



Strategic Plan

OVERVIEW

2019 - 2021

A Project of

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www.TransportationOptions.org

www.OntarioByBike.ca

INTRODUCTION

Ontario By Bike is one of the major programs of Transportation Options, a non-profit organization dedicated to fostering sustainable transportation and tourism initiatives in Ontario.

Ontario By Bike's (OBB) mission is to be Ontario's most comprehensive trip planning resource, inspiring cycle tourism in Ontario, assisting destinations and tourism businesses in market readiness and ultimately positioning Ontario as a premier destination for cycle tourism.

OBB's overall goals are:

- To further develop and promote cycle tourism in Ontario.
- To position Ontario as a premier world class cycling destination.
- To work with a coalition of cycling partners, to align Ontario's cycling tourism marketing and product development efforts in support of the implementation of two government plans: Tour By Bike – Ontario's Cycling Tourism Plan (2017) and #CycleON Action Plan 2.0 (2018)¹.
- To continue to deliver the Ontario By Bike Network, working with destinations partners and administering the bicycle friendly certification program for accommodations, campgrounds, restaurants and cafes, attractions, bike tours companies and stores, and business areas.
- To be the go to source for information on cycle tourism in Ontario.

OBB is a founding and leading participant of the Ontario Cycling Coalition comprising four organizations extensively involved in the further development of cycling in Ontario. The Cycling Coalition was established to further coordinate efforts to collectively develop and promote cycle tourism in Ontario.

Cycling Coalition members are:

- Ontario By Bike (OBB)
- Waterfront Regeneration Trust (WRT)
- Greenbelt Foundation (GBF)
- Share the Road Cycling Coalition (STR)

OBB and the Ontario Cycling Coalition works with a wide range of partners across Ontario. Key partners include:

- Regional Tourism Organizations (RTOs)
- Destination Ontario (DO)
- Government of Ontario, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport (MTCS)
- Government of Ontario, Ministry of Transportation (MTO)
- Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs)

¹ These two plans are described below.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Ontario By Bike's last strategic plan covered the period from 2015 to 2018 and the priorities and actions identified therein have been completed or are ongoing initiatives. This strategic plan for OBB identifies priorities and actions for the organization for the next three years, building on what has been achieved. OBB is well-positioned to continue its leadership role in the many actions required to further develop and promote cycle tourism in Ontario.

During the past few years, there have been significant shifts in the landscape around cycling in general, and cycle tourism, in Ontario. Key among these has been the much higher priority² given to cycling at the provincial level and the completion of several major cycling-related strategies and plans, specifically:

- Tour by Bike – Ontario’s Cycling Tourism Plan (2017)
(www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/tourism/cycling.shtml)
Prepared by MTCS, with contributions from other ministries and agencies across the Government of Ontario, this document builds on a number of provincial cycling plans and tourism strategies to identify action items that will “cultivate the existing potential for Ontario to emerge as a leader in the development of cycling tourism, and establish the province as a strong market, renowned globally for its cycling products and experiences”³. This plan identified actions in four priority areas:
 1. Products and Experience Development
 2. Strategic Marketing
 3. Advancing the Tourism Sector
 4. Making Evidenced Based Decisions
- #CycleON Action Plan 1.0 (2014) and 2.0 (2018)
(www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/publications/ontario-cycling-strategy.shtml)
Prepared by the MTO, with contributions from other ministries, agencies and key stakeholder groups, these action plans build on the #CycleON, Ontario Cycling Strategy, a 20-year vision to have cycling recognized as a respected and valued mode of transportation within Ontario. Action Plan 2.0 includes the following five strategic directions to guide action by the government and partners across Ontario:
 1. Design Healthy, Active and Prosperous Communities
 2. Improve Cycling Infrastructure
 3. Make Highways and Streets Safer
 4. Promote Cycling Awareness and Behavioural Shifts

² Note: This strategic plan was completed shortly after the June 2018 provincial election. It is unknown what changes in priorities, programs and budgets will be implemented by the new government. It is conceivable that such changes may necessitate a reworking of key elements of this plan.

³ Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, Tour By Bike – Ontario’s Cycle Tourism Strategy, 2017, page 4

5. Increase Cycling Tourism Opportunities⁴

The actions in this document are intended to be implemented between 2018 and 2023.

Other key shifts in the landscape include:

- Increasing interest within the tourism industry, including the RTOs and DMOs, in promoting cycle tourism in their destinations, and encouraging its further development.
- Recognition of cycle tourism as a key growth market for inclusion in promotions by DO.⁵
- Increasing interest within municipalities in improving their cycling infrastructure.
- Continued growth in participation in cycling and cycle tourism.
- The establishment of the Ontario Cycling Coalition and a commitment among the four organizations to work in partnership on selected priorities.

This strategic plan builds on the actions identified in Tour By Bike and #CycleON Action Plan 2.0, identifying opportunities for OBB to play a core role in achieving the strategies set out in these documents. It provides strategic directions along with a tactical action plan to guide OBB for the next three years. It will also assist OBB in working with and leading the efforts of the Ontario Cycling Coalition and other partners, to meet common goals.

This strategic plan was developed with input from members of the Ontario Cycling Coalition, Ontario By Bike Industry Partnership Advisory Committee and partners across the province (via an online survey), Transportation Options staff and Board of Directors.

⁴ Ontario Ministry of Transportation, [#CycleON Action Plan 2.0](#), 2018, page 2

⁵ Destination Ontario, [Strategic Playbook – A Plan for 2018 to 2022](#), 2018.

www.tourismpartners.com/api/documents/C2iyt3WB5USUsgcYPEQdrQ/download

ONTARIO BY BIKE PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES

Ontario By Bike delivers a range of programs and services, some directly to cyclists and others for tourism industry partners including businesses that cater to cycle tourists, regional and municipal governments and tourism development and marketing organizations. Examples of core programs either undertaken or coordinated by OBB are provided below. An additional detailed list of programs and activities is provided under each of the Strategic Directions in the complete strategic plan.

FOR CYCLISTS

- The Ontario By Bike Network provides a variety of information on cycling in Ontario, online, in print material and through personal interaction including:
 - Information on great places to cycle
 - Links to cycling maps and destinations
 - Suggested cycling itineraries
 - Online map with the location of and links to certified bicycle friendly accommodations, campgrounds, restaurants, cafes, wineries, attractions, business areas, bike stores, tours and rental locations
- Ontario By Bike Rides - small group, self-guided weekend tours
- Monthly consumer/cyclist e-newsletter
- Ontario Cycle Tourism Information provided at select consumer travel shows and cycling events
- Publication and distribution of annual Cycling in Ontario / Le vélo en Ontario guide

FOR AND WITH TOURISM INDUSTRY PARTNERS

- The Ontario By Bike Network certifies and promotes bicycle friendly businesses and cycle tourism across the province
- Marketing partnerships such as the Cycle in Ontario/Le vélo en Ontario guide, displays and information services at travel shows and cycling events, digital marketing campaigns, social media and content development
- Develops itineraries and cycle routes for destinations
- Hosts workshops and webinars for destinations and tourism business operators to assist with cycle tourism destination development
- Undertakes and reports on research on cycle tourism
- Hosts cycle tourism conferences
- Coordinates Ontario By Bike Industry Partnership and Advisory Committee
- Cycle tourism industry e-newsletter

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND PROGRAMS FOR 2019 – 2021

The following four strategic directions have been identified for Ontario By Bike:

1. Marketing and Communications
2. Product and Destination Development
3. Cycle Tourism Research
4. Cycle Tourism Partnerships, Communications and Advocacy

Each strategic direction is introduced below with an overview of recent activities in this area, justification and linkages to provincial plans, and overall goals. In the complete strategic plan, detailed actions are identified under each strategic direction along with implementation considerations including:

- Lead organization(s)
- Other partners
- Resources required (in general terms)
- Metrics for success
- Timelines

A table summarizing the strategic directions and actions is provided below in table format.

Summary: Strategic Directions and Actions

Strategic Directions	Actions
#1: Marketing and Communications	DIGITAL MARKETING
	3.1.1 Enhance and expand province wide cycle tourism website.
	3.1.2 Identify, initiate and support integrated digital marketing campaigns reaching beyond Ontario.
	3.1.3 Be active in digital marketing using a variety of communications channels and tactics.
	PRINT MARKETING
	3.1.4 Publish annual Cycling in Ontario/Le vélo en Ontario Guide.
#2: Product and Destination Development	OTHER MARKETING CHANNELS AND TACTICS
	3.1.5 Promote Ontario as a premier cycling destination at consumer shows and cycling events.
	3.1.6 Facilitate fulfilment of customer service and information requests.
	3.2.1 Itinerary and route development.
	3.2.2 Expand and maintain Ontario by Bike certified bicycle friendly business network.
	3.2.3 Conduct community and destination readiness workshops, audits and provide support.
#3: Cycle Tourism Research	3.2.4 Help support, grow and promote cycling events and tours in Ontario.
	3.2.5 Assist with the development of a wayfinding strategy and signage audits.
	3.3.1 Research into Ontario’s cycle tourism markets, tourism and economic impact of market.
#4: Cycle Tourism Partnerships, Communications and Advocacy	3.3.2 Research on best practices in cycle tourism in other jurisdictions.
	3.3.3 Create and maintain a research portal for studies on cycle tourism.
	3.4.1 Advocate for increasing transportation alternatives to support cycle tourism.
	3.4.2 Maintain and improve industry and government relations and recognition of sector.
	3.4.3 Coordinate and strengthen Ontario by bike industry partnership advisory committee.
	3.4.4 Develop and deliver communications to industry partners.
	3.4.5 Coordinate cycle tourism conference.



For more information and/or complete copy of Ontario By Bike's 2019-2021 Strategic Plan contact:

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Funded in part by Government of Ontario:



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Developed with assistance from Economic Planning Group