

Bike to the Future

Provincial Issues 2012 Report

The year started with the appointment of Ron Lemieux as minister responsible for Active Transportation, in addition to his intergovernmental responsibilities. In a letter following his appointment, he reiterated the commitments made by the NDP during the election:

- To develop a provincial AT policy to support and encourage AT;
- To appoint a provincial director responsible for coordinating the Province's AT commitments
- To establish an ongoing public stakeholder advisor committee; and
- To build a separate AT crossing at the Perimeter Highway connecting the North East Pioneers Greenway to East St. Paul and Birds Hill Provincial Park

A provincial program and policy analyst has been hired to be AT coordinator within the Government

All good.

Beyond that, progress on our issues has been negligible. The Government people tell us they are making progress, and they are very sensitive to criticism, but we have experienced a lack of action in response to the positions we have put forward:

- Our presentations on legislation relating to helmets, creating a broad 30 kph speed limit option in residential neighbourhoods, and various changes to the highway traffic act, including safe passing, have all been ignored to date; we have been involved in some formal consultations, but there have been no signs that the political leaders have chosen to follow our key advice.
- No evidence of progress to date in creating a new stakeholders group at the provincial level.
- We are still waiting to see what proposed draft regulations the Government presents for consultations as a result of the changes to the Highway Traffic Act passed earlier this year.
- We presented to the PUB hearing on MPI's rates, where we received a polite reception, but no indication from either the PUB or MPI that they thought our issue was important.

We have well established priorities with respect to provincial action, and we have good collaborative relationships with MSA and WRHA in pushing for safer cycling, so we have a good base for further action.

In the coming year, we will have to find ways to get beyond the indifference we experienced from Government ministers, so that they will take positive action on our recommendations. This must include building stronger public support for our causes. We must also keep the opposition well briefed and on our side.