



# Advisory Committee

## Minutes of Discussion Section during Web Conference Monday, June 24, 2013, 1pm–2pm

**In Attendance:** Norfolk & Haldimand Counties (RTO1) - Michele Orr; Niagara (RTO2) Sue Morin - Venture Niagara; Peel Region (RTO4) Erica Duque; Durham Region (RTO6) Terri-Anne Eagleson; Manitoulin Island (RTO13a) Maja Mielonen; Northumberland County (RTO8) Cori Arthur; Brockville (RTO9) Alan Medcalf; Ottawa (RTO10) Megan Peckford; IMBA, Igor Hoogendoorn; Waterfront Regeneration Trust, Peter Lipscombe; Ontario Trails Council, Patrick Conner; Share the Road, Eleanor McMahon;

**Transportation Options:** Louisa Mursell (Chair), Joanne Hurley (Admin) Transportation Options Board Member, Vincent de Tourdonnet.

**Provided Updates by Email:** Mississippi Mills (RTO11) Jeff Mills; Bike On Tours Howard Pulver; Ministry of Transportation, Mike Canzi

Additional information on this meeting, past meetings and the partnership visit:  
[www.transportationoptions.org](http://www.transportationoptions.org)

## REGIONAL UPDATES

(Using Ministry of Tourism RTOs as geographical reference points -  
[www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/regions/regions.shtml](http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/regions/regions.shtml))

### Norfolk & Haldimand Counties (RTO1) - Michele Orr, Counties Health Unit

- New Norfolk County Ontario Garden;s Map 2013 includes cycling routes. Haldimand Cycling Map also available.
- New Lake Erie Trails set to open this summer with Great Waterfront Trail Adventure event coming through the counties.
- Also popular annual Tour de Norfolk and new this year Tour de Caledonia.
- From Health Unit's perspective, recently Active Transportation Forum was held, Official Plan under review.

### Niagara (RTO2) - Sue Morin - Venture Niagara

- Venture Niagara taking the lead in some cycle tourism initiatives, as no tourism department at Region and regional staff to focus on planning or health aspects of cycling. Venture Niagara looking at possible solution, hiring someone to assist.
- Grand Tour (Vélo Quebec) has been in touch with regards to a proposed 2014 Ontario event and route Hamilton-Niagara.
- Venture Niagara involved in sports tourism, including GranFondo Niagara this September. GranFondo is planning on completing a detailed economic impact pilot project study, gathering data from riders.
- Town of Pelham proud of recent bicycle friendly community award. Also pleased to welcome a large group of cyclists to local coffee shop, as group leaders had found location of this bike friendly cafe on the Welcome Cyclists website.



### **Peel Region (RT04) Erica Duque, Region of Peel**

- Just completed a successful Bike Month.
- Brampton has a number of initiatives underway including a new Bicycle Advisory Committee, Bikefest event and valet bike parking now offered at farmers market.

### **Durham Region (RT06) Terri-Anne Eagleson, Durham Tourism**

- New Durham Cycle Tours maps are being well received. 20000 printed, distribution to key outlets and contacts complete. 25+ map mailout requests per week.
- Tour de Terra Cotta cycling event in Peel is being worked on by Central Counties (RTO6).
- Finalizing a sports tourism strategy. Also looking at how cycling fits into that and overall tourism strategy.
- Working on an interactive trails map, also how to convert cycling map to that format.

### **Northumberland County (RT08) Cori Arthur, Northumberland Tourism**

- New cycling event, Kawarthas Northumberland Classic, a United Way ride, September 22. 30km ride route, to be expanded with additional routes likely to be added in 2014. Event promotion being led by RTO8.
- Northumberland Tourism willing to connect with Venture Niagara regarding their experiences of tourism connecting with region/county on cycling initiatives.
- Admires the Clarington Welcome Cyclists Gateway signs, just west of Northumberland in Durham Region, they work well with the 9 that are located in Northumberland.

### **Brockville (RT09) Alan Medcalf, Brockville Cycles**

- Lots of buy in to cycle tourism. This is effectively translating into more interest and developments for active transportation planning.
- Alan completes a schedule of events / tours coming through the area every year, distributing them to businesses and with assistance of Chamber of Commerce and Tourism office. Businesses are then aware of potential to serve cyclists and can plan accordingly. Good idea for other regions that have numerous cycling events or tours.
- Gananoque and area accommodations talking about creating a 'cycle and stay' type of group, offering luggage transfer services.
- 1000 Islands Parkway off road multi-use trail is in the final stages of having half repaved and widened. St Lawrence Parks Commission proceeded to complete this project with good speed, and are now looking at locking down funding needed to complete other half in fall 2013.

### **Ottawa (RT010) Megan Peckford, Ottawa Tourism**

- Cycling is really being promoted in tourism marketing campaigns.
- Recent VIA Rail changes with baggage car removal from all trains to/from Ottawa means no more Bike Train options for cyclists, and has also impacted marketing and some ads have had to be changed. Ottawa Tourism has been in contact to share concerns and complain to VIA, and would like to collaborate with Transportation Options on the outreach planned to VIA to advocate for reinstating Bike Train service options.

### **Lanark County (RT011) Jeff Mills, Riding in Mississippi Mills (RIMM)**

*(Unable to join meeting but sent notes for inclusion)*

- Bicycle month has been great this year. You may have heard Ed Lawrence on CBC's Ontario Today mention our wonderful (but rainy) tour with him last Sunday.
- Mississippi Mills councillor is kicking off study and discussion around paved shoulders and a policy for our town.



- Silver Chain Challenge - [www.silverchainchallenge.ca](http://www.silverchainchallenge.ca) – I started 3 years ago to encourage cycling through a friendly challenge among the 9 communities of Lanark County. Renfrew County participated this year too. Invitation issued to the areas to find out more and look to including program in their region.
- Please like the Mississippi Mills Bicycle Month Facebook page as well as visit our website [www.mmbm.ca](http://www.mmbm.ca)

### **Manitoulin Island (RTO13a) Maja Mielonen, MICA**

- Annual Passage Ride event June 8-9 was successful, 40 riders from GTA, 12 from Ottawa, plus from other locations.
- MICA continues to work on paved shoulder additions to roads in area.
- Received funding to proceed with work on the development of a Georgian Bay Cycling Route. Details presented at several Toronto conferences.
- Cycling map sales doing well from website, collecting nominal payment via paypal.
- Chi-Cheemaun ferry counting cyclists, walk - ons with bike only, and also new this year to count bikes on vehicles. Last year walk-ons increased 6.8%. Great data capture.

## **CROSS PROVINCIAL UPDATES**

### **IMBA, Igor Hoogendoorn**

- October 1 is national 'Take a Kid Mountain Biking' event day. Separate and varied events, the locations are available on IMBA's website.
- IMBA looking at connecting and working with RTO/DMO's to help promote mountain biking, also working with mountain biking clubs to help better self promote.
- IMBA currently experiencing capacity constraints with low membership numbers.

### **Waterfront Regeneration Trust, Peter Lipscombe**

- Getting ready to launch the new 600km Lake Erie Waterfront Trail. All communities enroute looking forward to trail opening, and influx of cyclists. Launch to coincide with Great Waterfront Trail Adventure, Aug 11-17. Event is now sold out, reaching 200 rider capacity.
- A new Greenbelt cycling route is also under development, working with regions from Northumberland to Niagara, with a completion date of 2015. Transportation Options is also partnering on this projects, bringing tourism into the picture and tourism businesses with the Welcome Cyclists Network.

### **Ontario Trails Council, Patrick Conner**

- Recently held Ontario Trailhead conference in Peterborough, Transportation Options one of speakers sharing info on cycle tourism in Ontario.
- OTC would like to promote and partner with others on cycle tourism where possible. Could assist with connecting with VIA Rail regarding change to Ottawa Bike Train.
- There is a fall committee meeting at Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Sport on the Ontario Trails Strategy and next steps to update it. OTC working on agenda for meeting.
- Trails Count! pilot projects underway in a number of areas including Norfolk County, Thunder Bay, Bonnechere Park. Developed by Lakehead University, signs on trails take users by QR code to trail survey. These surveys of 15-16 quick questions can be tailored for trail or region. Results could impact future trail development.



## **Bike On Tours – Howard Pulver**

*(Unable to join meeting but sent notes for inclusion)*

- Bike ON Tours is experiencing a very busy season to date. We sold 25 copies of 2013 edition of the Ontario Bicycle Touring Atlas in the first 3 weeks that it was available.
- We have had a lot of interest in Custom and Package Tours, particularly in the Bay of Quinte area and to a lesser extent in the Bruce Peninsula and Niagara. We have customers from Mexico, Denmark and Quebec as well as from Ontario.
- The Custom Tours that we are working on for clients include Prince Edward County and the area between Kingston and Port Hope extending north to Tweed.
- We have been on the newly improved Hastings - Lang Rail Trail from Hastings west to Durham Region twice and were very impressed.
- Bike ON Tours is now operating from Belleville. We are working with a local bicycle rental store and delivery company to provide bicycles and luggage transfer.

## **Share the Road, Eleanor McMahon**

- Held recent Ontario Bike Summit, 2 day conference.
- GranFondo Niagara strong partnership with Share the Road.
- Economic impact study of event will be detailed and provide valuable info and insight. BC events worth \$21M.
- Draft Ontario Cycling Strategy under review with aims to complete by September. Share the Road invited to working group session this week by Ministry of Transportation.

## **Ministry of Transportation - Mike Canzi**

*(Unable to join meeting but sent notes for inclusion)*

- The Ministry of Transportation posted a draft Cycling Strategy online in November 2012 for public review and comment. The draft Strategy outlines how the Ministry proposes to increase the number and safety of cyclists in the province through legislation, education and other means.
- The draft Strategy includes a proposal that would see the Ministry identify a province-wide network of cycling routes for recreation and tourism. It also proposes that Ministry cycling infrastructure investments would be focused on closing the gaps between existing cycling routes to create a provincial network.
- More than 1,100 submissions were received during the consultation period.
- A panel of cycling experts will be convened on June 27 to provide additional advice on the Cycling Strategy, which is expected to be finalized by the end of summer.

## **Transportation Options – Louisa Mursell**

- Welcome Cyclists Network, new regions added, 25 regions now participating, 700+ business [www.welcomecyclists.ca](http://www.welcomecyclists.ca)
- Ontario Cycle Tourism Information Centre, lots of great events and consumer shows this winter and spring distributing cycling maps from around the province. Keep the paper maps coming.
- Greenbelt Cycling Route, funding approved project started, partnering with project lead, Waterfront Regeneration Trust. [www.greenbeltcycles.com](http://www.greenbeltcycles.com)
- Destination development & promotional work, various projects underway or completed. Lots of new partners, regions and communities looking at developing cycle tourism.



- Ontario Cycle Tourism Forum 2013, successful conference held March 1. Post conference publication and other information at [www.welcomecyclists.ca/octf13](http://www.welcomecyclists.ca/octf13)
- Bike Train - VIA Rail baggage service cuts, reduce options to/from Windsor, and end service to Ottawa. Complaints received and forwarded to VIA. We are providing additional information to VIA to try to support the need for this option and have them re-evaluate decision. GO Transit Bike Train Toronto to/from Niagara operating season July and August. [www.biketrain.ca](http://www.biketrain.ca)
- After a number of meetings with Province and input from industry stakeholders, the development of a stand-alone Ontario wide cycle tourism strategy is not feasible at this present time, however may present themselves in the near future. Instead Transportation Options will continue to work with regions and support partners on project based initiatives that develop cycle tourism.
- New cycle tourism research in Ontario has been collected, with highlights shared on web conference. Those reports and more can be found and downloaded on new web page [www.transportationoptions.org/resources](http://www.transportationoptions.org/resources)

***Meeting hosted by and minutes prepared by:***

**T**ransportation  
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For more information on web conference, advisory committee or the Ontario Welcome Cyclists Partnership please contact:  
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