



Why Biking to Work is Good for Business



Rick Nonnekes, a teacher at St. Michael's Catholic School in Cobourg, Ontario cycled to work for two years and estimates he saved \$750 by cycling approximately 1500 kilometers. "Without the need of a car to get to work, I was able to get rid of the second car making do very well with one for the family." In addition, Rick says, "my fitness improved and I was able to enjoy many pleasant morning rides through our beautiful town." Rick also saved .4T of ghg emissions over two years!*

** With many companies offering \$0.50/km for business travel cost of ownership, fuel and maintenance, multiplying 1500 kms. X 50 cents = \$750.00*

The benefits of Bicycle Transportation are well documented for individuals. There is also growing evidence that cycling can benefit businesses too -

Increased Productivity and Punctuality

- Cyclists and walkers will arrive at work more invigorated than those who commute by automobile.
- Cyclists are more likely to arrive at work on time, as they are less likely to be held up in automobile traffic.

Decreased Absenteeism & Turnover

- Physically fit employees are absent an average of two fewer days per year.

Reduced Parking Costs and Increased Accessibility

- Employers typically spend over \$60 per employee per month for a parking spot. By swapping the car for the bicycle, over \$720 per year per employee can be saved as well as freeing up spaces for customers making your business more accessible.

Be Viewed as a Community Leader & Attract Great Talent

- Employers on the cutting edge of attracting excellent employees appreciate their employees' personal needs and wellness (including fitness). Such employers are perceived as environmentally aware and are more likely to attract talent than those who are not.

Corporate Sustainability

Commuting to work by bike can be a component of a business sustainability program. Cycling as alternative transportation helps the environment by keeping CO2 out of the air and requires far less materials, energy and waste in their production than even the 'greenest' car.

Cycling is a healthy, clean, economical and enjoyable way for your employees to arrive at work alert and ready to perform.

Less than 50% of Canadians get any real exercise, and less than 10% get enough. Riding a bike 16K has a health benefit which is about equal to the health deficit caused by smoking a pack of cigarettes. As well;

- Cycling improves cardiovascular fitness.
- Cycling strengthens lower back.
- Exercise keeps minds young. A report from a Longitudinal Study of Aging has shown that exercise helps maintain mental agility.

Cyclists save Money

Riding a bike to work can save a lot of money; how much money varies according to motor vehicle use. The greatest savings occur with those who can avoid purchasing a car. Since the average car costs more than \$6,500 a year to operate (not counting tolls, fees, fines, or indirect costs), not owning a car can add \$500 a month to the bank account.

Cyclists are Kinder to Our Environment

Motor vehicle use degrades the environment in a number of ways, but bicycle use does not. Noise pollution, for instance, is a real problem for those living near highways, but bicycles produce no noise. Congestion creates stress for motor vehicle users, pedestrians, and cyclists, but bicycling does not significantly add to congestion.

Passenger vehicles are responsible for roughly 12% of Canada's total GHG emissions. Cycling can play an important role in improving air quality.

A short, 7K round trip by bicycle keeps about 4 pounds of CO₂ and other concomitant pollutants out of the air we breathe.

Cyclists Can Save Significant Healthcare Dollars

A study published by Queens University in 2001 concluded that the total economic costs of physical inactivity and obesity represented 2.6% and 2.2%, respectively, of the total health care costs in Canada.

How Can Employers Support Cycling to Work?

Tips to Encourage Bike Commuting

- Provide bike commuter facilities such as lockers, changing rooms, indoor bike parking or a simple bike rack
- Consider installing showers or arrange for shower use at a local health club
- Appoint a Bike Commuting Coordinator to help employees plan routes to work using low-traffic but direct roads
- Partner with a local bike shop to offer employee discounts, maintenance clinics, or to showcase new bike models during lunch
- Offer subsidies for bike commuters who don't use car parking spaces
- Promote cycling by forming a company bicycle club or by allowing bike commuters to dress more casually at work.

1. Appoint a Bicycle Coordinator

Someone who currently bikes to work is the logical person to head a bicycle commuter program. The most important attributes are enthusiasm and an interest in cycling.

2. Get Cyclists Onboard

Invite cyclists to develop their wish list for their employer. This might include showers, lockers and secured bike storage.

3. Organize a Bike-to-Work Month

- Select a Bike-to-Work Month Coordinator
- Issue bike-to-work daily and weekly challenges to neighboring employers or among company departments. Offer incentives.

Go Green Together is a non-profit corporation in the public interest with a mission to deliver energy, water and resource efficiency to households, businesses and institutions in Northumberland County to reduce greenhouse gases.

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