

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 7, 2015 at 2:00pm

LOCATION

Municipality of Huron Shores
7 Bridge Street
Iron Bridge, ON

PARTICIPANTS

Debbie Tonelli, Clerk – Municipality of Huron Shores
Dale Wedgewood, Councillor - Municipality of Huron Shores
Henry Hadkin, Public Works Superintendent – Municipality of Huron Shores
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

- Community is very supportive of cycling and has passed a resolution. They have issue with the \$500 membership. They have a lot of roads in their municipality and agreed to installing the signs.
- They are pleased to be part of the multi-community 370km cycling project.

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
- Trail enters the municipality at Ansonia Road and winds its way through the entire municipality on a number of roads. There is approximately 40 km of the route on municipal roads. WRT agreed to create access to the Town of Thessalon via Highway 129. Therefore, the route will go from Little Rapids Road to south on Highway 129 to Thessalon. The main route will still go from Little Rapids Roads to north on Highway 129 to Ingram Road.
 - Henry is very supportive of the route as he has seen success of these types of trails in British Columbia. There is a lot of cool things to see here.
 - There are a few gravel sections but Marlaine stated that this is not uncommon as there are a few sections on the Waterfront Trail in southern Ontario that have gravel. Marlaine stated that cyclists were asked if they would rather cycle on a busy secondary highway or have to manage a short portion of the trail on gravel and little or no traffic. The usual consensus is that people will rather manage a gravel portion of the trail.
 - Need to clearly name all the municipalities on the provincial map.
 - Community agreed to install the signs and will try to use existing poles, such as mileage speed limit poles. Signs cannot be installed on hydro poles.
 - Community asked who was supplying the signs. WRT to supply signs and poles.
 - WRT stated that they are always fund raising and accessing government programs and have always managed to pay for replacement signs.
 - WRT said that there will be 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 of long straight stretches of road the guidelines will be adjusted to the route. Perhaps a sign every 5 km when appropriate. Installation will occur in 2016.
 - It would be nice to access the community infrastructure program to surface treat some of the roads. It will depend of the percentage of grant in the \$10 million MTO Community Infrastructure Program. The community cannot afford only 50% funding.
 - The community has some key amenities and attractions such as markets, accommodation, stores, gas station, restaurants, waterfront access to Mississauga River and others. .

FOLLOW-UP ITEMS

1. WRT to request high resolution logo when required (M. Koehler).
2. When complete, forward draft map with particulars identified for final review (M. Koehler)
3. Continue to keep municipality up-to-date on key activities and milestones (M. Wozny & M. Koehler).