



PLANNING HOUSING AND  
COMMUNITY SERVICES

150 Frederick Street, 8th Floor  
Kitchener ON Canada N2G 4J3  
Telephone: 519-575-4533  
Fax: 519-575-4999  
[www.region.waterloo.on.ca](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca)

Albert Hovingh  
519-575-4813  
[halbert@region.waterloo.on.ca](mailto:halbert@region.waterloo.on.ca)

Department of Human Resources  
Government of Nunavut,  
P.O. Box 233 Igloolik,  
Nunavut X0A 0L0

Dear Sir/Madam:

I am writing this letter at the request of Mr. Igor Dragoslavic, with regard to the work he has done on hiking/cycling trails on properties owned by the Region of Waterloo.

Several years ago, we had a major problem with illicit mountain bike trails being constructed on Regional properties, usually within woodlands. Free riding stunts had been constructed by nailing lumber to trees to build a support network which was then filled in with suspended catwalks, jumps and other structures of varying degrees of sophistication and danger. In addition, mounds and holes were created on the trail surface itself to provide jumps and drop-offs for additional cycling tricks. Since these structures and stunts posed no end of liability and hazard risks, the Region of Waterloo removed them all and warned the cycling community that continuation of these activities could well result in the Regional forest properties being closed to cycling.

As a result a local cycling club approached me as the Region's forest manager and asked if there was something that could be done to ensure that cycling continued as a recreational activity on those properties. At that time I indicated that if they were willing to work within the Region's guidelines and in cooperation with the requirements of our forest management activities, it would be possible to develop a temporary agreement under which the cycling club would assume a stewardship role over the trail network on two Regional properties. We specified that the trails were to be maintained to the high standards established by the International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA) and that the Region, as landowner, would have the ultimate say as to where trails were permitted and which, if any, would require upgrading, modification, or closing.

Over the years the arrangement has worked incredibly well. The trail network has become well established, well-developed and incredibly well-used. Much of the trail development, layout and management has fallen under the guidance of Mr. Dragoslavic. In the five years or so that we have been working on this project, Igor has been involved to an extent that I would not normally expect of a volunteer. He has attended IMBA trail building schools and workshops and eagerly transferred that knowledge directly into his work on the trails. Over the years the trouble spots (erosion, tree-root zone impact points, dangerous drop-offs, and unauthorized short-cuts, e.g.) have been corrected and improved to the point where we now have some 20 km of high-quality single-track cycling trails within easy reach of residents of the Region of Waterloo. In fact the trails are becoming well known and drawing cyclists from several hundred kilometers around.

The trial arrangement has been such a success that we are now in the final stages of formalizing the stewardship agreement between the Waterloo Cycling Club (of which Igor is a director) and the Region of Waterloo.

Without Igor's tireless efforts and dedication, I sincerely doubt that this trail network would exist today. As landowner, the Region certainly would be unable to maintain anywhere near the amount and/or quality of trails that are present. Igor has put in a lot of individual effort, but he has also been able to recruit many volunteer hours from his fellow cycling club members and continues to log in countless hours of his own time year after year.

Igor has dealt with competing and non-authorized users of the Regional forest such as ATV riders and dirt bikers. Through persistent efforts he has continued to find their access points and working cooperatively with the Region has blocked the access to the degree that many of them have given up and gone in search of greener (or muddier) pastures. Igor has also developed the trails in such a manner that they are able to be used by cyclists and hikers, and has also offered to assist horseback riders in developing a series of trails for their use that would keep them from damaging the walking/cycling trails.

In short, I would say that Igor would be an ideal candidate for a position involving trail design, layout, building and maintenance. He has a knack for constructing trails that are both sustainable and fun at all levels of cycling ability. He is able to work with people of varying interests and needs, and appears to enjoy the challenges and hard work required to make a viable recreational system such as has developed in the Region of Waterloo.

I trust this information is helpful. If you have any further questions about this, please feel free to contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Hovingh', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Albert Hovingh R.P.F.  
Environmental and Stewardship Planner