

ultrasound

October 2007

Following the development of the Toronto Cyclists Union

Dear friends,

The Toronto Cyclists Union is 8 months away from delivery and appears to be developing in a healthy manner. Your support has been very influential and has ensured an enjoyable beginning to our first trimester. Your cards, presents and warm wishes are greatly appreciated.

The overwhelming amount of support we have received is also an indication of the future success of the Cyclists Union. This project will only work if we have the support and active involvement of thousands of cyclists, beginning in June 2008. Early indications of support are positive and we are proud to announce that the Ultrasound Facebook group has attracted close to 800 members in just a few weeks making it the largest bicycle-related Facebook group in Toronto.

In this newsletter we'd like to share with you our primary goal as an organization: advocacy. Although we will serve as a 'service club' for cyclists, we will also be working every day to improve riding conditions in our city to make sure that your ride is safer and more enjoyable. We are modeling our organisation after the Canadian Automobile Association (CAA) which promotes itself as a service club but also spends a significant amount of resources on advocacy, pushing governments to build more highways, wider streets, etc. It seems that no one has informed them about global warming or basic congestion theories which explain that more roads simply increase the number of cars leading to further congestion. Just two weeks ago, the CAA was in the media speaking out against the proposed east-west bikeway in Toronto. No problem. We can play the same game. The Cyclists Union will be a loud voice, supported by our members, countering the message of the automobile lobby groups.

The Toronto Cyclists Union will work hand-in-hand with other organizations and individual cyclists to ensure that bicycles are taken seriously by City Hall politicians and planners, as well as the media. We'll focus our attention on the installation of new bike



lanes, improved signage, maintenance of existing infrastructure and enforcement of bikelanes. Think how much money the City could make if they actually ticketed every car found parked in a bikelane!

Most importantly, we want to promote Toronto as a Bicycle City. There is a misconception that cycling is only a 'downtown' issue. The truth is that people ride bicycles in every neighbourhood in Toronto and it is the non-downtown riders who are most in need of new infrastructure. The Cyclists Union will be a city-wide project, with 44 Ward Captains acting as a liaison between the bike union, local bikers, the local Councillor, city planners and local media. If you live in North York, Scarborough, York or Etobicoke and you're interested in being a Ward Captain, please get in touch with us soon.

Thanks again for your continued support! Stay tuned for the November Newsletter which will contain an exciting announcement.

Yours truly,
The Cyclists Union team

www.bikeunion.to