

Pathways Newsletter



The Pathways for People newsletter is published three times a year and shares trail stories and updates, events and local news on infrastructure work happening across Norfolk County

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P4P Launches new website

P4P is excited to share that our website has been updated to a more modern look. All the same great content is available

Visit us online at
www.norfolkpathways.ca



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BENCH IN MEMORY OF MICHELE CROWLEY UNVEILED AT SEPTEMBER TRAIL WALK

Submitted by Dave Challen & Julie Richardson

When the idea of developing a memorial bench to commemorate the life and contribution of Michele Crowley we had no idea that donations would far exceed expectations. With donations in hand through the Lynn Valley Trail Association, Michele's bench was chosen and ordered through MacPhersons Playground equipment in Simcoe.

Following choice of the appropriate site, in early September Rob Luke, Alex Mummery and Dave Challen installed Michele's bench beside the Sunrise Rotary Trail at the Davis St. Lion's Park. This site provides easy access for all to visit Michele's bench for a moment of rest and reflection.

Why a memorial bench? The answer to this question has many answers as the meaning rests with the individual's experience, beliefs and world view. For family and friends it may provide a space for reflection on their unique experience with the individual and to remember them. For the passerby a memorial bench may be a spot for a rest. It may give them pause to think about the contribution and life of an individual they never met. It may provide an opportunity to give thanks for the resources that exist through the work of the individual memorialized by the bench.

For those who knew Michele as a colleague and friend in the Pathways for People organization, this bench serves to remember, honour and respect her.

On September 29th, over 120 people joined P4P on a trail walk in memory of Michele Crowley. A mix of friends, family, colleagues and members of the walking community joined. Before the walk, a few words were said by Gord Mason, Chair of P4P, Joyce Flexman, first chair of P4P, and Rob Luke, Michele's husband. They spoke of her impact in the community advocating for safe trails, paths and sidewalks across the county. The large group walked on the Sunrise Trail to Clifton Park and then back to Simcoe Lions Park.

We miss you Michele.



Plaque on the memorial bench



Many friends and colleagues joined the walk



Current and former P4P members enjoy the new bench

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NORFOLK COUNTY NAMED BICYCLE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY

Norfolk County has been designated a Bicycle Friendly Community by the Share the Road Cycling Coalition. Norfolk took home the bronze level community award during the Ontario Bike Summit in Toronto on April 1st, 2019. The event is known as the premier cycling conference in Ontario. The award, along with a Bicycle Friendly Community road sign was presented to Mayor Kristal Chopp, representatives from various county divisions and a member from Norfolk Pathways for People. Toby Barrett, MPP, was also in attendance to show his support.



The Bicycle Friendly Community Award Program provides incentives, hands-on assistance, and award recognition for communities that actively support cycling.

Communities are required to complete a thorough application process and are judged in five categories – engineering, education, encouragement, enforcement, and evaluation and planning. A community must demonstrate achievements in each of the five categories in order to be considered for recognition.

“Each one of our new 2019 Bicycle Friendly Communities has applied to the program in the past and received an Honourable Mention,” said Jamie Stuckless, Executive Director of Share the Road. “Those communities took the feedback provided by our expert panel of judges, took action on key areas and have now joined the ranks of BFCs in Ontario. Their success is illustrative of the value of the program.” Norfolk County has become a premiere destination for cyclists in southern Ontario in recent years, many of whom attend the annual Tour de Norfolk each July.

Norfolk County has also improved area trails, encourages new businesses to install bike racks for patrons and staff, welcomes bikes on board Ride Norfolk buses, and includes paved shoulders and sharrows in all planned capital works road projects.

Moving forward, Norfolk County will aim to receive a higher award standing by continuing to develop cycling infrastructure, supporting and promoting the work of volunteer cycling organizations/associations and playing an active role in supporting the cycling community in Norfolk County in order to make cycling safer and more convenient.

For more information – including a look at the County’s trail system – visit norfolktourism.ca/cycling.

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COUNT ME AMONG THE 6,185

Submitted by Rob Luke

New trails and walkways often frighten those who don't know the benefits of active transportation. Some of the reasons for opposing such projects are NIMBY-ism, perceived increase in vandalism and illegal trespassing, and perceived cost to taxpayer.

An example of this is the opposition the Lynn Valley Trail (LVT) received at its conception. At the time, Regional Councillors were quoted as saying:

“Why should taxpayers be on the hook for a white elephant trail that nobody will use?
It could snowball into a monstrous, costly thing” (Simcoe Reformer - October 26, 1988)
“It is of little interest to the average working man or woman; no interest to busy people”
(Nanticoke Times - May 16, 1992)

These councillors believed that nobody would use the trail and that it would cost taxpayers.

I rode the LVT on Thursday October 3rd from Simcoe to Port Dover and back on a blustery day of 9°C with the threat of rain. I counted 37 active people on the trail during my 90 minute ride; but that is a onetime personal experience. Now, thanks to trail counters, we have the facts and data to support the claims of usage. The counters allow us to slice and dice the data- how many people are on the trail daily, weekly, monthly and the time of day the trail is most frequently used etc.

Lynn Valley Trail usage summer 2019

150 users daily as high as 238	1,086 weekly as high as 1,623	5,000 monthly as high as 6,185
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The counter on the Waterford Heritage Trail records around 4,000 users per month for an average of 133 users/day. That is not 'nobody' – that is a lot of active people cycling, jogging, walking the dog or pushing a baby stroller!

On Saturday, August 29th 2015, Norfolk Pathways for People organized a group bicycle ride for Norfolk County Councillors and department heads – from Port Rowan to Long Point Provincial Park and back. The ride was well attended by Norfolk Council and it gave them a firsthand experience of the difficulties facing non-automobile users on the causeway. In recent years, there has been a significant increase in vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian traffic through Long Point. In fact, every July and August more than 1.1 MILLION vehicles travel Erie Blvd, many of which are large, wide campers as well as trucks pulling boat trailers. With such a narrow road and increasing traffic, it is critical to consider paving the existing gravel shoulders on Erie Blvd. (done – now the same applies to the Causeway). Paved shoulders will make it easier, less stressful and safer for motorists to pass. This also applies to emergency vehicles. A busy connective road through a tourist area begs pedestrian/bike lanes. It's a no-brainer since four pedestrians and cyclists have died on the causeway in my lifetime. That's four too many!

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Soon, we will hear a lot of public debate and opinions about the merits of bikes lanes on the Long Point Causeway and the addition of 10kms of rail trail north of Waterford. To be sure, someone will cite that saving lives on the causeway is too expensive and 10kms of rail trail that no one will use is a waste of taxpayers' resources and money – YOU CAN COUNT ON IT!

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE

READERS ARE ASKED TO WHERE WE NEED ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE IN NORFOLK

Submitted by R.T. Martin
Pathways for People



In late 2016, Norfolk officially adopted the Active Transportation Plan (ATP). The ATP was developed by Public Works with significant input from the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit and Pathways for People. Since then we've seen a gradual implementation of cycling infrastructure initiatives identified in the ATP as Public Works conducts annual road repairs and reconstruction. Notable examples including paved shoulders on Cockshutt & Swimming Pool roads as well as Old Hwy 24 north of Waterford. Imminent are similar improvements on Hwy 24 south of Simcoe and very importantly, Nelson St. heading west from Port Dover plus the Causeway at Long Point. Along with paved shoulders, there are plans for bike lanes and signage entering and exiting towns and villages as well as critical areas within towns themselves.

With close to 300 individual areas to be addressed in the ATP there is much to do and it will be some time before the ATP as envisioned is fully implemented. Public Works is committed to the process and P4P equally dedicated to monitoring and supporting the effort for as long as it takes.

Part of the ATP process is a regular review of the progress to date but also a periodic update to ensure critical areas in need are recognized and given a logical priority.

To this end, readers of the Pathways for People newsletters are invited to submit their areas of concern. Submissions should clearly identify the location, reasons and benefits for inclusion in the ATP.

Approximately two dozen potential locations have already been noted by P4P committee members. Of particular interest are on hills cyclists frequent where motorist sightlines can be compromised.

We will review any suggestions with the current ATP to see if the area is already identified and if not include it for consideration in the upcoming ATP review. We will also respond to the contributor as to our findings and intentions.

Please forward your suggestions to: Rob Martin (themartins@amtelecom.net) or Gord Mason (mason_gordon@hotmail.com)

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SQUEAKY WHEEL BIKE FAIR UPDATE

June is Bike Month in Ontario. On June 8, 2019 Pathways for People joined forces with community partners to co-host the Squeaky Wheel Community Bike Fair at Simcoe Lions Park.

Activities included a free helmet giveaway, a bike rodeo and a guided trail ride with Red Apple Rides. Many families attended and over 120 helmets were given away.



Waterford Heritage Trail adds New Sculptures

Submitted by Frank Woodcock

This spring and summer, environmental sculptures were erected along the fishing road beside Shadow Lake. They are the work of a local sculptress, Maria da Silva. Her vision is to create her sculptures using discarded branches, tree limbs and twigs to form a flowing rhythm that invites Nature to participate. She includes passages for deer, shelter for birds and small animals and once grasses and vines take root the works will be lush additions to our trail system.

Please come and enjoy these welcome additions to our parks area. Waterford Heritage Trail Association are pleased with the diversity our trail offers compared to the state of our lands only 17 years ago.



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Lynn Valley Trail Update

Submitted by Dave Challen

The LVTA will hold its 27th Annual General Meeting on Thursday November the 14th at 7:30 p.m. in the Port Dover Public Library which is adjacent to Lakewood Public School in Port Dover. The Association's business session will include the presentation of the Treasurer's Report, the President's report and the presentation of Directors for the year 2020 and other program reports. A highlight of the evening will be the presentation by Jim and Marjorie Dawson titled, Wilderness Canoeing "40 Years of Back-Country Canoe Trips." All present members and the general public are invited to attend. The Dawsons have had extensive experience in exploring Canada's north by water and have learned a great deal about and from Canada's Indigenous peoples. LVTA memberships will also be available at the meeting.

Several members of the LVTA Board of Directors have been busy developing an application for funding under the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) for cost sharing with the federal, provincial, and municipal governments announced on September the 3rd. Board Volunteers have also installed two memorial benches this fall. One in memory of Enid and Ted Blume is close to the Pennington Bridge; while the other is in memory of Michele Crowley at Lions Park, Davis Street just off The Sunrise Rotary Trail.

This November the two approaches to the Pennington Bridge will be under construction from November 11-15. A new design for the approaches will be installed to improve longevity and access by maintenance equipment and also to increase accessibility with a more gradual slope to the approaches. The section of trail from the Blueline Parking lot to Lynn Valley Road will be closed during that time. An alternate route would be to use the Lynn Valley Road and Blueline Road. Caution will be necessary in using these roads that are open to regular vehicular traffic.

Development of the Kilometers for Community program to engage volunteer groups in maintenance of section of the Lynn Valley Trail is progressing. Volunteers have signed up for over half of the Trail at this time. Further details will be provided at the AGM.



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