

Rotary Bike Tour for *M.E.S.A.*
General Guidelines for Over Night and Rest Stop Host Clubs

Over Night Host: provides fellowship, evening meal, over night lodging and breakfast meal for tour riders.

1. Routing. The host club and Day Coordinator plan the route to their host location from the starting place of the previous overnight location. The general routing usually is recommended by the Tour Coordinator and will assist the host in final routing plans. Routing decisions made that affect all routes will need to be consistent – for example if turns are to be painted on the roadway these will be the responsibility of the host club for their section of the week's route.

2. Contact Person. At least one contact person needs to be named who will serve as the contact for all planning prior to the tour. Also at least one contact person needs to be designated for the day the tour will be in the host's segment of the tour. This person will assist the riders and support drivers as they travel toward the host location. This person should be familiar with the route in the event directions are needed. The tour personnel need to know the person's telephone, cell phone and email address.

3. Rider Arrival. We try to arrive around 4 pm each day. The riders usually arrive in groups which may be spread out over an hour or more, depending on many factors. This is one reason why a contact person is needed for communication. Usually host clubs have members at the arrival location to meet and greet the riders as they arrive. This often works out best for local media to be on hand to interview riders and local Rotarians for good publicity for the local club.

Once the riders all arrive usually they are taken to the place where they will be staying overnight. If they will be staying families (preferred) they should be taken to the Rotarians' homes so they can clean up and prepare for any evening festivities planned. Rider vehicles usually will be stored in one of the support vehicles overnight. The host family will take the rider(s) to the location of the evening program/meal.

If space is limited, riders can double up in beds. Occasionally we will have married couples or other family members riding together. They likely will appreciate it if they can stay at the same place overnight.

4. Evening Meals. The overnight host club should plan on providing an evening meal for the riders (after they have had an opportunity to clean up). This is an excellent time to offer fellowship among the club members and the riders. Sometimes it can even be worked out so that the local club's weekly meeting can be held. In the past, clubs have done this at a member's home, at restaurants, or a cookout/picnic at a local park.

5. Overnight Lodging. We have found that staying with Rotarians in their homes is what makes the Tour so special – for the hosts as well as the riders. Many friendships are forged, ideas shared, Rotary benefits.

This is not always possible of course. Other options have included the host club arranging for rider stay at a local hotel/motel or even college dorms or similar lodging.

6. Breakfast Meals. The rider must be on the road no later than 9 am (8:30 if the day's ride is to be longer). Often the bicycles require some attention in the morning too. Try to allow 1-1/2 hours for the morning activities of eating and bike prepping. The support vehicle will need a supply of fresh ice for coolers from the breakfast location. Once riders leave the host responsibility ends.

Rest Stop Host provides a place for riders to stop and rest, usually with shade, plus food and water to refuel the riders.

1. Location. If the stop is not a predetermined *lunch* stop, it is usually determined to be at a point approximately midway between the starting location and the lunch stop or midway between the lunch stop and final destination for the day. This location needs to be approved by the Tour Coordinator. It is recommended that the location also be convenient for the local club members so some of them can attend also.

2. Rider arrival. The riders will arrive in separate groups perhaps up to an hour apart depending on a variety of factors. They might also depart from the rest stop location, too, but more often they will depart together.

3. The rest stop is intended to be just that: a place to rest and “refuel.” Some clubs have used this as a time to give their donation to *M.E.S.A.* – along with a photo of the riders – and that is great. The riders also enjoy any opportunity to meet with other Rotarians and their spouses at times like this. The meeting will be short but memorable.

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Host clubs should keep in mind that the tour is intended to be a fun time for all. The riders all enjoy meeting as many of your club members as possible. Your club can use the tour for your own benefit also. This is an opportunity to draw public attention to what your club has been doing in your community. You can also use this time to make your club’s donation to the *M.E.S.A.* project. Doing this helps your members to understand how the tour fits into the district’s bigger picture.

Any activity you plan should consider first how it might benefit your own club, be that for public recognition, bringing your members closer to each other, strengthening your club’s ties to the district, or watching your international donation and service increase. The tour is a catalyst for each of those if planned for properly.

If you ever feel the need for more information or more ideas or have any questions about the tour you can email Tour Coordinator, BikeTour@RotaryMESA.org

Thank you for being a big part of the *M.E.S.A.* Bike tour.