



Monadnock Alliance for Sustainable Transportation



EMPLOYER GUIDE TO PROMOTING ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

What is “Active Transportation?”

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION is defined by the U.S. Department of Transportation as any kind of human-powered transit. This includes bicycling, walking, skateboarding, and more. Public transportation is also considered active transportation because it requires commuters to travel to and from stations or stops. People that use public transportation also frequently make additional trips by foot throughout the day.



Image source: Southwest Region Planning Commission

The Business Case for Promoting Active Transportation

The benefits of active transportation are not limited to the people that use it. Businesses and organizations benefit from supporting active transportation in a variety of ways:

- Employees that walk, ride a bicycle, or take public transportation are healthier and take fewer sick days, resulting in **increased productivity** and **lower insurance costs**.¹
- Businesses that support active transportation help **attract and retain new talent** to the community. Studies show that young professionals prefer to live and work in communities with multiple transportation options.²
- For retail businesses, investing in infrastructure and programs that support active transportation offers significant returns in **increased retail sales** and money from **tourism**. People that travel on foot or by bicycle spend as much as or slightly less than people that arrive by car, but visit more frequently, resulting in more spending overall.³

This Guide offers suggestions on how to create a positive culture for active transportation in the workplace through developing infrastructure, policy, programs, education, and incentives. There is no “one size fits all” transportation solution for every business and organization. Accordingly, it is not necessary to incorporate all of the suggestions provided in this Guide - however, adopting some of these ideas moves our communities forward toward the benefits associated with active transportation.

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1. Carlson, S. A., Fulton, J. E., Pratt, M., Yang, Z., & Adams, E. (2015). Inadequate Physical Activity and Health Care Expenditures in the United States. *Progress in Cardiovascular Diseases*, 57(4), 315-323.
 2. Dutzik, T., Inglis, J., & Baxandall, P., Ph.D. (2014). Millennials in Motion Changing Travel Habits of Young Americans and the Implications for Public Policy (Rep.). U.S. PIRG Education Fund and Frontier Group.
 3. Clifton, K. J., Morrissey, S., & Ritter, C. (2012). Business Cycles: Catering to the Bicycling Market. *TR News*, 280, 26-32.

Policies and Education

Promoting active transportation at your business can start with company policy. Some of the most common roadblocks to commuting using active transportation are also some of the easiest to overcome with policy changes and educational opportunities.

- Offer a more relaxed dress code. Formal dress codes can make active transportation inconvenient, if not impossible. Travel attire should be breathable, flexible, and weather appropriate. For commuters on bicycles, clothing should also be tight enough to prevent it from getting caught in the gears. A business casual dress code makes it easier to actively commute to work in comfort while still looking professional. Alternatively, offer a secure area to change and store clothing.
- Flexible schedules allow employees to avoid congested rush-hour traffic or nighttime commutes. Some employees may prefer to arrive early in order to beat the traffic and to have time to freshen up or change clothing before starting the work day. Others may need time after closing in order to prepare for the commute home or to avoid rush-hour traffic. Consider allowing employees flexibility with their schedules to line-up with public transportation schedules in case of darkness or inclement weather.
- Consider organizational policies that allow for periodic workplace physical activities such as walking meetings, active breaks, and walking lunch groups.
- Work with local bike shops to organize workshops on bike maintenance and safety. Knowing how to change a tire, tighten brakes, and perform basic bicycle maintenance will keep your employees safe and on time.
- Make educational materials available at your workplace, including safety information, trail maps, and [tip sheets](#). Support efforts to educate employees on how to safely share the road with cyclists and pedestrians, and about reducing distracted driving.
- Appoint an individual to evaluate alternative transportation needs and plan programs/events. Conduct yearly employee surveys to collect data on commuting habits, identify barriers to active commuting and establish measurable goals for increasing active commuting.
- Draft a [workplace travel plan](#) that uses a multi-component approach to supporting active transportation. When combined with events and educational efforts, environmental changes such as bicycle infrastructure and enhanced walkability are more effective at improving employee health.⁴



Image source: Richard Masoner

4. Goetzel, R. Z., PhD, Roemer, E. C., PhD, Liss-Levinson, R. C., & Samoley, D. K. (2008). Workplace Health Promotion: Policy Recommendations that Encourage Employers to Support Health Improvement Programs for their Workers. Retrieved August 22, 2017, from http://dhss.alaska.gov/ahcc/Documents/meetings/200905/worksite_health.pdf

Infrastructure & Supports

Providing employees and customers with the infrastructure needed to support active commuting is one of the most impactful and rewarding steps employers can take towards creating an active transportation-friendly workplace. Access to appropriate storage and facilities makes it easier for employees and customers to choose active transportation and sends a strong message that your organization supports active commuters. Following are examples of infrastructure and supports which can help promote active transportation:

- Bike racks installed according to standards set by the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP). Bike racks come in a variety of styles and should be located in well-lit and publicly visible spaces. [Essentials of Bike Parking](#) is a free guide offered by the APBP that covers site planning, rack selection, installation, and placement.
- Bike shelters protect bicycles from theft and the elements. An alternative is to allow employees to bring bicycles inside to a dedicated room or garage.
- Security cameras, faux cameras, dome mirrors, and warning surveillance signs act as deterrents to bicycle theft.
- Basic tune-up equipment like an air pump, chain tools, wrenches, etc. The tools can be stored in a deck box or dedicated maintenance area.
- Changing areas and showers or subsidized memberships to a nearby gym to allow employees to freshen up after commuting.
- Locker rooms or storage areas allow employees to store their belongings while they are at work, which provides privacy and a hygienic storage solution for sweaty travel gear.
- Local bicycling/walking route maps to use for commuting to and from work as well as for breaks and walking meetings. Use [WalkScore](#) to find out how walkable your neighborhood is, what the safest routes are, and what amenities and services are located along your commute.
- Advocation for pedestrian, bicycle, and/or public transportation options and infrastructure in the community. The [Monadnock Alliance for Sustainable Transportation](#) (MAST) is a great resource to connect you with advocacy opportunities in your community.



Image source: Southwest Region Planning Commission

Programs & Incentives

Programs and incentives are a great way to build enthusiasm and show support for active transportation. There are numerous ways to get employees involved and excited about replacing their car trips to get to work. Following is a partial list of ideas to get started.

- Give employees that choose to walk, bike, carpool, or take transit to work peace of mind by creating a company emergency ride home program. Ride home programs can operate at a company level or community level using a network of volunteers, rideshare reimbursement programs (e.g. taxis or Uber), or public transportation vouchers. Some examples of emergency ride home programs are:
 - [RideFinders](#) is a regional program that serves the Central Virginia area. Their goals are to protect the quality of the air and increase the efficiency of the region's transportation network by reducing the number of vehicles on the road.
 - [CommuteSmart NH](#) offers an emergency ride home program in central New Hampshire that supports commuters who commute green by offering reimbursement for taxi, transit, or rental cars taken because of an unexpected emergency.
- “Promote” or “Participate in” [National Bike Month](#) with help from the [League of American Bicyclists](#). This annual event promotes the benefits of biking and other alternative transportation options. Join an existing event or create your own and offer employees prizes for employee participation such as bike helmets, locks, and public transportation passes. Some useful resources for tracking participation are:
 - The CommuteSmart NH [Trip Logger](#) allows users to log their commutes by manually adding trips to their personal log.
 - [National Bike Challenge](#) allows a Team, Workplace, or individual to help make National Bike Month exciting.
- Participate in the [Bike Friendly Business](#) program of the League of American Bicyclists. This program recognizes businesses for their efforts to increase ridership and foster positive local bike culture in their communities. Award levels are based on participation in four categories – the 5 E's; engineering, education, encouragement, enforcement, and evaluation & planning.
- Form a company bike club or walking club. For example, encourage new riders and challenge your co-workers on a company leaderboard through the National Bike Challenge. Participate in a pedometer competition called [Steptember](#) in September, or form company teams to compete in the [10,000 Steps USA](#) workplace challenge.

Programs & Incentives (Continued)

- Maintain a company-owned bicycle or pool of bicycles for employee use. Bicycles are not just for commuting to and from the workplace, they are also great for taking short rides to get to an out-of-office meeting or for use on a lunch break.
- Participate in the [Bicycle Benefits](#) program and reward your customers who commute by bicycle. To participate in the program, you create a discount or reward that you offer to cyclists who display the Bicycle Benefits sticker on their helmets. By welcoming cyclists with discounts or rewards, your business will enjoy new customers, increased customer loyalty, revenue from selling Bicycle Benefits helmet stickers, and additional free advertising.
- [Commuter Tax Benefits](#) allow employers to reimburse employees for commuting expenses. Transit and carpool/vanpool commuters are entitled to up to \$260 per month, and cyclists are reimbursed for up to \$20 per month to put towards bicycle related expenses including purchase, improvements, repair, and storage.
- Offer financial incentives including monetary rewards or money towards equipment based on logged ridership. Some examples include:
 - Patagonia's Drive-Less program pays employees \$2 per trip, up to two trips per day (up to \$500 per year).
 - Clif Bar's [Cool Commute Program](#) offers employees up to \$500 towards the purchase of a commuter bike as well as other monetary incentives.
- Pay bicycle commuters that don't need a parking space through a [parking cash-out program](#). Employers save on business expenses and employees gain extra income.
- Provide discounted bikeshare or carshare memberships to employees. If bikesharing or carsharing is not available in your community, consider supporting the efforts of community members who are advocating for it.



Image source: @bicyclebenefits on Instagram

Ready...set...go!

We hope that this guide has sparked ideas on how your organization or business can promote active commuting among employees, customers, and/or members.

For more information on how to create a healthy workplace, visit the [Healthy Monadnock](#) website, where you can find tools to help create or enhance worksite wellness programs and get recognized for your efforts to promote a healthy work environment.

Remember: businesses and organizations of any size can benefit from a boost in workplace health, morale and productivity by making active transportation a safe and rewarding option for employees and customers. Even small changes can go a long way towards promoting a healthy workplace!



Image source: Richard Masoner

About the Monadnock Alliance for Sustainable Transportation (MAST)

MAST is an alliance of individuals and organizations working to implement sustainable transportation solutions for the Monadnock Region. MAST recognizes the broad impacts that our transportation system has on us as individuals and as communities - everything from access to employment and services to cost of living to our health and beyond. Given transportation's prominent role in our daily lives, MAST believes a diverse coalition of government, businesses, non-profit, and other groups are essential for addressing these transportation challenges. Accordingly, the purpose of MAST is to serve as a forum and structural framework to:

- Build consensus on transportation needs and solutions;
- Foster the development of local and regional partnerships on transportation initiatives;
- Provide information about sustainable transportation initiatives;
- Help individuals and groups identify support for sustainable transportation options;
- Connect stakeholders with funding resources and technical assistance services; and,
- Advocate and educate about sustainable transportation needs and benefits.

For more information about MAST, visit www.MASTNH.org.