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A vision for cycling and living in Haliburton County. . .

What could cycling and living in Haliburton County be like once the *Cycling Master Plan* is successfully implemented? If we could “wave a magic wand” and make it happen all at once, here is a possible description...

Haliburton County is well known throughout the province, and indeed, throughout North America as a great place to cycle. There are numerous scenic short, medium and long-distance routes. Maps are widely available and appropriate signage is in place.

It is hard not to notice cycling is an important part of life in Haliburton County. On weekdays, around the village and hamlet hubs, residents of all ages can be seen cycling to work or to school. On weekends, it is not unusual to see large groups of cyclists riding. Families can also go out on rides together because there are many shorter, quieter routes accessible to them. There are numerous trails for cyclists who prefer off-road experiences.

Cyclists of all ages are comfortable sharing the roadways with motor vehicles. On busier roads there are paved shoulders and frequent signage reminds drivers to “Share the Road”. There is a general awareness that roads are for a variety of users, not only cars. Cyclists are aware of their responsibilities as vehicles when on the roads and know how to keep themselves safe by following highway traffic guidelines and wearing appropriate gear. There are opportunities for people to improve their cycling skills at workshops hosted by local organizations.

Tourism and economic development initiatives promote the County as a great cycling destination. Visitors to the County know that it is cycling-friendly by the number of businesses that support cycling – either directly by providing services such as bike rentals and repair, or by providing convenient bike parking and information on where to ride. Cycling route signs along roadways provide a message to people arriving that this is a place where people cycle! Local accommodations have bikes that guests can borrow or rent and report that cycling is a preferred activity among many of their guests. Several accommodations provide organized cycle tours to various destinations around the county.

Signature cycling events draw participation from residents and visitors.

The Shifting Gears Cycling Festival is a series of activities throughout the month of June.

Competitive and recreational cyclists join together to participate in the Tour de Haliburton Highlands, which consists of loops of varying distances reaching all points of the County.

Even people who don't cycle appreciate the economic spin-off that all the cycling activity brings into the County, and recognize the value of this environmentally friendly, healthy activity. Through the commitment and efforts of local decision makers, staff, businesses, and community groups, cycling is an integral part of the fabric of life here.

