

# Active Transportation; Findings of a WRHA Survey Conducted in 2014/15

## Background

Evidence has demonstrated the positive impact of active transportation (AT) on employee wellbeing and its value to employers. There is a large body of evidence indicating that people who are engaged in active transportation to work are healthier, happier, have better workplace attendance records and increased productivity (see [Active Transportation and Employee Productivity](#)). Also, incorporating active transportation into our daily routines helps employees achieve the recommended 150 minutes per week of physical activity.

## Research Overview

As part of the WRHA's participation in the national CLASP Healthy Canada by Design initiative, the Population and Public Health Program developed a survey to better understand employee active transportation (AT) behaviours and perceptions within the organization (including Riverview Health Centre).

More specifically the survey explored:

- AT use in the summer and winter months for travel to or from work and during work hours;
- Barriers and facilitators to AT use; and
- Factors (policies, programs and infrastructure improvements) that would influence future AT use.

In follow-up to the surveys, focus groups were conducted at work sites with more than 100 survey responses to further explore some of the themes identified in the survey. Within the WRHA, 1665 employees completed the survey, including 105 at Riverview Health Centre.

## Findings

Although most Riverview Health Centre (RHC) employees surveyed currently use a car to get to/from work (up to 78%), many of those surveyed (29%) reported being within walking and biking distance to work (see Page 2). Many respondents would consider using AT to get to and from work (38% biking; 18% walking; 35% transit), and 54% would consider carpooling. Recommendations for future enhancements of transportation demand management strategies at RHC are outlined on Page 3, and a summary of RHC staff responses to the survey are presented on Page 4.

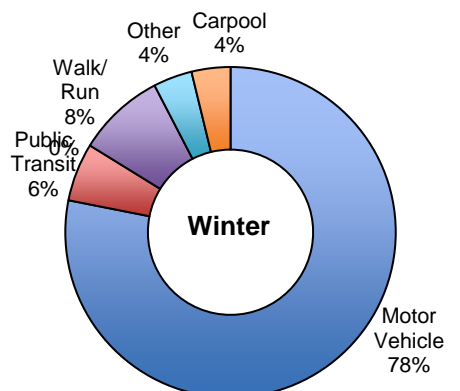
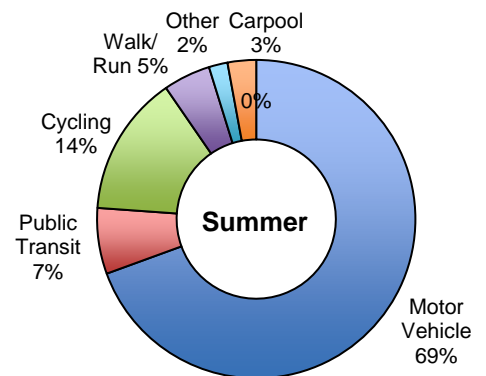
## Definition of Transportation Demand Management

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies can influence employee transportation choices. TDM is the use of policies and programs by employers to influence whether, why, when, where and how employees travel to/from and during work hours. A summary of policies and programs that employers can implement are found in [TDM Strategies for Employers](#).

## Definition of Active Transportation

The Public Health Agency of Canada defines active transportation (AT) as "...any form of human powered transportation". It includes any kind of self-propelled movement, such as *walking, cycling, inline skating, rollerblading, or wheeling*, that is used to get individuals from place to place (e.g. from/to home, work, school, library, shopping, worship, etc.). Active transportation can be combined with other modes of transportation, such as public transit. *Using public transit is a form of AT.*

## Modes of Transportation Most Often Used



## WHAT WE HEARD FROM RHC STAFF

**10%** of respondents live **WITHIN WALKING** distance of RHC (~25 min walk/2 km)

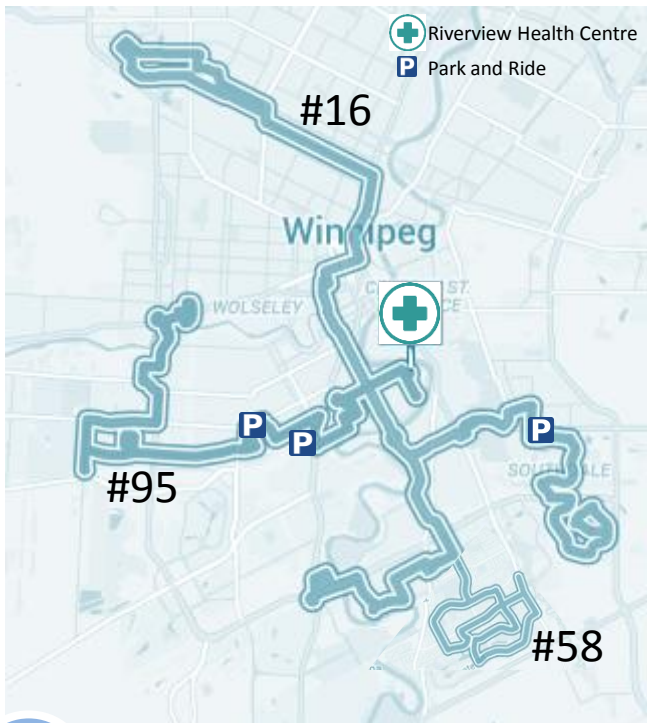
**29%** of respondents live **WITHIN BIKING** distance of RHC (~20 min bike/5 km)

**18%** of respondents **who DRIVE**, live **WITHIN WALKING** or **BIKING** distance to RHC

Average Commute	By ALL Methods	By Motor Vehicle/ Carpool	By Public Transit	By Cycling	By Walking/ Running
Distance*	10.6 km	12.3 km	9.9 km	5.8 km	1.1 km
Time*	24 min	20 min	42 min	20 min	12 min

\* Distance and time were reported separately.

Bus routes within a 15 minute walk of Riverview Health Centre



# of direct bus routes available: **1**

35% of respondents would consider using public transit

MONTHLY COSTS (approx.)  
 \$88.55 Monthly Bus Pass  
 \$35.00 Parking Pass for staff

### **Carpooling**

An excellent option for those living further distances from work and is a transportation method that 54% of respondents would consider adopting!

89% of respondents would **CONSIDER USING** or are **ALREADY USING** some form of **ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION**

# So HOW could WE encourage AT use among RHC staff?

Overall Riverview Health Centre (RHC) staff identified many factors that influence the type of transportation modes they use for their commute to or from work. Broadly, these factors can be grouped into three categories: 1) policies and programs that can be implemented by RHC and/or the WRHA; 2) infrastructure projects that are the responsibility of RHC and/or the WRHA; and 3) policy and infrastructure changes that are the City of Winnipeg's responsibility.

Below are some of the TOP RATED factors that could influence employee use of AT.

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WRHA  
and/or  
RHC

## Organizational Policy & Programming Opportunities

- Subsidized bus passes
- Flexible start/finish times
- Parking spot cash-out programs
- Emergency ride home program

## Site Infrastructure & Building Design Opportunities

- Secure bike parking
- Conveniently located on-site showers and lockers

For more information on policies and programs that employers can implement see [TDM Strategies for Employers](#)

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“The bike racks are located in dark corners while the parking lot has lights and cameras.” – focus group participant

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## Policy & Infrastructure Opportunities

- Improved public transit availability and accessibility\*\*
- Improved AT infrastructure
- Short distances to key destinations

\*\* Major barrier noted by over half of respondents

Some more specific examples of the above include;

- More inclusive public transit routes, stops and fares, including the expansion of rapid transit and integrated AT options
- Improved bike lane connectivity
- Add physical barriers between bike lanes and motor vehicles
- Proper snow clearing of sidewalks, paths and AT corridors

City of  
WINNIPEG

The WRHA does NOT have direct control over policy and infrastructure changes at a MUNICIPAL level, but can influence the policies and investments they make.

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“Busing to work is often slower than biking ... and the buses are so overcrowded I've been left standing in the cold as they pass by.”

– focus group participant

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For more information, please contact [hbe@wrha.mb.ca](mailto:hbe@wrha.mb.ca)

# Survey Results

## Q1. How often do you travel AT LEAST 10 minutes to ANY destination using active transportation?

May to September WEEKLY or More Often – 80%      Less Often than Weekly – 20%  
 December to March WEEKLY or More Often – 51%      Less Often than Weekly – 49%

## Q2. Which modes of transportation have you used in the previous year to commute to/from work?

Motor Vehicle – 85%      Public Transit – 22%      Walking/Running – 31%      Carpool – 12%  
 Cycling – 21%      Combination Modes (ex.Walk then Bus) – 6%      Telecommute – 0%  
 Inline Skating/Skateboarding/Wheeling – 1%      Other – 1%

## Q3. Which mode of transportation did you use MOST OFTEN to get to/from work? See graphs Pg#1

## Q4. Thinking of your commute to work in a TYPICAL WEEK;

Do you use ANY form of ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION?      35% - YES

Which Modes of AT do you use MOST OFTEN?

Cycling – 43%      Public Transit – 22%      Walking/Running – 22%

Of those using active transportation weekly, 76% use active transportation 4+ DAYS PER WEEK!

## Q5. Do you require a motor vehicle for work related purposes?      YES – 10%      SOMETIMES – 36%

## Q6. WHY do you use your CURRENT mode of TRANSPORTATION?      TOP 3 reported

AT Users      Health/Fitness – 60%      Cost Savings – 38%      Stress Reduction – 24%

Non-AT Users      Time Savings – 57%      Weather – 54%      Convenience/Comfort – 53%

## Q7. Would you CONSIDER trying to commute to/from work using the following;

Carpooling: Yes/Maybe – 54%

Public Transit; Yes/Maybe – 35%

Cycling: Yes/Maybe – 38%

Walking; Yes/Maybe – 18%

## Q8. Does your MODE of transportation CHANGE with the SEASON?      MAYBE!

- 0% of respondents cycle year round. Cyclists appear to primarily choose to drive in cold weather while 100% of those who walk in the summer continue year round!  
 WHY? Weather + Convenience + Safety
- Active Transportation participation DOES change throughout the year with 81% participating in at least 10 minutes of AT per week in the SUMMER which drops to 51% in the WINTER!

## Q9. For each FACTOR, rate how IMPORTANT it is in AFFECTING the mode of TRANSPORTATION you use to get to/from work on a typical day.      TOP 6 (ranked 4 or 5/critical) reported here.

AT Users;

Short distances to destinations 63%

Better biking infrastructure 60%

Transit availability 53%

AT separate from street 53%

Subsidized bus pass 46%

Flexible work start/finish times 46%

Non-AT Users;

Short distances to destinations 73%

Parking cash-out program 68%

Secure bike parking 60%

Better biking infrastructure 54%

AT separate from street 51%

Emergency ride home program 51%

## Q10. What factors DO NOT INFLUENCE your MODE of transportation?

Minimal staff support for the following:

- Onsite workshops and AT presentations in the workplace
- Assistance or incentives for carpooling
- Workplace car-share or bike fleet program