A Grassroots Approach to Building a Bicycle Friendly Community

Ed Van Vliet & Elise Gatti
Coordinators | Bike Welland

April 25, 2012
Ontario Bike Summit | Toronto
Overview

» Background
» Cycling in Welland
» Approach
» Tactics
» Specifics
» Challenges
BACKGROUND
Background | Bike Welland

» Founded in November 2011
» Informal group of residents; no membership
» Current “coordinators”
  » Neil Armstrong
  » Elise Gatti
  » Jeff Hopkins
  » Ed Van Vliet
Background | Bike Welland

» Met on a local online cycling forum

» Inspired by Welland City Council’s October 2011 vote to pursue Bicycle Friendly Community status
Background | Niagara’s Cycling Community

Branding Logos:
- Shorthills Cycling Club
- Niagara Greenwheelers
- Bike Niagara
- Greater Niagara Circle Route
- Bike Welland
- Clarkson Cycle and Fitness
- St. Catharines Cycling Club LTD
- Source
- Pedlar Bicycle Shop
- Bikefit
- Pedal Bicycle Shop
- Liberty
- Thornton's Cycle & Sports
Background | Regional Assets
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» Policy
  » Regional Niagara Bicycling Committee (RNBC)
  » Greater Niagara Circle Route Committee (GNCRC)
  » Active transportation committees

» Multi-modal Support
  » Niagara Regional Transit bike racks
  » GO Bike Train (seasonal)
Background | Regional Assets

» Clubs
  » Niagara Freewheelers Bicycle Touring Club
  » Short Hills Cycling Club
  » St. Catharines Cycling Club

» Bike Shops
  » 10

» Instruction
  » Bike Niagara (general cycling)
  » Reactivated (mountain biking)
Background | Regional Assets

» Infrastructure

  » Multi-Use Trails
    » Greater Niagara Circle Route 145 km
    » Steve Bauer Trail 6 km

  » Single-Track Trails
    » Short Hills Provincial Park 23 km
    » Port Colborne “The Hood” ~20 km
    » 12 Mile Creek area in St. Catharines ~20 - 30 km
    » Brock University Area ~ 10 to 15 km

» Bike Parks

  » Fort Erie YMCA/LeisuredPlex
  » Niagara Falls YMCA/McBaine Centre
  » Welland Skate/BMX Park
  » Port Colborne Lock 8 Park (August 2012)
Background | Regional Assets

» Events
  » Bike Races 12+
  » Community/Charity Rides 8+

» Maps
  » Niagara Regional Bicycling Map
  » Short Hills Cycling Club moutain biking maps (online)
CYCLING IN WELLAND
Cycling in Welland | Positives

» Welland Canal Trail (Greater Niagara Circle Route)
Cycling in Welland | Positives

» Welland Canal Trail (Greater Niagara Circle Route)
Cycling in Welland | Positives

» Steve Bauer Trail
Cycling in Welland | Positives

» Civic Square/Main Street Redesign and Bicycle Parking
Cycling in Welland | Positives

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Cycling in Welland | Positives

» Bike Lanes: Thorold Road
Cycling in Welland | Positives

» Bike Lanes: Fitch Street
Cycling in Welland | Positives

» BMX/Skate Park
Cycling in Welland | Negatives

» Lack of dedicated space for bicycles on most busy roads
Cycling in Welland | Negatives

» Lack of dedicated space for bicycles on most busy roads
Cycling in Welland | Negatives

» Cyclists behaving like pedestrians
Cycling in Welland | Negatives

» Cyclists behaving like pedestrians
Cycling in Welland | Negatives

» East Side under-served
Cycling in Welland | Negatives

» Inadequate bicycle parking
Cycling in Welland | The Potential

» Transforming wide streets into Complete Streets
» Quiet residential streets as Bike Routes
» Expanded multi-use trail network
» More amenities along Welland Canal Trail
» Mountain biking park
» Bicycle Friendly Businesses
» Platinum Bicycle Friendly Community
Cycling in Welland | Recent Initiatives

» Bronze designation via Share the Road Cycling Coalition (2012)
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» Bronze designation via Share the Road Cycling Coalition (2012)
» First city in Canada to partner with the Canadian Automobile Association (CAA) to add Share the Road decals to Welland’s municipal fleet
Cycling in Welland | Recent Initiatives

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» Meeting location for:
  » Joint Hamilton-Niagara-Burlington Bicycling Committees Annual Meeting: May 12, 2012
  » Niagara Bike Summit: October 4-5, 2012
APPROACH
Approach | Set Priorities

1. Identify priorities for cycling in our community
   » Increase safety and amenities for cyclists
   » Develop a Community Bicycle Plan and have it adopted into Official Plan
   » Raise awareness among cyclists and drivers about the rules of the road
   » Increase bicycling as a mode of transportation and recreation
     » Work with partners to promote cycling events and education
Approach | Focus Our Enthusiasm

1. Identify priorities for cycling in our community
2. Focus on areas that are of personal interest to Bike Welland volunteers
   » Children’s safety
   » Mountain biking
   » Rides
   » Racing
   » Planning and design
Approach | Collaborate

1. Identify priorities for cycling in our community
2. Focus on areas that are of personal interest to Bike Welland volunteers
3. Reach out to other groups
   » Letters (via email) of introduction to Welland City Council, leadership of Niagara cycling clubs, cycling and active transportation committees and Welland bicycle merchants with offer of collaboration
   » Website with links to other groups and promotion of their events [www.bikewelland.org](http://www.bikewelland.org)
   » Make contact with area journalists
Approach | Be Flexible

1. Identify priorities for cycling in our community
2. Focus on areas that are of personal interest to Bike Welland volunteers
3. Reach out to other groups
4. Use meetings to set goals and work independently
   » Meet about once a month at a member’s house
   » Prepare an agenda
   » No minutes
   » Collaborate internally as desired and as time permits
Approach | Participate

1. Identify priorities for cycling in our community
2. Focus on areas that are of personal interest to Bike Welland volunteers
3. Reach out to other groups
4. Use meetings to set goals and work independently
5. Participate in the larger cycling community
   » Attend as many events as we can
   » Since November 2011: Niagara Active Transportation Summit, Short Hills Cycling Club AGM, Welland Active Transportation Workshop, Niagara Freewheelers Annual Open House, 2002 Niagara Transportation Strategy Update: Public Open House, Ontario Bike Summit
TACTICS
Tactics

» Develop a visual image
  » Pick a logo and colour palette
  » Website, business cards, posters

Every tread counts.

In April 2012, the City of Welland was designated as a Bicycle Friendly Community. Bike Welland is a community-based advocacy group working with city officials and Welland's bicycling community to improve the safety and enjoyment of cycling in Welland. Join us!
Tactics

» Develop a visual image

» Make some friends (or enlist some friends)
  » Stay in touch with allies, particularly those whose company you enjoy
Tactics

» Develop a visual image
» Make some friends (or enlist some friends)
» Build a coalition
   » Work as a coalition on specific issues
   » Strength in numbers/increase your political clout
Tactics

» Develop a visual image
» Make some friends (or enlist some friends)
» Work towards a coalition

» Pick a fight!
  » Choose a challenging but tangible project (finish a trail segment, get a bike park, add a bike lane, etc.)
  » Identify possible supporters and form a coalition
  » Work to achieve the goal
SPECIFICs
Specifics | Mandates

» Bike Plan
  » Work with the City of Welland and other advocacy groups to integrate safe cycling infrastructure into local and regional policy

» Bike Ed
  » Work with partners to promote safe cycling and driving practices and encourage greater participation in all forms of cycling

» Bike Culture
  » Promote cycling culture in all its manifestations
Bike Plan | Bicycle Friendly Community

» From January – March 2012, collaborative application by city staff, Councilor Mike Petrachenko, Regional Niagara Bicycling Committee (RNBC) and Bike Welland

» Motto: “Bronze or Bust”

» Bronze status receive in April 2012

» Next Steps:
  » Implement recommendations
  » Silver designation
  » Bicycle Friendly Businesses
Bike Plan | Active Transportation

» Niagara Active Transportation Summit: November 2011
» Welland Active Transportation Workshop Part 1: March 2012
» Welland Active Transportation Workshop Part 2: April 2012
Bike Plan | Complete Streets

» Niagara Region Complete Streets policy initiative

Making the Tourism Case for Complete Streets:
Niagara’s Experience

Bike to where you live, learn, work and play
Bike Plan | Community Bicycle Plan

» Develop a Community Bicycle Plan for the City of Welland in summer 2012
» Adoption by Council into Official Plan
» Integration of all forms of cycling into our transportation and recreational networks, including utility cycling, recreational cycling, mountain biking, BMX
Bike Ed | Welland Bike to Work Week

» Provide posters for City of Welland campaign
Bike Ed | Route Selection

» Google Maps Bicycling
   » Trails
   » Dedicated lanes
   » Bicycle friendly roads
Bike Culture | Website

» Events, links, planning, road rules, get involved

Upcoming Events
Submitted by EllenCatt on Sun, 03/05/2012 - 22:28

Ontario Bike Summit 2012
April 24 & 25 Toronto

Short Hill Cycling Club's Circle of Life Cancer Ride
Sunday, April 29 > Municipal Beach, Lombary Avenue, St. Catharines
A fundraiser covering 14.5 km/8.5 km (road/trail).

Niagara Transportation Strategy
Submitted by EllenCatt on Tue, 04/17/2012 - 18:22

Niagara’s 2002 Transportation Strategy Update Public Open House

Recent comments
No comments available.
Bike Culture | Bike Shorts Film Festival

» August 2012, Downtown Welland
Bike Culture | Niagara Food Festival Bike Valet

» Free bicycle parking for cycling patrons
CHALLENGES
Challenges

» Time
Challenges

» Time

» Liability for group rides
Challenges

» Time
» Liability for group rides
» Local attitudes towards cycling as a mode of transportation
Challenges

» Time
» Liability for group rides
» Local attitudes towards cycling as a mode of transportation
» Money
Thank you!

Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance you must keep moving.

~ Albert Einstein
Contact

Ed Van Vliet
rmoned@gmail.com

Elise Gatti
elisegatti@gmail.com

Bike Welland
www.bikewelland.org