



For Immediate Release – April 29, 2021

CYCLE TOURISM WEBINARS TO HELP BUSINESSES DEVELOP PERTH COUNTY, ST. MARYS & STRATFORD AS CYCLING DESTINATION

The Ontario By Bike Network will be hosting two free cycle tourism webinar workshops tailored for businesses on May 17 and 19, 2021.

Perth County, Town of St. Marys and Destination Stratford are actively collaborating on strategically growing their share of the burgeoning Cycle Tourism market, starting with a combined membership with the Ontario By Bike Network.

"We are thrilled to be partnering on this collectively. Our region has so much to offer with diverse cycling experiences from road, trail, rural to urban, and engaging hills, something for every speed of cyclist" says Kelly Deeks-Johnson, Economic Development and Tourism Manager, Town of St. Marys.

Launched in 2010, the Ontario By Bike Network is currently active in 40 regions across Ontario and has seen over 2,500 attendees register for their workshop and webinar series. Ontario By Bike certifies businesses and locations, who meet the criteria, for free under the following categories: accommodations, food service providers, tourist attractions, campgrounds, downtown business areas and other bicycle-related businesses.

With over 1,500 Ontario By Bike businesses already participating in the program, businesses within Perth County, St. Marys and Stratford can join this provincial network, allowing them to connect with the increasing number of cycle tourists and local cyclists across Ontario.

The immediate benefits of the region-wide membership are free and informative one-hour webinar workshops for tourism businesses and organizations to provide key insights in to how to become certified as a bicycle friendly location through the Ontario By Bike Network and reach the growing cycling market in Ontario.

"We are excited to be expanding the Ontario By Bike Network and collaborating with Perth County, Town of St. Marys and Destination Stratford to do so as cycling across the area is becoming an increasingly popular recreational and tourism activity over the past years" says Ontario By Bike / Transportation Options' Executive Director, Louisa Mursell.

Workshop highlights will also include information on cycle tourism, cycling within Perth County plus local cycling developments in St. Marys and Stratford, demographic and trip planning characteristics of cycle tourists, as well as what services and amenities will attract cyclists to local businesses.



“Cycle Tourism is growing rapidly across the province, and we are thrilled to support the continued development of cycling products and experiences in our region. With our incredible trail assets, scenic natural landscapes, and unique communities, Perth County has the potential to be a premier cycling tourism destination” says Ashley Brockelbank, Tourism Officer at Perth County.

The region is a largely undiscovered gem for cyclists with its quiet rural road riding routes, attractive countryside and numerous welcoming communities, big and small. Additionally, mountain biking at Wildwood Conservation Area plus the longer Guelph to Goderich Trail (also known as the G2G Trail), that traverses the County to the north, add to the appeal.

“As one of the fastest growing segments in tourism, our destination and region need to collectively embrace this economic opportunity” says Zac Gribble, Executive Director of Destination Stratford. “As we bring intention and effort to developing and enhancing our local and regional cycle tourism assets, we can harness our existing strengths in accommodations, culinary and culture to become a cycle-friendly destination of choice.”

The webinar workshops are free, open to the public, and owners, managers and/or staff of accommodations, campgrounds, cafes, restaurants, tourist attractions, bike shops and other cycling-related businesses and stakeholders are encouraged to attend.

Webinar Dates & Times:

Monday, May 17 – 7pm to 8pm

Wednesday, May 19 – 10am to 11am

Pre-Registration Required:

ontariobybike-perthcounty.eventbrite.ca

Webinar access and login information will be provided in advance as well as phone option.

GoToMeeting will be the webinar platform used.

QUICK FACTS

- Ontario By Bike Network currently has over 1,500 certified bicycle-friendly participating locations in 40 regions across Ontario.
- To date, over 2,500 attendees have registered for workshops and webinars hosted by Ontario By Bike.
- Cycling and cycle tourism are growing markets.
- Ontario visitors participating in cycling activities spent \$893 million in 2018. (StatsCan)
- Exploring Ontario by bike is becoming an increasingly popular touring option for cycle tourists from Ontario, Quebec, and when travel is allowed cyclists from USA and international origins.
- The Network and workshops will help businesses attract more cyclists.
- Ontario By Bike workshops are free to attend.
- More facts and stats on cycle tourism in Ontario are available at:
www.transportationoptions.org/ontarioresearch



ABOUT THE ONTARIO BY BIKE NETWORK

The Ontario By Bike Network is a project of Transportation Options, a non-profit organization dedicated to fostering sustainable mobility and tourism solutions across Ontario. For more information, visit www.transportationoptions.org. Other successful Transportation Options' projects include the Bike Train Initiative (www.biketrain.ca) and Parkbus (www.parkbus.ca).

For more information, visit www.ontariobybike.ca or phone 1-866-701-2774.

For webinar registration, go to ontariobybike-perthcounty.eventbrite.ca

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