

# The Daily Commute; How Active Transportation May Help YOU

## Background

Growing evidence is demonstrating the positive impact that active transportation can have on employee wellbeing, specifically citing improved measures of health and happiness. It's value to employers can be noted as well, as employees who engage in active transportation also tend to be more productive and miss fewer days of work due to illness. Not only are these effects beneficial for the workplace, but by incorporating active transportation into YOUR routine you can help yourself to achieve the recommended TOTAL of 150 minutes per week of physical activity as suggested by the Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines as well!

## Research Overview

As part of the national CLASP-funded, Healthy Canada by Design initiative, the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA) and the Physical Activity Promotion team, of Population and Public Health, explored behaviours and perceptions relating to employee transportation at Victoria General Hospital. This was accomplished through surveys and focus groups, addressing many broad categories;

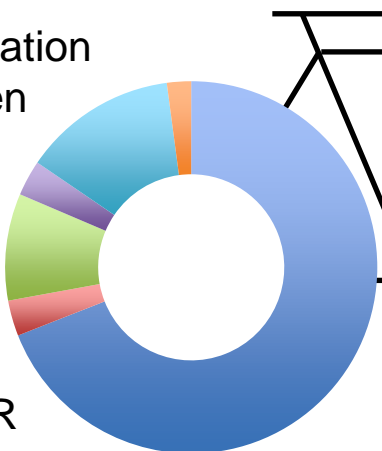
- Barriers and facilitators to active transportation use for work in Winnipeg,
- The relationship between land use, site location and design, and employee active transportation use, and
- The relationship between employees' self-perceived health and active transportation use.

Staff at Victoria General Hospital represented ~6% of all survey respondents, with 100 surveys completed at this site. This report summarizes the main findings based on the information YOU provided!

**What IS Active Transportation (AT)?**  
Quite simply, it is defined by the Public Health Agency of Canada as “...ANY form of HUMAN POWERED transportation”, which can include ANY form of self-propelled movement. These include common things such as WALKING, CYCLING or WHEELING, among many others, as well as combined modes of transportation, such as walking or cycling to a bus stop, then taking PUBLIC TRANSIT!

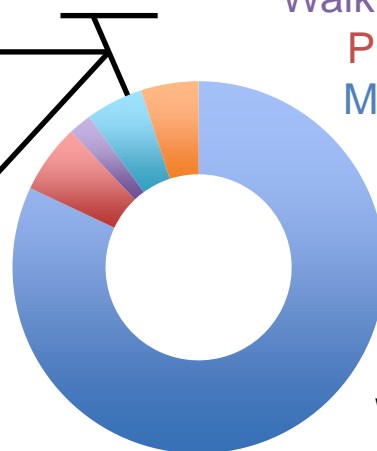
Modes of Transportation Most Often Used By RHC Staff

SUMMER

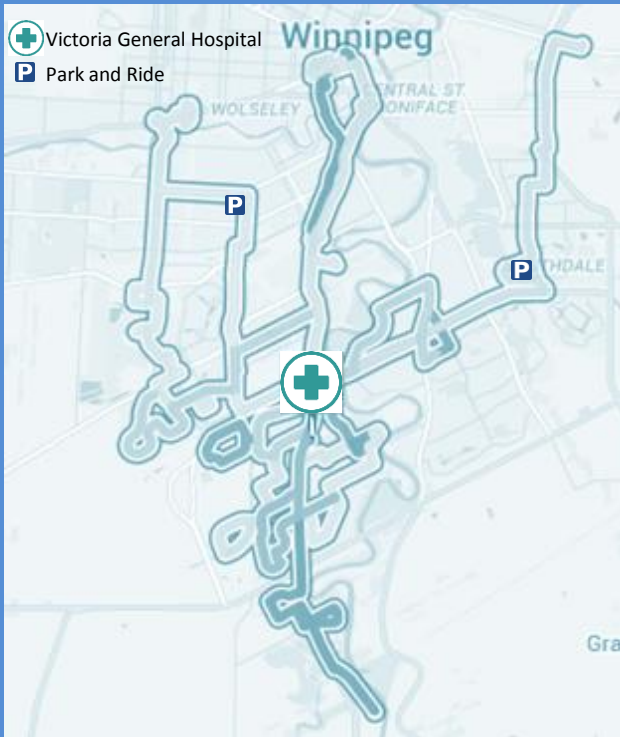


Walking/Running  
Public Transit  
Motor Vehicle  
Carpool  
Cycling  
Other

WINTER



## Bus routes within a 15 minute walk of Victoria General Hospital



### Consider a Combo!

11 bus routes service the nearby area making a COMBINATION of PUBLIC TRANSIT and WALKING ideal at VGH!

30% of respondents live WITHIN 5 km of VGH (20 min bike ride)

24% of respondents who DRIVE, live within 5 km of VGH (20 min bike ride)

There are a variety of important reasons for this. However, these are the respondents who are more likely to be accommodated by well-planned active modes that take their needs into account.

### What is IMPORTANT to YOU in choosing a METHOD of transport?

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#### Non-AT Users

- Short Distance – 60%
- Parking Spot Cash out Program – 51%
- Better Biking Infrastructure – 49%
- Flexible Work Start/Finish Times – 43%

#### AT Users

- Short Distance – 82%
- Better Biking Infrastructure – 77%
- Flexible Work Start/Finish Times – 68%
- Parking Spot Cash out Program – 64%

| Average Commute | By ALL Methods | By Motor Vehicle/ Carpool | By Public Transit | By Cycling | Combination/ Other* |
|-----------------|----------------|---------------------------|-------------------|------------|---------------------|
| Distance**      | 11.1 km        | 12.4 km                   | 9.3 km            | 3.6 km     | 11.3 km             |
| Time**          | 20 min         | 17 min                    | 28 min            | 17 min     | 30 min              |

\*Majority = Combination of public transit + walking

\*\*Distance and time were reported separately.

68% of respondents utilize AT weekly through the summer.

## What Did YOU Tell Us?

### Changing SEASONS and WEATHER impact your decisions

In the SUMMER **69%** of you engage in **AT LEAST** 10 MINUTES of ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION per week, but in WINTER that same number drops to **42%** as more people begin to take their own vehicle to and from work at VGH. The WINTER sees the number of people DRIVING and using PUBLIC TRANSIT increase due to the cyclists choosing alternative methods of transportation.

### HEALTH + HAPPINESS

**77% of AT users rated their health as VERY GOOD or EXCELLENT compared to 56% of non-AT users.** AT users also ranked significantly higher in terms of daily Happiness, Interest in their work, Satisfaction with job, and holding strong, positive Relationships.

### TIME is MONEY, or MONEY is TIME?

While Non-Active Transportation users note TIME SAVINGS, CONVENIENCE, and LONG DISTANCES to work as their Top 3 reasons for driving, Active Transport users list COST SAVINGS, HEALTH, and ENVIRONMENTAL protection as the main reasons they use active transportation!

### MANY of YOU are already using ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION methods in your typical work week

**56%** of you currently use some form of ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION at least ONCE a week on average, and **59%** of those using AT to get to work, do so 4+ days per week!

### You utilize a VARIETY of transportation METHODS!

At one point or another over the past year, **83%** of respondents indicated they have driven a MOTOR VEHICLE to work, **32%** indicate they have taken a form of PUBLIC TRANSIT, **24%** have used a CARPOOL, **32%** have WALKED/RAN, and **24%** have CYCLED.

### You have THOUGHT about using ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

**61%** of respondents NOT utilizing active transportation would consider using a CARPOOL, with **30%** saying the same for PUBLIC TRANSIT, **16%** for WALKING, and **44%** for CYCLING

### Who's your neighbour?!

Carpooling is an excellent option for those living further distances from work and is a transportation method that **67%** of respondents would consider using!

### There are A LOT of vehicles sitting around all day

Only **13%** of respondents indicated that they REQUIRE a vehicle to carry out their DAILY WORK, meaning that for most of you DRIVING to work, your car is spending almost all of its time PARKED

“What you may lose in punctuality, you will GAIN in PRODUCTIVITY”

– focus group participant

“We (WRHA) have 28 000 employees ... we could have a significant impact on the culture”

– focus group participant

# So HOW can WRHA help to make the CHANGE?

Overall Victoria General Hospital Staff identified many factors that influence the transportation modes they use for their commute. Broadly, these factors can be grouped into three categories: 1) policies and programs that could be implemented by Victoria General Hospital or the WRHA; 2) infrastructure projects that could be undertaken by Victoria General Hospital or the WRHA; and 3) policy and infrastructure changes that could be undertaken by the City of Winnipeg. Below are some of the factors that were TOP RATED by respondents interested in changing their travel mode, sorted into their respective categories.

WRHA  
and/or  
VGH

## Organizational Policy & Programming Opportunities

Potential improvements that could be considered include:

- Subsidized Bus Passes
- Flexible Start/Finish Times
- Parking Spot Cash-Out Programs
- Emergency Ride Home Program

## Site Infrastructure & Building Design Opportunities

Potential improvements that could be considered include:

- Secure Bike Parking
- Conveniently Located On-site Showers and Lockers

“I would love to see ... more efficient public transportation - especially in up and coming neighbourhoods that do not even have bus service”

– focus group participant

## Policy & Infrastructure Opportunities

Potential improvements that could be considered include:

- Improved Active Transportation Infrastructure\*\*
- Improved Public Transit availability and accessibility
- Short Distances to Key Destinations

\*\*Key item noted by 77% of AT users, 50% of non-AT users

Specific examples of the above include:

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

City of  
WINNIPEG

The WRHA does not have direct influence on policy and infrastructure changes at a MUNICIPAL LEVEL, but can certainly support policies and investments made in this area.

Why are flexible schedules important?

“I would use the bus if the bus schedule matched my work schedule better. Taking a bus to work will either get me to work 30 minutes early or 10 minutes late.” – focus group participant

Try **ADDING** some minutes of AT to **YOUR** commute!

Only **10%** of respondents indicated utilizing a combination of transportation methods. Try parking a few blocks away and take a quick stroll, or pick **ONE** day of the week to **BUS!**

**86%** of respondents would **CONSIDER USING** or are **ALREADY USING** some form of **ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION** for commuting.

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