

# MEETING REPORT

## INITIATIVE

Lake Huron North Channel Waterfront Trail & Trans Canada Trail

## PURPOSE

Tourism Northern Ontario and Waterfront Regeneration Trust is continuing to conduct implementation activities of the Lake Huron North Channel Cycling Route Study and implementation activities of the Trans Canada Trail Concept Plan - Lake Huron North Channel Waterfront Trail.

## BACKGROUND

As a follow-up to previous community meetings, discussions and correspondence, this follow-up meeting/mapping workshop session was with the community and those they felt should be in attendance (mayor, councillors, tourism/recreation staff, roads personnel or others) to provide input/comments on the Lake Huron North Channel Waterfront Trail and Trans Canada Trail route.

Attached is the agenda for the meeting/mapping workshop. We brought maps and asked that the communities develop a community list of items identifying community attractions, amenities, connections and concerns.

By the end of the session, we anticipated to have a clear understanding of what particulars will be identified on the community's section of the map and the final route that will be signed as the Lake Huron North Channel Waterfront Trail and the Trans Canada Trail.

This map of the route and the particulars identified will be digitized and become part of the provincial cycling trail mapping system and part of the national Trans Canada Trail system. Communities will have another opportunity to view the route and maps before they are finalized. These are continuing steps in the implementation process.

## DATE and TIME

May 21, 2015 at 1:00pm

## LOCATION

Township of Baldwin  
11 Spooner Street  
McKerrow, ON

## PARTICIPANTS

Peggy Young-Lovelace, Clerk/Treasurer – Township of Baldwin  
Vern Gorham, Mayor – Township of Baldwin  
Michael Wozny, Coordinator – Tourism Northern Ontario (TNO)  
Marlaine Koehler, Executive Director – Waterfront Regeneration Trust (WRT)

## PARTICULARS

1. Welcome and introductions.

## 2. Brief update of Lake Huron North Channel Cycling Route project and Trans Canada Trail initiative:

- Met with the communities along the route last year and they are supportive of the TNO initiative.
- Received resolutions of support from many communities, and board approval and support from the Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM).
- Tourism Northern Ontario continues to be supportive and vested in the logistics regarding this regionally based new product development initiative.
- Waterfront Regeneration Trust has expanded their mandate and agreed to be the coordinating agency for the route. Waterfront Regeneration Trust is a charitable non-profit group that has been coordinating over 1,400 km of cycling trails (the Waterfront Trail) in southern Ontario through over 70 communities for 20 years. The expansion of their mandate to include the 370 km Lake Huron North Channel Cycling Route provides the north with a great opportunity and guarantee of success. The Waterfront Trail is a well-known provincial cycling brand and we will be linked and part of this brand with the route identified as the Lake Huron North Channel Waterfront Trail.
- As per partnership agreement with Trans Canada Trail and funding through the Trillium Foundation, this route will also be part the official Trans Canada Trail, a national trail system that will span from coast to coast and open in 2017.
- Discussed the Ministry of Transportation's News release titled "Ontario Investing \$25 Million in Cycling Infrastructure". There is \$15 million for key connections and linkages on provincial highways in which the Lake Huron North Channel Cycling Route is specifically identified to receive funding. There is also \$10 million for municipal cycling infrastructure cycling routes and preliminary information indicates that it may be 50% funding with a \$250,000 cap.
- Efforts of the communities, TNO, FONOM and WRT have been well acknowledged by MTO and important in the announcement of MTO to provide funding and to incorporate cycling infrastructure and activities.
- MTO has issued a Request For Proposals for the assessment and evaluation of a coordinated provincial cycling route in accordance with their #CycleON strategy.
- There is a lot of interest and the expansion of cycling trail to Northern Ontario has been very well received at the recent cycling show in Toronto.
- Cycling continues to grow as a transportation option, recreational activity and tourism opportunity.

## 3. Community update highlights

- They are reluctant to fully support the project due to a concern of liability if a cyclist is injured on one of their roads.
- They only have one person in their Roads Department. Sometimes they have a part-time person helping out.
- At this time, there is no commitment for an annual financial contribution of \$500.
- Nevertheless, they are willing to part of the multi-community 370km cycling project if possible.

## 4. Review and mark cycling particulars on master map

- Collected data from community representatives in the following areas on the map:
  - a) Alerts - trail/road conditions (change in surface, gravel, high speeds, railway crossings, busy crossings, cyclists have to dismount etc.)

- b) Amenities - washrooms and parking as well as other important items such as shopping areas, hospitals, restaurants, general stores, etc.
  - c) Attractions - museums, galleries, parks, conservation areas, cultural particulars, farmer's market, camping, provincial parks, historical and heritage sites, marinas, terrestrial or aquatic natural features
  - d) Connections - to other trails or tours
- The Township of Baldwin only has less than 5 km of the cycling trail in their township.
  - There is a small section on Jacklin Road coming from Espanola. The trail goes onto Highway 17 at Jacklin Road and is under the responsibility of MTO.
  - The community believes that signing the cycling trail brings an increased level of responsibility and liability. The WRT is experienced with this concern as some communities have also identified this as an issue. WRT indicated that a community is only required to do the road activities that they already do on a regular basis. The only difference is that the community should ensure it has a record of these ongoing regular activities. The township does only one road sweep in the spring.
  - WRT indicated that cyclists are already allowed to travel on these roads and community liability is covered by existing policies.
  - The community stated that it wants to check with its insurance company.
  - The community says there are accidents in the area. They have some traffic count figures and will forward this information.
  - WRT said that they will consider engaging a consultant to provide assurance of no increased liability to the Township of Baldwin due to having a few km of road signed as the Lake Huron North Channel Waterfront Trail.
  - The community indicated that they are willing to install the signs. As there will only be about four signs, they suggested that they would put them up in the spring and take them down in the fall. This would avoid the signs getting damaged in the winter.
  - Community asked about the logistic and activities of where the signs would go. WRT will do a signage audit to determine sign locations. Discussions included the distance between signs which has been 2 ½ km. However, due to the nature of the Lake Huron North Channel Waterfront Trail along Jacklin Road only a few signs in each direction will be required. Installation will occur in 2016.
  - The community is too small and can't take advantage of the \$10 million MTO Community Infrastructure Program.
  - Discussions included how cyclists could be directed to the township businesses, such as Tim Hortons.

#### **FOLLOW-UP ITEMS**

1. Get the traffic count figures (P. Young-Lovelace).
2. Project will be brought to the June 2015 council meeting for approval (P. Young-Lovelace & V. Gorham).
3. Inquiry to be made with MMM Group regarding liability issue (M. Koehler).
4. When complete, forward draft map with particulars identified for final review (M. Koehler)
5. Continue to keep municipality up-to-date on key activities and milestones (M. Wozny & M. Koehler).