

# Defining the Advocacy position for the Ottawa Bicycle Club (OBC)

Approved by the  
OBC Board of Directors  
May 4, 2020



## Introduction

One of the Ottawa Bicycle Club's (OBC) objectives, outlined in its Constitution, *to ascertain, defend and pursue the rights of cyclists* has been the subject of many discussions among members, in particular on how the club has not come out with a specific statement on its position in relation to this objective, and a clear advocacy position. The club's Strategic Plan 2020-2025 (approved by the Board of Directors in October 2019) also included an action plan to develop a targeted advocacy that is focused on supporting the OBC's core objectives.

The purpose of this exercise, therefore, is to define and articulate a specific advocacy position, as it relates to the OBC objective noted above. The exercise was conducted via an in-person workshop and an electronic survey.

## Workshop

A workshop was set up in February 2020 for any OBC member interested to help shape our club's advocacy position. Nine OBC members (including some members of the Board of Directors) participated. At the end of the two-hour discussion, workshop participants visualized a two-pronged focus for the club's advocacy activities as follows: ***educating cyclists with their responsibilities to help ensure their safety, and promoting and facilitating safe group cycling on public roads***. A few potential action items surrounding these two areas of focus were also identified, but workshop participants agreed that the action plan could be enhanced by soliciting additional input from other OBC members.

## Electronic survey

In March 2020, all OBC members were invited to complete an electronic survey. Responses were received from 73 members who expressed interest on the topic: 46.6% have been OBC members for more than 10 years, 15.1% have been members between 6-10 years, and 38.4% have been members for 1-5 years. Similar to the approach taken in the workshop, members were asked to first define what rights of cyclists mean to them. A similar response to the workshop was received in the survey, with majority of responses acknowledging that cyclists have rights but also responsibilities, and cyclists have a right to safely use and share the road, with 6 members citing rights associated with securing better cycling infrastructure.

In addition, a significant number of members (57/73 or 78%) agreed/strongly agreed that is important for the OBC to educate cyclists regarding their responsibilities, and 61/74 or 84% agreed/strongly agreed that it is important for the OBC to promote and facilitate safe group cycling.

Members were then asked to provide practical recommendations on how the OBC can implement these two focal points. This entailed challenging participants to consider how much their proposed recommendation will likely cost, and that since the OBC is a volunteer-run club, who will/can/might do the recommended action?

## Operationalizing the results

Here is our **draft action plan** to promote our advocacy position (approved by the Board of Directors, May 4, 2020; due dates will be TBD).

Practical action plan recommendations offered by members from the February workshop and the March survey follow:

<b>Focus 1 – Educating cyclists with their responsibilities to help ensure their safety</b>			
<b>What</b>	<b>How and When</b>	<b>Target audience</b>	<b>Volunteer team</b>
Educate current members on rules of the road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop communication materials highlighting cyclist responsibilities (tap on materials from Cycling Canada, the Highway Traffic Act or CanBike), and share with members (by mm/yy)</li> <li>• Incorporate key safety points on membership card (by mm/yy)</li> <li>• Conduct pop-up knowledge quizzes (by mm/yy)</li> <li>• Use social media (create plan by mm/yy)</li> </ul>	Current OBC members	<p><b><i>Designing communication materials/editing team:</i></b></p> <p>Lead: TBD</p> <p>Bob Hicks Byron Johnson Scott McDougall Eric Burpee Bob Alexander Leona Gray Other</p>
Educate new members on safe cycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct orientation and provide handouts (by mm/yy)</li> <li>• Incorporate key safety points on membership card (by mm/yy)</li> <li>• Conduct pop-up knowledge quizzes (by mm/yy)</li> <li>• Use of social media (create plan by mm/yy)</li> </ul>	Target audience: new OBC members	<p><b><i>Designing communication materials/editing team:</i></b></p> <p>Lead: TBD</p> <p>Bob Hicks Byron Johnson Scott McDougall Eric Burpee Bob Alexander Leona Gray Other</p> <p><b><i>Group riding clinics and Advanced skills clinics teams:</i></b></p> <p>Lead: TBD</p> <p>Bob Hicks Doug Corner Byron Johnson Emily Graves Carolyn Gail Tannenbaum Scott McDougall André Gauthier</p>

<p>Outreach and partnerships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stage safe cycling awareness sessions and demonstrations in partnership with the Ottawa Police Service, the City of Ottawa, and City Councillors (by mm/yy)</li> <li>• Increase OBC visibility at major City of Ottawa cycling events like the CN Cycle (by mm/yy)</li> <li>• Engage with the NCC to offer training, or set up booths/demo centres at Sunday Bike Rides (by mm/yy)</li> <li>• Partner with the Ottawa Safety Cycling for joint delivery of safe cycling presentations (by mm/yy)</li> <li>• Write to media outlets to signal our presence on bike-related events and questions (by mm/yy)</li> <li>• Use of social media (create plan by mm/yy)</li> </ul>	<p>Target audience: non-OBC members/ general public</p>	<p><b>Outreach team:</b></p> <p>Lead: TBD</p> <p>Bob Hicks Emily Graves Jenny Close Bill Bourne Dave Palmer André Gauthier Bob Alexander Peter Hojczyk Michel Ferland Bill Bourne Other</p>
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**Focus 2 – Promoting and facilitating safe group cycling on public roads**

What	How and When	Who	
<p>Incorporate cycling safety education into current programs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop communication materials highlighting cyclist responsibilities (tap on materials from Cycling Canada, the Highway Traffic Act or CanBike), and incorporate into programs: Introductory group riding, Advanced skills, and Racing events clinics (by mm/yy)</li> <li>• Recruit strong and trained group ride leaders (by mm/yy)</li> <li>• Require certain standards for participation in group rides (by mm/yy)</li> <li>• Develop a code of practice (e.g., how many riders in a peloton, how close should people ride, protocol for stop signs, etc.) (by mm/yy)</li> <li>• Conduct traffic safety workshops and seminars, invite OPS, City Councillor, etc, partner with other safety educators (by mm/yy)</li> <li>• Use of social media (create plan by mm/yy)</li> </ul>	<p>Target audience: current OBC members</p>	<p><b>Designing communication materials/editing team:</b></p> <p>Lead: TBD</p> <p>Bob Hicks Byron Johnson Scott McDougall Eric Burpee Bob Alexander Leona Gray Other</p> <p><b>Group riding clinics and Advanced skills clinics teams:</b></p> <p>Lead: TBD</p> <p>Bob Hicks Doug Corner Byron Johnson Emily Graves Carolyn Gail Tannenbaum Scott McDougall André Gauthier Other</p>

			<b>Traffic Safety Workshop team</b> Lead: TBD  Bob Hicks Doug Corner Byron Johnson Emily Graves Scott McDougall Michel Ferland Bill Bourne Other
Outreach and partnerships (see focus 1)			Same team members from focus 1

Note: volunteer team members will cross-over various activities, but the point of the exercise is to focus on the what, how and when columns.

### Volunteers who could help implement the action plan

In the survey, participants were asked about their interest in helping promote advocacy for the OBC: 11 members indicated they can help design communication materials, 21 members said they will help in outreach activities, 20 can help in group riding clinics, 14 in advanced skills clinics, 22 could participate in helping put out traffic safety workshops, 18 are interested in becoming a member of a Special Governance and Advocacy Committee, and 25 could help in other advocacy activities. See Annex A for a partial list of interested volunteers. Volunteers' names are temporarily earmarked on the action plan table above, and will be asked to focus in taking part in one or two specific action plan activities above.

### Articulating the OBC advocacy position

The first action for the club will be to publish, in the June issue of the OBC Newsletter, *The Spokesperson*, and through all OBC social media channels, the club's two-pronged focus for its advocacy activities as follows (**approved by the Board of Directors, May 4, 2020**):

*The Ottawa Bicycle Club (OBC) is committed in its objective to ascertain, defend and pursue the rights of cyclists. It will do this by **educating cyclists** with their responsibilities to help ensure their safety, and by **promoting and facilitating safe group cycling** on public roads.*

#OBcadvocacy #cyclisteducation #safegroupcycling

The Board also acknowledged some members' point of view that the club should also advocate for safe cycling infrastructure such as dedicated bikeways and bike paths, etc. but based on the results of our consultation, it will not form part of our advocacy position. The partnership we will

pursue with potential collaborators, will focus on education and skills development to help ensure cycling safety for our members and would-be members.

In addition to helping fulfill one of the action plans in the club's Strategic Plan which is to identify an advocacy position in relation to OBC objective *to ascertain, defend and pursue the rights of cyclists*, being able to articulate our advocacy position, also helps fulfill our commitment to another OBC objective *to assist the community at large in the promotion, encouragement and understanding of all aspects of cycling and related activities*.



## Annex A: Team grouping source / list of volunteers

<b><i>Designing communication materials/editing</i></b>	<b><i>Outreach</i></b>	<b><i>Group riding clinics</i></b>	<b><i>Advanced skills clinics</i></b>	<b><i>Traffic Safety Workshop</i></b>	<b><i>Other advocacy activities</i></b>	<b><i>Membership to a Special Governance and Advocacy Committee</i></b>
Bob Hicks	Bob Hicks	Bob Hicks	Bob Hicks	Bob Hicks	Bob Hicks	Bob Hicks
		Doug Corner	Doug Corner	Doug Corner	Doug Corner	Doug Corner
Byron Johnson		Byron Johnson		Byron Johnson	Byron Johnson	
	Emily Graves	Emily Graves		Emily Graves	Emily Graves	Emily Graves
		Carolyn Gail Tannenbaum			Carolyn Gail Tannenbaum	
	Jenny Close					
Scott McDougall		Scott McDougall	Scott McDougall	Scott McDougall	Scott McDougall	Scott McDougall
		Michel Ferland	Michel Ferland	Michel Ferland		Michel Ferland
	Bill Bourne	Bill Bourne	Bill Bourne	Bill Bourne		
Eric Burpee						
	Dave Palmer				Dave Palmer	Dave Palmer
	André Gauthier	André Gauthier		André Gauthier		
Bob Alexander	Bob Alexander			Bob Alexander		
	Peter Hojczyk			Peter Hojczyk	Peter Hojczyk	
					Neil Collie	Neil Collie
Leona Gray						

*Note: there are 25 other members who expressed interest in volunteering for our advocacy activities but did not provide their names and email addresses.*