



Cycle Tourism Product, Innovations & Opportunities

-Explorers' Edge-
Regional Tourism Summit

November 6, 2024

www.OntarioByBike.ca

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Cycle Tourism Product, Innovations & Opportunities - Explorers' Edge - Regional Tourism Summit

November 6, 2024




1. Introduction & Overview
2. What is Cycle Tourism & Who Are Cycle Tourists
3. Why Welcome Cyclists
4. Cycle Tourism in Muskoka, Parry Sound, Almaguin & Algonquin
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 - i. Ontario By Bike Network
 - ii. New Markets: E-bikes & Fat Bikes
 - iii. Bike Tour Packages
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6. Questions & Comments





Ontario By Bike

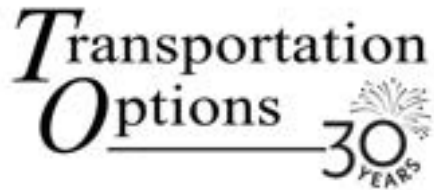
Transportation
Options 30
YEARS

1 . INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

What is the Ontario By Bike Network?

Goal: To develop and promote cycle tourism in Ontario through a network of bicycle friendly businesses that together enhance the region's cycle tourism product

Project Coordinators



Destination Partner



www.thegreatcanadianwilderness.com

www.explorersedge.ca





2020 – COVID surge in cycling and domestic travel. Continued growth and recognition of Ontario By Bike as most used resource by cyclists. Cycling in Ontario annual guide grows in popularity, 40,000 copies in French and English

2021 - Partnership with Destination Ontario. 10th anniversary of Cycling in Ontario Guide. Website updated.

2016 – Ontario By Bike Network becomes registered trademark & hosts 3rd Cycle Tourism Conference

2023 - 5th Cycle Tourism Conference hosted Mar 2. 2023 Cycling in Ontario guide published, all 40k copies distributed. Successful 2023 OBB Rides season completed.

2015 – Ontario By Bike launches small group tours

2024 - 2023 Ontario Cycle Tourism & Cycling Activity Report published. 12th annual Cycling in Ontario guide published, demand high and distribution ongoing. 2024 OBB Rides sold out.

2014 - Welcome Cyclists Network rebranded as Ontario By Bike Network. Print 2nd edition of annual guide

2010 – The Welcome Cyclists Network launches

2019 – Ontario By Bike Network exceeds 1,500 certified bicycle friendly businesses and administered in 39 Regions across Ontario & hosts 4th Cycle Tourism Conference

2008 - Welcome Cyclists Network test piloted in Niagara

2007 - Award-winning Bike Train initiative introduces bike racks onboard select passenger rail trains. Onboard survey reveals tourism businesses offering inadequate services for cyclists



Canada's Bus To The Great Outdoors



www.ParkBus.ca

City to trailheads, campgrounds and other key park destinations

Toronto, Vancouver, Ottawa, Halifax, Montreal, Edmonton

~70% of Canadian population close to 40+ parks

2024: Naturelink, TD Express & *NEW* Trailquest



2. WHAT IS CYCLE TOURISM & WHO ARE CYCLE TOURISTS

What is Cycle Tourism?



Cycle Tourism: Can incorporate road, trails, mountain and e-bikes, and typically falls under:

- 1. Destination Riding:** Overnight cycling that focuses around a specific destination and the cycling amenities available in that area.
 - E.g. Weekend trips incorporating trail or road riding, or mountain biking in area
 - Also referred to also as “Hub & Spoke”
 - Riding with an e-bike
- 2. Touring:** Independently organized, multi-day trips. Could have support vehicle or self-supported / FIT (fully independent travelers)
 - E.g. Multi-day cycling tour on roads
- 3. Events & Tours:** Visiting a region due to specific cycling events or tours hosted in that area. Day or multi-day.
 - E.g. Travel to participate in cycling event in area like Northern Pass to Conquer Cancer
- 4. Day Rides and Urban Cycling:** Day cycling trips that focus around a specific destination and the cycling amenities available in that area.
 - E.g. Visiting tourists drive to Huntsville and ride in area

Who Are Cycle Tourists?



A Cycle Tourist: Someone travelling >40km from their place of residence, where cycling is incorporated in the trip

All types – Wide range of ability & age

- Leisure & family cyclists
- Recreational cyclists
- Touring / experienced cyclists
- Race & competitive cyclists
- Mountain / Gravel / Fat bikers
- * Includes e-bikes

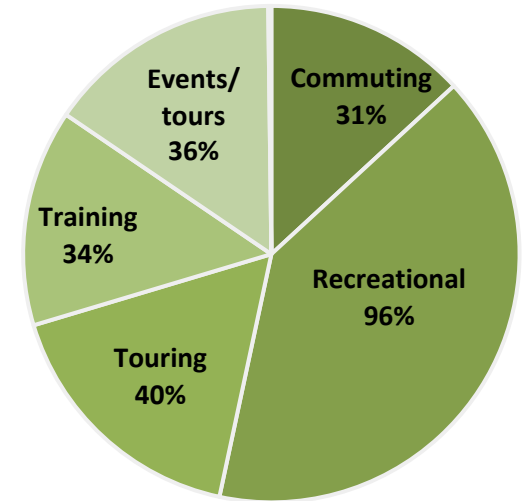


Attractive demographics



About Ontario Cyclists

- 49% of cyclists are aged 45 to 64, 34% of cyclists are aged 65 and over
- 57% of cyclists identified as male, 42% female.
- Recreational cycling was the most popular type of cycling activity in 2023.
 - 96% of respondents cycled for recreation
 - 40% cycle touring
 - 36% participated in events/tours
- Road cycling, followed closely by riding off-road trails, are preferred types of cycling, followed by gravel cycling, with a number mentioning fat biking as other preference.



Ontario Cyclists | Ride Habits & Preferences

- 52% prefer a daily ride distance of 46km to 99km, 32% who prefer distances between 21km to 45km, on multi-day trips that include cycling.
- 58% did one or more overnight trips that included cycling in Ontario in 2023, including 38% that did two or more trips.
- 68% did three or more day trips in Ontario that included cycling in 2023

- 24% are winter and year round cyclists
- 22% own one or more e-bikes in their household, 17% are considering purchasing an e-bike in the future.





3. WHY WELCOME CYCLISTS

Cycle Tourism in Ontario

In 2022, Visitor Numbers and Spend:

- **1.2 million cycling visits** in Ontario, representing 1% of total visits in Ontario
- **Spent \$565 million** accounting for 2.35% of total visitor spending in Ontario
- Largest spending categories (in order) are accommodations, food & beverage, transportation



Source: Statistics Canada's National Travel Survey 2022; MTCS

Note: 2022 data is domestic (Canadian visitor) results only; and due to methodology change, data for 2022 is not comparable to years 2019 and before.

Cycle tourists spend more & stay longer in Ontario!



- \$537/trip vs. \$421/trip (non-cyclists)
- Same-day visitors \$337/trip vs. \$114/trip (non-cyclists)
- 4.2 nights vs. 2.9 nights (non-cyclists)
- 61% of cycling visits were overnight visits (compared to 35% of total visits non-cyclists)



Source: Statistics Canada's National Travel Survey 2022; MTCS

Note: 2022 data is domestic (Canadian visitor) results only; and due to methodology change, data for 2022 is not comparable to years 2019 and before.

Ontario Cycle Tourism Stats and Facts

2019 Ontario Cyclists - Source Markets:

- 76% cycle tourists are from Ontario
 - Accounting for 44% of spending

Other cycle tourists in Ontario are:

- Canadian - 8% (accounting for 10% of spending)
 - *In past approx. 81% from Quebec*
- International - 9% (accounting for 40% of spending)
 - *In past predominantly from France, UK, other European*
- American - 6%



Ontario Cycle Tourism Impact On Businesses

Accommodations

When on an overnight cycling trip, cyclists had the following preferences:

- 45% stay at hotels/motels/luxury accommodations often/very often.
 - 35% stay at private rentals, cottages, with friends and relatives, hostels.
 - 18% prefer camping.
-
- 32% of cyclists spent over \$150 per night on accommodations while on a bike trip
 - 65% of cyclists spent over \$100 per night on accommodations while on a bike trip
 - Cyclists spending on overnight accommodations increased significantly since 2021.



Ontario Cycle Tourism Impact On Businesses

Food & Beverage

- 55% of cyclists spent over \$26 on food and beverage on a cycling trip or outing
- 23% of cyclists spent over \$50 on food and beverage



Attractions, Entertainment and Other Activities

- 30% of cyclists spent over \$26 per day on attractions and other activities
- 70% spent between \$0 and \$25



Retail Shopping

- 27% of cyclists spent over \$26 per day on retail shopping,
- 73% spent between \$0 and \$25
 - Cyclists spend slightly increased on retail shopping

Top activity preferences for Ontario cyclists are:

- Visiting museums and cultural sights; Culinary experiences including wine and beer tastings; Going to the beach; Hiking and other outdoor activities; Arts and studio tours



4 . CYCLE TOURISM IN MUSKOKA, PARRY SOUND, ALMAGUIN & ALGONQUIN

Why Muskoka, Parry Sound, Almaguin & Algonquin

- Established on-road cycling routes & trails
- Scenic landscape
- Four season cycling destination
- Cross-regional cycling routes
- Vibrant communities close to routes and trails
- Community & partner support
 - Bike stores, bike tour operators and rentals
 - Cycling groups, organizations, and clubs
 - Cycling events
 - Tourism & business partners
- A variety of transportation options:
 - Train, bus, plane; cycle in / cycle out; close proximity to large urban centres, international tourism reputation



Road Routes in Muskoka, Parry Sound, Almaguin & Algonquin

Large number of on road routes, some with paved shoulders
Ranging from 14km to 165km.



- **Parry Sound Area** – 12 road routes of varied distances
 - TRY: Parry Sound to Nobel – 22km ‘out and back’ route leaves Parry Sound to community of Nobel. Nobel Rd has paved shoulders.
- **Magnetawan Area** – 14 road routes, including Burk’s Falls, Screaming Heads, Ahmic Lake
- **Muskoka** – Numerous routes from Bracebridge, Gravenhurst, Huntsville
 - TRY: Muskoka Beach – Scenic 25km ‘out and back’ recreational route from Gravenhurst to the lovely public beach near Taboo Muskoka Resort. Stretch it a bit further to Muskoka Brewery and take a brewery tour.

Dedicated ‘Great Places to Cycle’ page for Parry Sound & Almaguin – Muskoka & Algonquin
www.ontariobybike.ca/parrysoundalmaguin & www.ontariobybike.ca/muskokaalgonquin

Also see www.ontariobybike.ca/manitoulinlaclouche & www.bikecottagecountry.ca & other resources

Great Trails & Gravel in Muskoka, Parry Sound, Almaguin & Algonquin

- **Rotary Algonquin Regiment Fitness Trail** – 5km winds along the shoreline of Georgian Bay and the town of Parry Sound
- **Seguin Recreational Trail** – 61km multi-use trail
- **Old Railway Bike Trail** (Algonquin Provincial Park) – 16km rail trail is suitable for family and recreational cyclists and is accessible spring to fall.
- **Beausoleil Island** – Located in the Georgian Bay Islands National Park, ride over 15km of unpaved scenic trails around the island. Bike rentals available.
- **Old Nipissing Road Trail** – Also known as “The Ontario Ghost Trail”, 70km stretch of the TCT includes gravel roads and trails, and paved roads, and is most suited for gravel or mountain bikes. Runs north/south between Hwy 69 and 11. Limited services.
- Devil’s Gap Trail & Old Stone Road Trail

Mountain Biking (& Fat Biking)

Muskoka, Parry Sound, Almaguin & Algonquin

- **Hidden Valley** - Located close to downtown Huntsville, with HMBA
- **Georgian Nordic Bike Trails** – Mountain biking and winter fat biking, Parry Sound area
- **Resource Management Centre Trails** - 16km outside of Bracebridge, with MORCA
- **Porcupine Ridge** - 12km, views across Lake Muskoka

- Minnesing Mountain Bike Trail & Byers Lake Mountain Bike Trail - Algonquin Provincial Park; Restoule Provincial Park; Arrowhead Provincial Park
- Echo Valley Nature & Bike Trails
- Torrance Barrens
- Pines Interpretive Trail & Loxton Beaver Trail - Almaguin Highlands

Cross Regional Routes in Muskoka, Parry Sound, Almaguin & Algonquin

These routes incorporate a variety of local trails and roads:

- **Trans Canada Trail** – A four-season, multi-use trail system with various surface types and users.
- **Park to Park Trail** – 230km from the western shore of Georgian bay at Killbear Provincial Park to Algonquin Provincial Park's West Gate.
- **Great Lakes Waterfront Trail** – Stretching over 3,600km. Connects 10 communities and over 25 lakes in Muskoka including two signed routes: 90km Lake Muskoka Loop and 66km Lake Rosseau Loop
- **Voyageur Cycling Route** – A developing 645km route from Sudbury – North Bay – Mattawa – Ottawa. Shorter routes, cycling experiences and itineraries available.



Dedicated 'Great Places to Cycle' page for Parry Sound & Almaguin – Muskoka & Algonquin
www.ontariobybike.ca/parrysoundalmaguin & www.ontariobybike.ca/muskokaalgonquin
Also see www.ontariobybike.ca/northeast & www.bikecottagecountry.ca & other resources



**5. *PRODUCT
DEVELOPMENT
OPPORTUNITIES:***

i) Ontario By Bike Network

What is the Ontario By Bike Network?

Ontario By Bike certifies businesses as bicycle friendly.

Depending on business category, businesses have to meet criteria to verify that they are ready to welcome cyclists to their location.

There are more than 1,680 businesses certified across Ontario.

www.OntarioByBike.ca

- 47% of cyclists had visited one or more businesses certified as bicycle friendly by Ontario By Bike in the past two years.
- 40% visited multiple businesses certified as bicycle friendly.
- 38% of cyclists not yet aware of certification program.



BICYCLE FRIENDLY BUSINESSES

There are over
1,680 locations
certified by
Ontario By Bike



36%

Accommodations



26%

Attractions
(including
wineries and
breweries)



20%

Cafes &
Restaurants

Plan your next
ride to stop at
bicycle friendly
places to eat, visit
and sleep
ontariobybike.ca

Who Can Participate?



Ontario By Bike is **free** for businesses who:

- Comply with the certification criteria for each category
- Are located in region that the program is offered

- Accommodation providers
- Campgrounds
- Food services providers
- Tourist attractions
- Business areas
- Other cycling-related businesses/organizations

www.ontariobybike.ca/addyourbusiness

www.ontariobybike.ca/terms



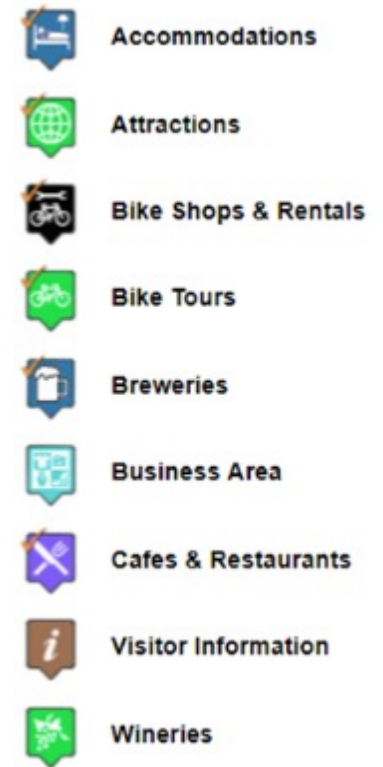
Certification Criteria – By Category

Over 1,680 locations across Ontario

Differs depending on category:

- Secure bike lock-up area
- Local cycling information
- Basic bicycle repair tool set
- Healthy, local food options
- Rest area, washrooms and water

www.ontariobybike.ca/criteria



Network Participant Benefits

Online Business Directory Listing

- Business details, contact info, logo, images
- Location pin on [Ontario By Bike Map](#)
- Business listing Linked directly from regional cycling page
- Increases SEO/Online footprint
- Window decals and use of logo

Ontario By Bike Network Programming

- Ontario By Bike Participant Tool Kit, Regional Cycling Resource
- Industry Workshops & Webinars

Other Industry tools and resources

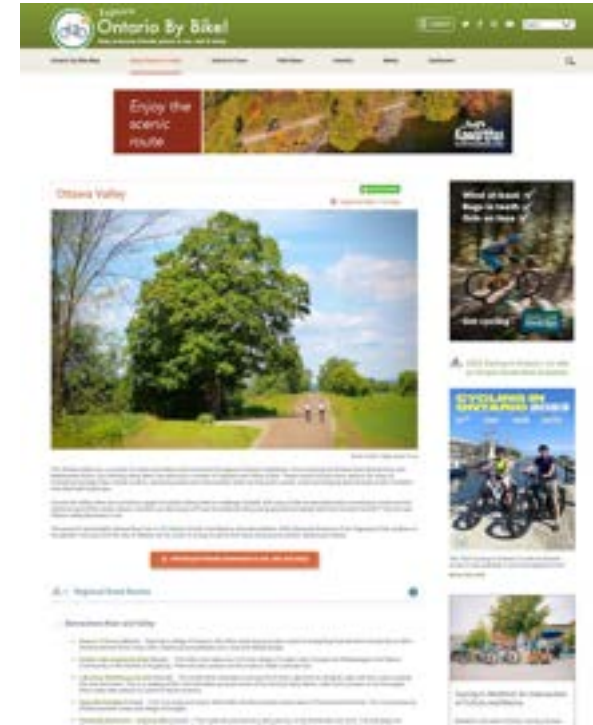
- www.ontariobybike.ca/industry

Formation of a larger network in Region/Province

- 1,680 Certified Bicycle Friendly Businesses in Ontario

Ontario By Bike Network Marketing and Promotions

- Exposure and access to Ontario's cycling market
- Website, newsletters, social media, shows/events, annual print guide





5. *PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES:*

- ii) New Markets
E-bikes & Fat Bikes**

E-Bike Definition

Definition can vary depending on province.

In Ontario ...

An e-bike is a power-assisted bicycle with an electric motor that has:

- a handlebar for steering
- working pedals
- two or three wheels
- an electric motor
- braking systems
- maximum assisted speed of 32 km/h
- maximum weight of 120 kg (includes the weight of the bike & battery)



Types of E-Bikes

There are many different types of e-bikes and brands on the market.

COMMUTER



E-HYBRID



E-FAT



E-CRUISER

PERFORMANCE



E-ROAD



E-MOUNTAIN



E-GRAVEL

UTILITY



E-FOLDING



E-CARGO

E-Bike Benefits

- Can travel further distances
- Reduce trips in cars = active transportation
- Easy to enjoy an active holiday
- Less pollution than vehicles
- Provide exercise
- Allows different types of riders to bike together
- May enable older adults to keep cycling
- Can carry heavier loads, especially on cargo e-bikes



VS.



Where E-Bikes Can Ride

Determined at the provincial and municipal level.

** This adds challenges as not under federal regulations*

Some provinces provide specifications
(e.g., No e-bikes on sidewalks in Manitoba, and no e-bikes on the PEI Confederation Trail in the winter)



Some municipalities provide specifications
(e.g., No e-bikes on Conservation Area trails in Hamilton, No e-bikes over 40kg on shared pathways in Toronto)

In general, you can ride an e-bike on most roads and highways where conventional bicycles are permitted.

E-bikes, like bicycles, are subject to Ontario's Highway Traffic Act, and are considered a vehicle, just like a car or truck, and must obey all traffic laws plus have the same rights and responsibilities as drivers.

E-Bike Stats & Facts

- E-bikes are growing cycling and the market is anticipated to reach \$52.37 billion USD by 2030.
- Worldwide sales are estimated to balloon from 36 million units in 2015 to 100 million by 2035.
- In Europe e-bikes are being perceived as the next mode of mobility and also a leisure product, with the market valued at over \$6 million USD in 2021.
- In the US ebike sales jumped 240% making e-bikes a larger category than road bikes



How to be an E-Bike Friendly Community

- Provide secure and safe e-bike charging stations
- Allow e-bike users to charge batteries at other public facilities or businesses
- Provide secure bicycle parking, for all types of bikes
- Include information about e-bikes, charging stations and any restrictions on cycling information resources for community & visitors
- Allow e-bikes on trails and paths, communicate any restrictions
- Offer e-bike rentals and trial loaners
- Promote e-bike friendly routes
- Welcome e-bike riders to community



E-Bike Charging Station

An increasing number of communities and municipalities are installing or investigating e-bike charging stations.

- Eastern Townships and Montérégie regions investigating/installing: Velovoute: www.velovoute.com
- Other options include: www.sarisinfrastructure.com



Fat Bikes

- Bicycle with oversized tires
- Ideal for off-road riding, soft terrain like snow or sand
- Winter sport activity
 - Expanding shoulder and winter season outdoor tourism product offering
- Started in 2005
- Larger manufacturers entered market in 2012-2015



Fat Bike Opportunities

- Expense to purchase
 - Offer Fat Bikes to rent
- Fat Bikes & Winter Trails
 - Can be integrated with other winter trail systems
 - Avoid user conflict with: signage, trail design, communications
 - Many ski locations now including fat bike trails, some golf courses offering winter activities too



Locations Include:

- Huntsville – Deerhurst Resort
- Bracebridge – Liv Bike Park; Bracebridge Resource Mgmt Area
- Parry Sound – Georgian Nordic Outdoor Activity Centre
- North Bay – The Stepping Stones Trails
- Sudbury – Kivi Park; Walden Trails
- Sault Ste. Marie – Hiawatha Highlands; Crimson Ridge Golf Course; Sault Ste. Marie Canal National Historic Site.
- Thunder Bay – Centennial Park/Shuniah Mines/Trowbridge Forest; Sleeping Giant Provincial Park



Fat Bike Opportunities

Fat Bike Events or Race Series

- Weather & snow conditions play a factor

In Ontario...

- Ontario Fat Bike Festival - Mansfield Outdoor Centre
- Global Fat Viking Event - Anywhere!
- Wendigo Fat Bike Ultra - Ottawa Valley
- Sleeping Giant Fat Bike Loppet - Thunder Bay
- "Rock the Ridge" Fat Bike Challenge - Crimson Ridge, SSM
- Georgian Nordic Outdoor Activity Centre - Parry Sound





5. PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES:

iii) Bike Tour Packages

Ontario By Bike Rides

About

- Started in 2015, 2024 10th year of hosting
- Small group tours (~45 riders)
- Weekend long packages, 1 or 2 nights
- Value priced
- Include: hotels accommodations, some meals, support van and more
- Ride with group, local ride ambassadors, or at own speed - with sweep rider

Purpose

- Designed to feature and promote ride destinations across Ontario
- Promote Ontario By Bike
- Generate revenue
- Create new & legacy itineraries
- Generate & measure economic impact
- Get new riders out, inclusive and welcoming to all types

Success!

- Offer 4 rides each summer season
- Rides consistently sell out, 70% within first month of sales
- Many repeat riders, as well as new riders



Case Study: Impact of Cycle Tours

Ontario By Bike 'Rides'

- \$320 is the average spent per person on a 2 day, 1 overnight cycling trip in Ontario; \$575 average spent on 3 day, 2 overnights

(Based on 10 impact studies on a selection of 10 rides since 2019)

North Bay & Lakes (2023)

- South River - North Bay – Bonfield – Callandar – Lake Nipissing / 158km
- Overnights (2) in North Bay
- Economic Impact of \$533pp and approx. \$24,535 total for 3 days/2 nights

Railway City & Erie Ports Tour (2024)

- St. Thomas – Port Stanley – Port Bruce – Sparta / 122km
- Overnight in St. Thomas
- Economic Impact of \$216pp and approx. \$11,431 total for 2 days & 1 nights

Downloadable self-guided legacy itinerary available

www.ontariobybike.ca/rides & www.ontariobybike.ca/itineraries



Ontario By Bike Rides

Challenges

- TICO license
- Booking system
- Capacity & staff resources
- Volunteers
- Liability & insurance
- Group size and hotel rooms
- Rural vs. urban ride destinations
- Rising costs
- Revenue not stand-alone
- Growth trajectory

- Not marketing !





**5. *PRODUCT
DEVELOPMENT
OPPORTUNITIES:***

**iv) Marketing & Promotions
Additional Opportunities**

Marketing & Promotions: Best Bicycle Friendly Businesses in Ontario Explorers' Edge / RTO12

www.ontariobybike.ca/2024awardwinners



2024 Winner

Algonquin
Accommodations – Whitney



2023 Winner

Four Corners
Algonquin – Whitney



2022 Winner

South River Brewing
Company



2021 Winner

Thrive Foods Cafe & Marketplace - Honey Harbour

2020 Winner

Magnetawan Grill & Grocery

2019 Winner

Four Ninety Bed & Breakfast - Gravenhurst

Marketing and Promotions

Cycling In Ontario Annual Guide

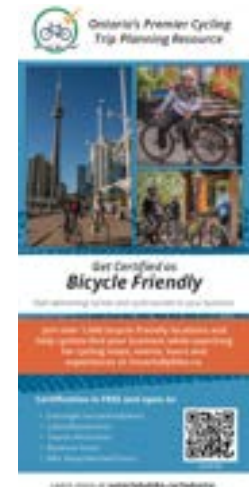
- 2024 - 12th annual edition, online at www.ontariobybike.ca/2024
- Printed 30,000 in English and 10,000 in French
- 72,000+ total readership in 2024
- 21,000 digital reads and downloads of past 3 editions
- Distribution across Ontario, Quebec, smaller quantities to USA
- 56-pages, driving traffic to businesses, partner websites and OntarioByBike.ca

Readers Feedback Survey Results 2024

- 80% visited websites and used resources referenced in 2024 guide
- 87% found the guide 'useful' or 'very useful' when planning a cycling trip in 2024

Business Certification – Ontario By Bike Network

- Existing certified locations: Ensure Ontario By Bike listing is updated, display window decal, include certification info on website, attend webinars
- New Certifications: Share and promote Ontario By Bike bicycle friendly certification opportunity with other businesses in your communities or with BIA/Chamber



Additional Opportunities:

How to Connect with Cycle Tourists

- Have local cycling maps available, and staff knowledge of cycling routes in area
- Include location info on website from nearest trail or bike route
- Add interior/exterior bike motif and decorations
- Offer secure bike parking
- Allow use of washrooms and fill water bottles
- Capture and use photos of cyclists in marketing materials, online/print/social
- Create suggested stay itineraries that feature cycling
- Offer delivery of retail products to accommodations or shipping



Additional Opportunities:

Leverage Partnerships

- Connect with local DMO/RTO, trail organizations and other partners to align with & support cycling initiatives
- Connect with local/regional cycling clubs and welcome them to your location, word will soon spread
- Connect with existing cycling events or bike tour operator to express interest in partnerships

Partnerships Required

- Create trail hubs, enhance facilities
- Add cycling component to local non-cycling event/festival
- Creating regional Cycle & Stay network
- Explore opportunities to produce visual assets (e.g. images or video)
- Advocate for continued investment in cycling infrastructure, including trails, road and mountain bike networks





6. QUESTIONS & COMMENTS



Thank You


www.OntarioByBike.ca

For more information

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