling Coalition.

“The support by Ontarians for increased investments in infrastructure is a powerful statement that will assist our ongoing work with municipal – and provincial – governments towards enhanced investments in infrastructure as well as programs to enhance cycling and road safety,” McMahon noted.

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 investment and engagement by provincial and municipal governments. Core to the organization’s mission and mandate are safety, education and awareness campaigns.

For information and interviews: Janet O’Connell, Managing Director, Share the Road Cycling Coalition cell: (705) 641-0745 [joconnell@sharetheroad.ca](mailto:joconnell@sharetheroad.ca)

#### **Matthew Sweet**

(W) 905-615-3200, ext.4026

[matthew.sweet@mississauga.ca](mailto:matthew.sweet@mississauga.ca)