

Transportation Services Division



Meeting Minutes: Greater Niagara Circle Route Committee

Date: 2021-02-26
Time: 1:00 pm
Location: Zoom
Chair: T. Ugulini
Attendees: T. Ugulini, C. Ryall, W. Campbell, D. Dodge, N. Dubanow, B. Greenwood, L. Sicoli
Minutes: J. MacPherson

Discussion Items

1) **Opening Remarks** - by C. Ryall

2) **Opening Remarks** - by GNCRC Chair

3) **GNCRC Tourism Collateral** – L. Sicoli, Economic Development

- Overview on how Economic Development can engage in Circle Route goals and visibility to the route
- T. Ugulini: Have you reached out to Sue Morin? She is a good resource.
- L. Sicoli: Yes. I have spoken to S. Morin and she provided good context and background
- T. Ugulini: Niagara Freewheelers made a presentation at our last meeting and they would also be a great resource.
- C. Ryall: We have been closely linked with S. Morin and been in conversations about updating the cycling map. It is one of the larger initiatives of ATSC.
- B. Greenwood: I had many great comments on the current map. It's an age of transition, so paper is still necessary.
- L. Sicoli: We can provide some marketing support from our end as well. If you want something specific, we can connect with social media promotion. If you identify social media influencers, we can connect them to our marketing department to move forward.
- T. Ugulini: We need to maintain the link with Economic Development and put our best foot forward promoting the GNCRC. We need to make sure we get the word out and maintain it.
- L. Sicoli: We are happy to support the membership to Ontario By-Bike Association. It is about to expire. It is a "go-to" membership for cyclists.
- N. Dubanow: Made a motion – 2nd by D. Dodge
 - To renew our Ontario By-Bike Association membership, to be paid for by Economic Development. **Carried** – Will go to TSC then to PW.
- C. Ryall: Once approved we will work with Economic Development to move it forward.
- L. Sicoli: I would like to stay as a connected thread to the GNCRC to better understand how Economic Development can assist.
- C. Ryall: ATSC's renewal of the cycling map is a major initiative. We use it in

different forums, showcasing our infrastructure. We are working with S. Morin and the LAMs, looking to get bike infrastructure to include on map update. The intent of the map is strictly around cycling. S. Morin and I are working to complete this by the end of April timeframe.

- B. Greenwood: The timing is great getting this out in time for the good weather.

4) Greater Niagara Circle Route Update

- i) The reporting structure for the Greater Niagara Circle Route Committee was transferred from Planning and Economic Development Committee to Public Works Committee – PDS 36-2020 Approved at PEDC December 9, 2020.

5) GNCRC Work Plan Review

- To be submitted to TSC April 27, 2021 for approval, then next steps will be implemented.
- T. Ugolini: R. Dillon met with our Public Works Department and they are implementing improvements.
- N. Dubanow: R. Dillon also met with our staff. She is an excellent resource.
- C. Ryall: In support of what we're doing in GNCRC, we are having her attend TSC and do a condensed version of her presentation.
- B. Greenwood: I think it would be great to pass along the information to the proper committees.
- N. Dubanow: I agree to bring her to TSC to give a broad overview of the Circle Route
- B. Greenwood: Communication among committees and people is vital.
- C. Ryall: Having R. Dillon come forward to outline the current state of the Circle Route, may help with additional funding or other opportunities which may really help us.
- B. Greenwood: Bringing the existing map to TSC to hand out would be helpful. It's a great promoter of the Niagara Region.
- C. Ryall: We will take this away as an action item to reach out to Rita to present a 15 minute overview at TSC.
- T. Ugolini: I absolutely agree.

Wayfinding

- T. Ugolini: Is there a way we can do joint funding between the municipalities and the Region, using resource dollars so the signage is consistent? Does it have merit to work as a partnership and everyone has buy in?
- C. Ryall: We can bring a motion forward that talks to a shared financial contribution between the Region and the municipalities. The region could hire a consultant to do a wayfinding strategy specifically for the Circle Route.
- N. Dubanow: Fort Erie already has a program for wayfinding underway. We did this at the municipal level. It was approved in 2010 and was implemented in 2019.
- T. Ugolini: I think Welland's is also well underway.
- F. Greenwood: Could we have a look at what Fort Erie and Welland has in progress?
- N. Dubanow: We have reports with a specifically designed framework. They are publically available on the website as to how we are moving forward. I am concerned that our signs won't meet the Regional specs for signage. Is there a way we can make it work?
- C. Ryall: The Region put forward a general wayfinding program consistent across the Regional right of way across all municipalities. It wasn't approved a number of years ago. The LAMs have been progressing with their own wayfinding.

Anything on Regional roads has been in consult with the Region. Perhaps we can reach out to the different operations groups at the LAMs that touch the Circle Route and see if they have any strategies they would like to bring forward. I feel it is still best to bring a consultant in to review this. There are many options to use in way finding. Having a consultant as part of the committee is valuable.

- T. Ugulini: In the short term, we should reach out to the municipalities to see where they are at in terms of signage and report back to this group. Then we can make a decision.
- C. Ryall: Yes. We should try to get this done in the next week and be mindful of the timing of next the TSC.
- T. Ugulini: We can host a short meeting on this wayfinding item only. Then make a decision prior to the March TSC.
- C. Ryall: We will reach out to the LAMs for this information and call another meeting.

Future Network Expansion:

- PEDEC wanted to make the completion of the Circle Route in north St. Catharines, a priority in their 2021 work plan.
- D. Dodge: Do we want to put a motion forward to start this work?
- T. Ugulini: The workplan is not in order of priority. We should use bullet points instead of numbers.
 - Dodge made a Motion, 2nd by Campbell – **Carried**
- B. Greenwood: How much money has been invested in the Circle Route over the last couple years?
- T. Ugulini: My understanding is there has been no money spent recently. Any work that has been done, has been paid for by the municipalities (i.e. asphalt repairs).
- C. Ryall: Prior to the group going into abeyance, there was a dedicated pot of dollars. There has been no recent activity for money to be put into. I reached out to Finance to confirm what is available. I would need to go to TSC for a budget adjustment to use those dollars. This wasn't approved through the Capital budget to use those dollars.
- B. Greenwood: This would open it up for new people to understand the ongoing work in the municipalities. It would be a good message to give to the whole council.
- C. Ryall to come back with actual numbers of the money available.
- C. Ryall: I reached out to St. Catharines. There is a design completed and on hold, pending a decision with the Region for \$80k – 90k to do the work. I will brief T. Ugulini prior to TSC meeting in March.
 - D. Dodge: Motion to accept the Workplan as presented - 2nd Dubanow – **Carried**

6) Closing Remarks - by GNCRC Chair

- Thanks to everyone. It's good to be back at it getting some work done.

7) Closing Remarks - by C. Ryall

- May 17th is the next GNCRC meeting. It's been an excellent meeting today.