



What is Active Transport?



Creating neighbourhoods that encourage people to choose active transport is a great way to keep the community healthy.

Active transport can include walking, cycling, skating, skateboarding and even public transport use, because people walk or cycle to and from the service stops.

Using active transport to make local trips, such as to the shops, the local park or to visit friends is an easy way for people to get their daily dose of physical activity.

What are the benefits of promoting active transport?

Many local governments are grappling with increased traffic, local congestion, noise pollution and parking demands while trying to ensure accessibility to all services and facilities within their area. While much of this traffic comes from outside the municipality, about half of all trips are local and less than five kilometres.

Encouraging your local community to use active transport can make an immediate contribution to reducing local traffic problems. The benefits of active transport include:

- **Increased community safety** – more people walking and cycling around your neighbourhood results in improved awareness of all road users, greater community contact and more ‘eyes on the street’;
- **Helping local businesses** – people using active transport are more likely to shop locally;
- **Improved community health** – physical activity reduces numerous chronic health problems and can contribute positively to social capital and mental wellbeing;
- **Access for all** – walking and cycling are low cost activities that are available to the whole community;
- **Improved environment** – fewer car trips means reduced greenhouse gas emission, less noise and air pollution;
- **Reduction in local congestion**; and,
- **Reduced pressure on road budgets** – providing for, and maintaining infrastructure for motor vehicles consumes a significant proportion of the council budget.

How can local governments encourage active transport?

The environment we live in affects the way we behave. For instance, suburbs without footpaths have lower rates of physical activity than suburbs with footpaths.¹ Local governments can help make their community more active by helping to create an environment that fosters physical activity.

There are many ways local governments can encourage active transport.

A few of these are listed below:

- **Upgrade public transport facilities** – provide suitable bus shelters and ensure there is up to date information about the bus services to increase patronage;
- **Install and upgrade facilities** – provide a high quality network of paths for pedestrians and cyclists (including signage, seating, water fountains and end of trip facilities) and create places of interest;
- **Keep the community informed** – promote facilities, provide signage, produce and distribute a Local TravelSmart Guide (see the information sheet on *Local TravelSmart Guides*);
- **Encourage feedback** – seek input from citizens, pedestrians and cycling advocacy groups (e.g. via hazard report cards or membership on an advisory committee), to help council provide better facilities. A TravelSmart Officer can act as an internal local government advocate for active transport (see the information sheet on *What is a Local Government TravelSmart Officer?*);
- **Demonstrate leadership** – prepare a travel plan for your Local Government to set a good example for the community; and,

Any time that you swap your car for a bike, walking shoes or a SmartRider it makes a difference, to your health and that of your community.

¹ Owen et al. (2004). "Understanding Environmental Influences on Walking", *American Journal of Preventative Medicine*. 27(1): 67-76.

Continued next page...



It's how you get there that counts



Government of Western Australia
Department of Transport



What is Active Transport?



- Support the TravelSmart Workplace program - encourage larger workplaces in your area to become a TravelSmart Workplace (see information sheet on *Making Workplaces TravelSmart*).

What are local governments already doing to encourage active transport?

Local governments throughout Western Australia are finding ways to encourage their communities to be more active. Some examples are outlined below:

- The City of South Perth has introduced separated pedestrian and cycle paths and bicycle parking in Sir James Mitchell Park;
- The Town of Victoria Park has a workplace program that provides staff with a bicycle if they commit to riding to work for a year as well as implementing a range of walking and cycling infrastructure throughout the community;
- The City of Subiaco partly funds a shuttle bus service that connects the University of Western Australia, Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre and Rokeby Road to the Subiaco train station.

Excluding the cost of the land, a multi-level car park costs between \$30,000 and \$50,000 per bay to construct and an open air public car bay costs at least \$2,500.²

Elizabeth II Medical Centre and Rokeby Road to the Subiaco train station.



- The City of Swan and the City of Subiaco have both introduced a travel allowance scheme to encourage staff to choose active transport to work.
- The City of Gosnells has allocated significant resources to improving infrastructure including rehabilitation of existing footpaths, construction of new shared paths, dedicated cycleways on roadsides, and a bridle/walk trail.
- The City of Nedlands has amended its Town Planning Scheme to facilitate the installation of end of trip cycling facilities in new developments (where deemed appropriate);
- The City of Perth has provided a dedicated bicycle parking facility at the Elder Street Car Park and is in the process of implementing a bike plan; and,
- The City of Joondalup's TravelSmart Officer provided local support to assist with the delivery of the TravelSmart Household program to the City's residents.

To find out more contact:

The Department of Transport

Email: travelsmart@transport.wa.gov.au
Phone: (08) 92168000 (ask for TravelSmart)
Website: www.transport.wa.gov.au/travelsmart

The following websites provide information on:

Encouraging cycling

www.transport.wa.gov.au/cycling
www.bfa.asn.au

Encouraging walking

www.transport.wa.gov.au/walking
www.walkinginfo.org

About the Physical Activity Taskforce

The Physical Activity Taskforce (Taskforce) was formed in 2001 to oversee the development and delivery of a whole of government, whole of community approach to increasing physical activity levels in Western Australia.

The Taskforce brings together the expertise of a number of state government departments, local governments, leading academics and non-government representatives.

www.beactive.wa.gov.au

² Department of Planning (2011). Unpublished communication.



It's how you get there that counts



Government of Western Australia
Department of Transport

be active wa
Physical Activity Taskforce