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email: velocapebreton@ns.sympatico.ca

May 27, 2006

Hon. Rodney MacDonald, PC
Francis MacKenzie, Liberal
Darrell Dexter, NDP
Nick Wright, Green Party

Subject: Active Transportation Issues in Nova Scotia

Dear Mr. X X X,

Velo Cape Breton, its partner and like-minded organizations (Heart and Stroke Foundation, Canadian Diabetes Association, Cape Breton District Health Authority, Cape Breton Island Pathways Association, Doctors Nova Scotia, Recreation Nova Scotia) and many other organizations are pursuing an agenda to raise physical activity levels through active transportation initiatives. We are of the view that this is best accomplished through a supportive, safe environment that provides opportunities for all forms of active transportation, be it bicycling, walking, in-line skating, skateboarding, wheeling or jogging.

Studies have shown that an environment supportive of active transportation can lead to: increased levels of physical activity, with positive health outcomes and lowered disease treatment costs; lower highway maintenance costs; safer highways; increased tourism opportunities; and, a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

The following questions are being posed to each of the parties in the provincial election. Your responses (and non-responses) will be included in our electronic newsletter, posted on our web site and shared with our partner organizations by June 7th, so we encourage a response by June 6th at the latest.

1. To integrate physical activity into the daily lives of children, adults and seniors, we must ensure that the communities where Nova Scotians live, learn, commute, work and play are safe and barrier-free (i.e. creating and maintaining active transportation infrastructure, such as sidewalks, greenway corridors, bicycle-friendly signage, local trail and bike maps, wider roads, more road sweeping, promotional campaigns, municipal staff to support Active Transportation initiatives). How does your party plan to fund and create the infrastructure needed to ensure active transportation?
2. Studies have shown that active, outdoor enthusiasts are a higher-yield tourist than average tourists, with bicycle tourist specifically staying longer and spending more money per day than average tourists. How does your party plan to stimulate tourism among higher-yield tourists generally and bicycle tourists specifically?
3. There is widespread acknowledgement that the condition of Nova Scotia's highways needs to be addressed. The current Motor Vehicle Act does little to distinguish bicycles from motor vehicles, and provincial road standards currently address the needs of motor vehicles only. What will your party do to ensure that all future highway construction and maintenance meets the needs of all road users, including bicyclists, particularly the "named" highways (e.g. Marconi Trail, Cabot Trail, Fleur de Lis Trail) that are promoted as scenic routes to tourists?
4. The Ecology Action Centre is advocating that the Province of Nova Scotia allocate 10% of all gas tax revenues to active and sustainable transportation infrastructure, beginning in the fall of 2006. Will your party implement such a policy?

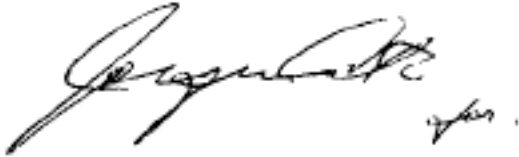
Finally, Velo Cape Breton supports the following goals of Recreation Nova Scotia, and seeks your commitment to address them, should your party form the next government:

- That the Government of Nova Scotia commit to supporting recreation.
- That the Government of Nova Scotia:
 - invest in the renewal of the Active Kids Healthy Kids strategy in conjunction with a comprehensive plan to address the activity needs of the population as a whole:
 - support a recreation facilities capital infrastructure program, by communicating how recreation contributes to reducing health care costs through improved physical and mental health;
 - Adopt the recommendations contained in the Canada Volunteerism Initiative (CVI) report titled: "Talking with Volunteers... Recommendations for Government Action" available on Nova Scotia CVI network at:
<http://www.novascotianetwork.org/resources.view.php?aid=24>

Should you require further background information, please do not hesitate to contact me at velocapebreton@ns.sympatico.ca.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andre Gallant', with a small flourish at the end.

Andre Gallant, Vice President
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www.velocapebreton.com

c.c. Bicycling Nova Scotia
 Recreation Nova Scotia
 Doctors Nova Scotia
 Heart and Stroke Foundation
 Canadian Diabetes Association
 Cape Breton District Health Authority
 Cape Breton Island Pathways Association
 Ecology Action Centre
 ACAP Cape Breton
 All Candidates for the N.S. Legislative Assembly