



Community 20/20 Research Report 2019

Transit and Active Transportation - Connecting Your Development to Sustainable Transportation Opportunities

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Purpose: The Competitive Advantage

The purpose of this research report is to highlight the benefit of connecting a business location to transit and facilitating active transportation as a means of travelling to and from the location. The report also explores the social, economic and environmental aspects of sustainable transportation choices.

With the evolving trends in work taking place in the Golden Horseshoe, businesses are becoming increasingly aware of the advantage of offering sustainable and active transportation options onsite. Reducing a business's overall carbon footprint by having more business users take public transit or bike to work is a great way to advance sustainability commitments. Beyond the benefit to an organization's environmental profile, transportation that moves people out of cars provides benefits for business and community building, including improving health and reducing stress through activity. Enjoyable and easily accessible commutes that don't require people to idle in traffic in their vehicles can also increase the attractiveness of an organization or business to prospective employees, particularly younger workers and those considering relocating from more highly served areas of the GTHA. Having more users make use of alternative transportation will also reduce pressure on parking space at the business location and potentially reduce costs. Finally, making the building more accessible to those who do not own or want to use a car can increase the number of people able to visit and increase overall traffic to the site.

What can a Business do now to encourage public transportation?

- Research your local municipality's transit service and lines (click here for [Burlington Transit](#)).
- Post up-to-date schedules and maps for local and regional transit (i.e. dedicate one or more screens in a prominent location of your building for this purpose). These screens can also be synced to post updates on weather advisories and other delays/cancellations in regional transit [For Burlington services, use @BurlONtransit and @GOtransit]
- Conduct a transportation needs survey of tenants to use when petitioning your local municipality for better service

Where could a business benefit from partnership with the local Municipality?

- Enhance transit service and amenities by adding bus shelters if needed.
- Increase in frequency and all-day service along main roads connecting to the business location.
- Linking the business location to the nearest regional transit hub via a bus service.

- Work with the local municipality to improve sidewalks and street lighting surrounding bus stops that serve the business location.

Providing a Shuttle from your business location to Regional Transit Hubs

There are many options for businesses to invest in a shuttle service for users to connect to regional transportation. These can be helpful and provide short term benefit to deal with poor transportation options and connectivity. Long term, advocating for increased public transit is a benefit to everyone and will increase the accessibility of business locations.

Exploring Regional Alternatives: Smart Commute Halton

Businesses can also benefit from the expertise and support already available in the Golden Horseshoe for sustainable transportation by becoming a member of [Smart Commute](#). Membership is free and is geared towards helping businesses provide and incentivize alternative forms of transportation. Smart Commute also has a tool that individuals can use to find carpool matches from their area, which could help reduce pressure on parking space at a business location.

Services provided by Smart Commute to employer members include:

- Collecting survey information on commuting needs and barriers
- Developing custom plans to address needs
- Providing ideas, tools and materials to launch and promote smart commute tools to track staff commuting behaviour, cost savings, and environmental benefits

Employer [case studies](#) are available for review, and to provide successful examples.

Active Transportation: Cycling

Cycling to work is an increasingly popular way for people to stay active and participate in more sustainable transportation. Cycling can lead to great health outcomes for staff and employees and can lead to personal efficiencies. While some employees may want to cycle directly from home to work, many will use cycling as part of a longer commute that uses other transportation modes. Particularly in the context of a regional transportation system where bikes are welcome on trains and buses, having infrastructure at a business location can close the loop from home to work for a combination of sustainable transportation. Providing infrastructure for cycling is also increasingly necessary for new businesses to be competitive options.

Parking and Storage

Most important is to have a secure location to store bicycles at work. These can be outside or inside but should be near entrances and accessible. If placed outside, bike racks can be placed away from roads or traffic areas, but near to entrances. An overhang or covering can help encourage cycling in various weather conditions.

When looking at bicycle parking, there are four key elements to keep in mind: convenience, security, quantity, sufficient space

Cycle parking should be at ground level, or on a slight ramp - ideally near to the front entrance. Parking itself should be as level as possible and should never have bikes facing up or down an incline.

Cycle parking should be no more than 50m from the front entrance and should be no farther than the nearest parking spot. Users should be able to cycle all the way to the parking spot.

Parking should also have a form of weather protection or covering as well.



Source: *Urban Racks* (urbanracks.com)

Spacing and height of the racks provided are important. Ideal measurements for each bay are: width 0.6m, length 2m, space between stands 1.2m (source: [Cambridge Cycle Parking Guide](#))

It is good practice is to have 20% more capacity than peak use; however, a transportation survey of employees would also be helpful in assessing needs.

Amenities

For building users, having amenities like a shower, locker room, or changing area are crucial to increase cycling use. Lockers in particular may be a desired feature for all users regardless of whether they want to cycle.

Public Work Stand

PWS provide tools for emergency bike repair and maintenance and can be attached to pumping stations to refill tires. Companies produce bike fix-it stations with tools for basic repair and raised hanger arms to

hold bicycle off the ground. Public pumps are also available (usually sold separately) and can be easily attached to concrete. Note: When selecting a supplier, it is important to ensure that pumping stations service both Presta and Schrader valve heads and that they are made to withstand winter weather.



Suppliers

www.Urbanracks.com (Surrey, BC)

www.Dero.com (Minnesota)

www.Cyclesafe.com (Michigan)

Conclusion

Based on the numerous environmental and workplace advantages above, we recommend that local businesses encourage employees and visitors to use public transit and active transportation as an alternative mode of transportation to and from the location. A good starting point is surveying tenants to understand their current transportation habits and what barriers (if any) exist to adopting more sustainable transportation alternatives. This [survey template](#) can be adapted to capture current transportation habits. Having a more accessible location is vital to increasing traffic to the business location and to extending the reach of an organization's target audience.

Facilitating sustainable transportation alternatives also helps organizations advance their environmental and sustainability priorities and commitments.