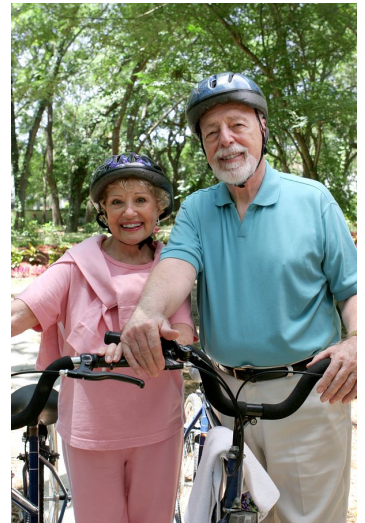


# BICYCLING

## Introduction

***Every bicycle trip improves our quality of life, not only for the cyclist, but also for the rest of society. Here's how:***

- Every auto trip converted to bicycle contributes to improvement of air quality and a reduction of greenhouse gases.
- Regular physical activity improves health and fitness, and lowers health care costs.
- Fewer motorized trips mean less traffic congestion and stress.
- Cycling puts people in touch with their neighbourhoods.■



Despite high bicycle ownership, many cyclists still do not think of cycling as a transportation option. Recreational cycling is widely popular, but the number of commuter or utilitarian cyclists is much lower. Reasons given for these lower numbers include lack of infrastructure, bike parking, and end of trip facilities, as well as concerns about safety. It's time to address these issues.

## ***Bicycling, Feeling Great, Looking Great***

The positive benefits from bicycling are enormous. Have a look.

### **Transportation Efficiency Benefits**

- Transportation by bicycle is the most energy efficient mode of transportation, and generates no pollution, except in its manufacture.
- Cycling is often the fastest mode of transportation from door to door for shorter distances<sup>1</sup>
- Ten bicycles can be parked in the space required for a single automobile.
- The cost of a typical car parking space in a parking structure can be tens of thousands of dollars compared to hundreds of dollars to manufacture and install a post-and-ring bike stand accommodating two bicycles.
- The addition of a through traffic lane on an existing road can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars per kilometre. This widening would provide an additional roadway capacity of 800 vehicles per hour. By comparison, the costs associated with the addition of a single 1.5 m bike lane, which can accommodate approximately 2,000 trips per hour<sup>2</sup>, can cost only tens of thousands of dollars for a simple restriping.<sup>3</sup>



### **Environmental Benefits**

- Short distance motor-vehicle trips are the least fuel-efficient and generate the most pollution per kilometre. These trips have the greatest potential for being replaced by cycling and walking.
- Reducing auto trips will mitigate ozone depletion, the greenhouse effect, ground level air pollution, photochemical smog, acid rain, and noise pollution.

### **Health and Fitness Benefits**

- Cycling contributes to personal health by enhancing fitness and providing an enjoyable, convenient, and affordable means of exercise and recreation. The most effective fitness routines are moderate in intensity, individualized and incorporated into our daily activities. Cycling and walking can both accomplish this, and at the same time provide mobility.



1 U.S. National Bicycle and Walking Study, 1994.

2 Ministry of Transportation of Ontario, Ontario Bikeways Planning and Design Guidelines, pg. 8-34, March 1996.

3 All cost estimates are exclusive of land acquisition and major utility relocations.

- About two-thirds of Canadians are physically inactive, resulting in \$billions of direct health care costs in Canada.<sup>4</sup> Increased physical activity, such as walking and cycling, can reduce the risk of coronary heart disease and the cost of medical care, decrease workplace absenteeism, and maintain the independence of older adults.
- Cycling benefits one's health regardless of the age at which one takes up cycling.

### **Economic Benefits**

- Riding a bike instead of driving a car on short trips can save up to 18 to 24 cents per kilometre, which could in turn result in thousands of dollars saved per person per year.

### ***Biking Is For All Ages***

24% of local trips by seniors in the Netherlands are made by bike, and 35% of local trips by children under age 15. Seniors can bike into their nineties.<sup>5</sup> For this to happen, however, seniors and children need to be safe on our streets. We need to design our roads to be safe for bikers and pedestrians as well as cars.

### ***Things You Can Do***

- Join the SC **Bicycling Action Committee** (<http://sustainablecobourg.ca/bicycles>)
- Buy a bike if you don't have one, and start biking if you do.
- Bike to work. Bike to shop. Bike for fun.
- Be familiar with all the safety requirements for biking (see <http://www.toronto.ca/cycling/bikeplan/pdf/chapter06.pdf>)
- Urge your municipal politicians to create bike lanes and routes, and public bike stands.
- Talk to your employer about creating a Bicycle User Group (BUG) and creating incentives for cycling. (see <http://www.toronto.ca/cycling/bikeplan/pdf/chapter07.pdf>)
- Develop a Bike-to-School Program
- Promote Cycling Programs, Facilities, and Events

### ***Further Information***

Sustainable Cobourg (<http://sustainablecobourg.ca/bicycles>)

Video: Cycling for Everyone: Lessons for Vancouver from the Netherlands, Denmark, and Germany

([http://www.sfu.ca/city/city\\_pgm\\_video020.htm](http://www.sfu.ca/city/city_pgm_video020.htm))

Toronto Cycling Committee

<http://www.toronto.ca/cycling/index.htm>

Cobourg Cycling Club

(<http://www.cobourgcyclingclub.com/>)

Ganaraska Freewheelers

(<http://www.northumberland.com/freewheelers/>)

Contact us at:  
Go Green Together  
207A Division St.  
Cobourg ON K9A 3P6  
[www.gogreentogether.ca](http://www.gogreentogether.ca)  
Phone: 905.377.1278



<sup>4</sup> Canadian Medical Association Journal, Nov. 28, 2000.

<sup>5</sup> *Cycling for Everyone*, presentation by John Pucher, Rutgers University