

# 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 10:00am

## LOCATION

Town of Thessalon  
187 Main Street  
Thessalon, ON

## PARTICIPANTS

Heidi Werner, EDC – Town of Thessalon  
Kimberly Hamilton, Councillor – Town of Thessalon  
Robert MacLean, Clerk/Treasurer – Town of Thessalon (post meeting)  
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 supportive of the cycling project and have passed a resolution of support. They anticipate that the \$500 contribution will be approved when required.
- Their EDC is developing a tourism strategy and this will be part of the strategy. Would like M. Wozny to do a presentation to the EDC committee.
- 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
- The cycling route/Trans Canada Trail goes along Little Rapids Road, then Highway 129 to Ingram Road. After discussions, WRT agreed to re-route the trail to extend along Highway 129 into the Town of Thessalon to the waterfront.
  - A trail head sign will be erected on the waterfront at the staging area. Lots of amenities here from restaurants, to accommodation on the lake, to stores, public showers and laundry facilities (at marina), LCBO and more.
  - MTO will have to erect the signs on Highway 129.
  - Perhaps the town could have kayak rentals and other activities.
  - Pleased to have activity driven to their website with hyper-links.
  - Community agreed to install the signs.
  - WRT will be supplying the signs and any poles, if required. All efforts will be made to use existing poles.
  - The community doesn't anticipate to have any projects that they could take advantage of the \$10 million MTO Community Infrastructure Program.

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

1. Attend EDC committee meeting and do a presentation (M. Wozny).
2. Forward copy of project information to committee (M. Wozny).
3. When complete, forward draft map with particulars identified for final review (M. Koehler)
4. Continue to keep municipality up-to-date on key activities and milestones (M. Wozny & M. Koehler).