

## Benefits of Active and Sustainable Transportation

By taking the Commuter Challenge, Canadians are showing their support for active and sustainable commuting. Why are they doing it? Some do it for their health; others participate for the community, economic and environmental benefits.

### Health and Personal Benefits

Active and sustainable transportation enhances physical, mental, and emotional health. These facets of our lives are interconnected and significantly affect our well-being.

- ***Meet Canada's recommended physical activity guidelines*** and reap significant health benefits by walking or cycling 30-60 minutes per day (Health Canada Physical Activity Guide, 2005).
- ***Reduce the air pollutants*** that negatively affect lung and heart health. Vehicle emissions increase the chance of asthma attacks and respiratory infections such as pneumonia and bronchitis, particularly among the elderly, the very young and those with existing respiratory disease.
- ***Enhance the quality of your relationship with the community and environment.*** Smell the roses, hit the local coffee shop, or chat with neighbours on the way to and from work.

## Economic Benefits

- **Save tons of money!** Driving 18,000 km per year costs an average of \$9,525 per year or 52.9 cents per kilometre (Canadian Automobile Association 2004 national average for a 2004 Chevrolet Cavalier Z-24).
- **Reduce health care costs** for Canadians. It is estimated that transportation-related emissions will cost the health care system \$11 billion to \$38 billion between 1997 and 2020 (Transportation Association of Canada, 1998).
- **Save tax dollars.** Reduce roadway construction and maintenance costs.

## Community Benefits

**Active and sustainable transportation makes your community safer by reducing the risk of vehicle-pedestrian accidents.**

- **Increase social interaction** within the community, resulting in much improved personal relationships and community health.
- **Support community-based businesses**, such as local shops, restaurants, bakeries and newsstands.
- **Decrease traffic noise.** Engines and horns, or sprockets and bells? You decide!
- **Reduce traffic jams and parking hassles.**

## Environmental Benefits

Active and sustainable transportation keeps our air clean by improving air quality and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

- **Reduce toxic air pollution.** Pollutants from many transportation sources aggravate respiratory disease, and contribute to property damage and acid rain.
- **Reduce the threat of climate change.** Did you know that it takes 130 trees to produce the amount of oxygen needed to combat the carbon dioxide emitted from one car each year?
- **Conserve natural habitat.** Fewer cars on the road decrease the demand for more roads and parking lots, allowing more land for green space.
- Driving less **reduces the need for non-renewable fossil fuel** resources.

## Employer Benefits

Active and sustainable modes of transportation enhance employee productivity, health and job satisfaction.

- **Reduce costs.** Healthy commuters make fewer demands for subsidized parking.
- **Reduce sick days.** Healthy commuters are more relaxed at the workplace and take fewer days off sick.
- **Reduce workplace accidents.** Healthy commuters are more alert and adept at work.
- **Enhance public image.** Employers who promote and facilitate the well being of employees, communities, and the environment enjoy greater loyalty and respect from employees and customers alike.