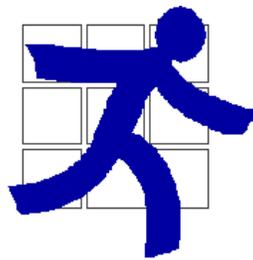


# **2004 National Transportation Survey**



**Prepared by Sue Cragg**

**Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute**

Originally submitted to *Go For Green*

**January, 2006**

## ***Background and Acknowledgements***

This report was originally submitted to *Go for Green* as a report on survey findings for subsequent publication and promotion. The Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute gratefully acknowledges the legacy of *Go for Green* and the permission granted for us to publish this report.

*Suggested citation:* Cragg, S., Cameron C., and Craig, C.L. (2006) 2004 National Transportation Survey. Ottawa, ON: Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute.

## Introduction

- The 2004 National Transportation study was conducted on behalf of *Go for Green* and the *Public Health Agency of Canada*, as a follow up to the 1998 Active Transportation Survey, to provide trend and additional information to the previous baseline data.
- The objective of this report is to present the data and compare findings to the 1998 National Survey on Active Transportation.
- The survey examines opportunities and participation in active transportation and commuting (walking and cycling) in adults and school aged children.
- Interviews were conducted by the Institute for Social Research (ISR), York University with 1,640 Canadians aged 15 and older during 2004. The sample distribution was roughly proportional to size of province and is exhibited in the sidebar. Data were weighted to ensure representativeness of Canadians overall.
- Data were collected via computer-assisted telephone interviews using a two-step selection design of using a random digit dial technique to select an eligible household and then using random selection of a household member with the closest birth date. The response rate was just over 50%, exceeding that of most commercial surveys.
- Data are cross-sectional and analyses are descriptive: they describe associations between factors that should not be construed as causal relationships.

	Frequency
<b>Province/ Territory</b>	<b>Sample</b>
Newfoundland	30
Prince Edward Island	7
Nova Scotia	48
New Brunswick	39
Quebec	403
Ontario	608
Manitoba	58
Saskatchewan	53
Alberta	172
British Columbia	216
Yukon	2
Northwest Territories	2

## **Key findings**

- While some data cannot be directly compared, in general, 2004 findings are similar to those of 1998. Perceived barriers, benefits and attitudes toward active transportation have not changed.
- There seems to be a decrease in walking as a leisure or recreational activity. In addition, while the prevalence of walking to a routine destination at least sometimes has increased, the prevalence of having walked there at least half the time has decreased, suggesting that people may be walking less.
- Cycling for leisure and recreation, and for utilitarian travel has increased.
- Opportunities exist to encourage Canadians to walk or cycle to nearby destinations more often.
- Fewer people live within a reasonable walking distance (2.5 km) of at least one routine destination compared to 1998. The majority of Canadians live within reasonable cycling distance (8 km).
- Exercise and health is seen as the main benefit to walking and cycling. Practicality and convenience, and pleasure are also frequently cited benefits.
- Distance or environment, weather, and the constraints of time or work are the most frequently cited barriers to choosing cycling or walking more often as a mode of transportation.
- Canadians would like to walk and cycle more. Many have increased the amount they have done so in the past year and there is a certain willingness to increase the number of trips to routine destinations to more active modes.
- While some factors cannot be controlled (health and weather) there are many changes or improvements that can be made that Canadians agree would help them to choose walking and cycling more. These include improvements to safety, routes (in terms of existence, linkages, aesthetics and maintenance) and tax incentives.
- Canadians feel that governments have a role to play in supporting active transportation, both in terms of spending and through taking responsibility in other ways.
- Most Canadians agree that they have pleasant places to walk near their home.
- Most Canadians are uneasy about traffic safety when it comes to cycling.
- Half of children do not walk and three-quarters do not cycle to school and the main reason for this, as cited by parents, is that the school is too far.
- While safety is somewhat of a concern, many parents who do not think it is safe to walk or cycle to school state that an improvement in safety would not change the likelihood that their child would travel to school using an active mode.

## Walking

### Level of participation

- 78% of Canadians walk as a leisure or recreational activity; however in 1998, 85% walked for leisure and recreational reasons.
- 67% of Canadians walked to at least one routine destination, at least sometimes, in the twelve months prior to the survey. This is an increase from 1998, when 58% reported walking as a mode of transportation to a routine destination, at least sometimes, in the past twelve months.
- 36% walked to at least one routine destination more than half the time: In 1998, 43% of Canadians walked at least half the time in the twelve months prior to their being surveyed.
- Overall 54% of Canadians live within reasonable walking distance (2.5 km) of at least one routine destination. It appears from the 1998 data, although the exact definition cannot be confirmed, that 64% of Canadians lived within 2.5 kilometres of at least one routine destination. In 2004:
  - Typically<sup>1</sup>, Canadians who walk to leisure and recreation opportunities, to work or to their child's school, at least sometimes, walk a distance of about 3 km.
  - Canadians typically walk a distance of 2 kilometres when they visit friends and family, or go shopping and run errands at least sometimes.
  - Those who walk to the nearest public transit stop, at least sometimes, typically walk half a kilometre and those who walk to their child's school bus stop, at least sometimes, typically walk about 400 metres.

### Walking to routine destinations<sup>2</sup>

#### Work

- Overall, 29% of Canadians walked to work at least sometimes in the twelve months prior to the survey.
  - Those with household incomes of under \$20,000 annually are more likely to report having walked to work at least sometimes than those who reported household income levels of greater than \$60,000 annually
- 74% of those who live a reasonable distance from work had walked at least sometimes and 33% did so more than half the time.

#### Visiting friends and family

- Overall, 48% of Canadians had walked to the friends or family they most often visit at least sometimes in the twelve months prior to the survey.
  - Those with the lowest household incomes are more likely to report having done so than those in higher income brackets

---

<sup>1</sup> Calculated using median distance.

<sup>2</sup> The data in this section *cannot* be compared to the reported figures from 1998. It appears that the 1998 analyses were based on people who lived a reasonable distance from *any* destination whereas this analysis is based on distance from the specific destination (e.g., Work travel is examined in terms of those who live a reasonable distance from work.) Also there is a conflict between the numbers in the 1998 report and the statistical tables.

- 75% of those who live a reasonable distance from friends and family had walked to go visit them at least sometimes and 40% did so more than half the time.

**The place they usually shop and do errands**

- Overall, 49% of Canadians reported having walked to the place they usually shop and do errands at least sometimes in the twelve months prior to the survey.
  - Those who live in cities with populations greater than 100,000 are more likely to have done so than those who live in smaller cities.
- 67% of those who live a reasonable distance from shopping and places to run errands had done so at least sometimes and 29% did so more than half the time.

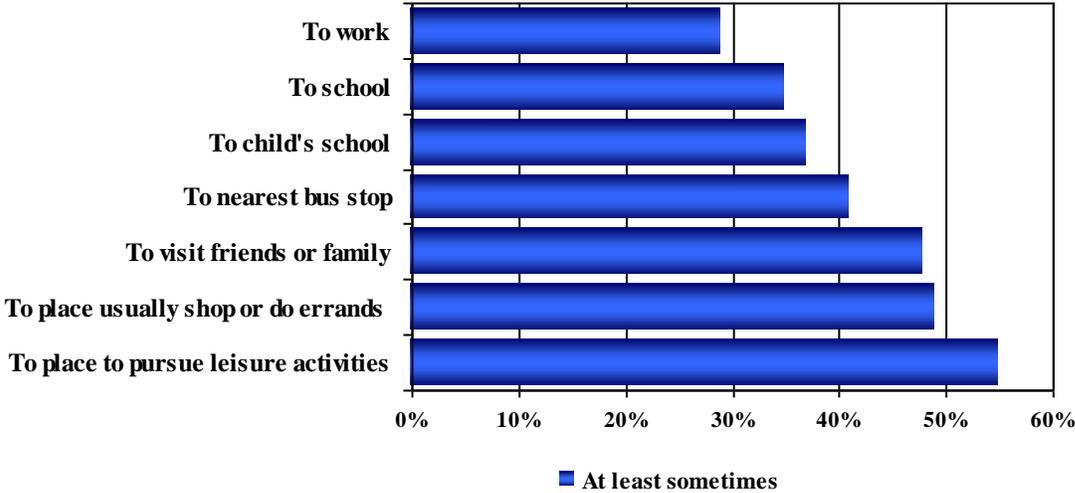
**The place they most often pursue leisure activities**

- Overall, 55% of Canadians had walked to the place they most often pursue leisure activities at least sometimes in the twelve months prior to the survey
  - Those aged 18-24 are more likely to report having done so than those aged 55 or older.
- 72% of those who live a reasonable distance from leisure or recreational opportunities report having walked there at least sometimes and 36% did so more than half the time.

**School**

- 35% of Canadian students reported having walked to school at least sometimes in the twelve months prior to being surveyed.

**Walking or Wheeling to Routine Destinations in the previous twelve months**



## Walking to other Destinations

### Child's school

- Overall, 37% of parents walked to their child's school at least sometimes in the prior twelve months.
- 61% of those who live a reasonable distance from their child's school report having walked at least sometimes.

### Public transit stop

- Overall, 41% of Canadians walked to the nearest public transit stop at least sometimes in the twelve months prior to the survey
  - Those aged 18 – 24 are the least likely to have stated that they *never* walked to a public transit stop, as are those who live in households with a reported annual income of less than \$20,000, and those who live in the largest communities
- 48% of those who live a reasonable distance from the nearest public transit stop reported having walked at least sometimes.

## Cycling

### Level of participation

- 60% of Canadian adults own or have use of a bicycle and this proportion has remained unchanged from 1998. In 2004:
  - 54% of women and 67% of men report owning or having use of a bicycle.
  - Those reporting at least \$30,000 in household income are more likely to report bicycle ownership than those reporting a lower figure.
  - Residents of Montreal are more likely than those who live in Toronto or Vancouver to report bicycle ownership.
- 82% of Canadians cycle for leisure or recreation. In 1998, only 48% of Canadians reported that they cycled for leisure or recreation purposes.
- Overall, 64% of Canadians cycle to at least one routine destination at least sometimes. This is an increase from 1998, when only 26% of Canadians stated that they cycled to a routine destination at least sometimes.
- 17% of Canadians cycle more than half the time. This figure has not changed from 1998, where 14% did so at least half the time in the twelve months prior to their being surveyed.
- Overall 83% of Canadians live within reasonable cycling distance (8 km) of at least one routine destination:
  - Typically Canadians who cycle at least sometimes to the place they usually do recreation or leisure travel about 4.8 km.
  - If they cycle at least sometimes to the place they usually do their shopping or errands, they typically travel 2.5km.
  - Those who cycle at least sometimes to visit friends and family typically travel 4 km.
  - Cycling to work at least sometimes entails typical trips of 5 km.

### Cycling to routine destinations<sup>3</sup>

#### Work

- Overall, 76% of Canadians *never* cycled to their workplace in the twelve months prior to being surveyed. This proportion increases slightly to 78% if the response ‘never bikes anywhere’ is included.
  - Those with incomes of less than \$20,000 are least likely to say they never bike to work.
- 36% of those who live within a reasonable distance had cycled to work at least sometimes.

#### Visiting friends and family

- Overall, 48% of Canadians had *never* bicycled to the friends or family they visit most often over the previous twelve months to the survey.

---

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 2.

- 56% of those who live a reasonable distance from friends and family had cycled to visit them at least sometimes.

**The place they usually shop and do errands**

- Overall, 64% of Canadians *never* bicycled to the place they usually shop or do errands over the previous twelve months.
- 39% of those who live a reasonable distance from shopping and places to run errands had cycled there at least some times.

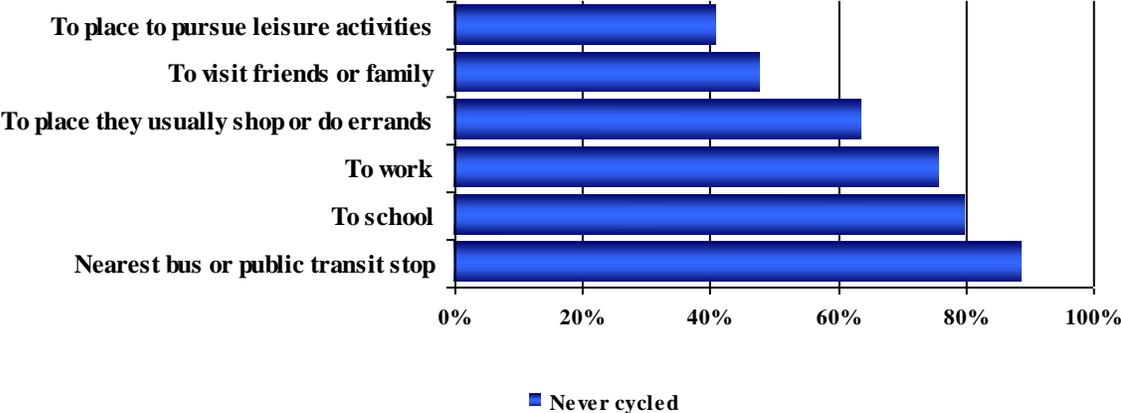
**The place they most often pursue leisure activities**

- Overall, 41% *never* bicycled to the place they most often pursue leisure activities in the previous twelve months.
- 62% of those who owned a bicycle reported that they had cycled to the place they most often pursue leisure activities at least sometimes and 16% did so more than half the time.

**School**

- 80% of students reported *never* having cycled to school in the twelve months prior to being surveyed.

**Never Cycled to Routine Destinations in the previous twelve months**



**Cycling to other destinations**

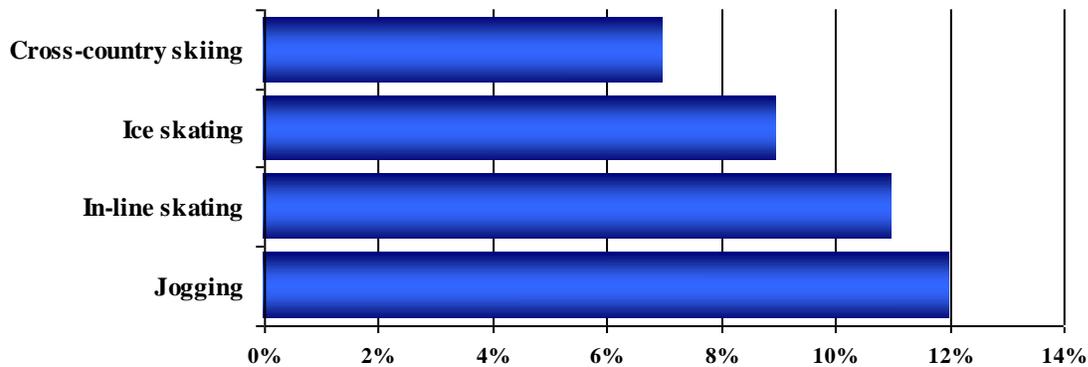
**Public transit stop**

- Overall, 89% of Canadians (and an additional 2% who never bike anywhere) had *never* biked to the nearest bus or public transit stop to home over the previous past twelve months.
- 8% of those who lived within 8 kilometres of their nearest public transit stop and who owned a bicycle had cycled there at least sometimes.

## Other transportation

- About 27% of adults work at home or telecommute.
- 62% of Canadian adults travel to work by car most of the time, 9% always do, and 11% never do.
- 86% own or have regular use of a car.
- Currently 52% of Canadians never travel by public transit and an additional 27% rarely do. 11% travel by public transit most of the time or always.
  - Those aged 18-24 are less likely than Canadians overall to say they never or rarely take public transit, while Canadians in the oldest age group are the most likely to say they never or rarely take public transit.
  - The percentage that never or rarely do increases with greater levels of household income.
  - Taking public transit is more prevalent in Montréal, Toronto and Vancouver than elsewhere in Canada.
  - Taking public transit is more likely to be reported by residents of cities with more than one million people than by those who live in smaller cities.
- Other ways that people have used to travel to work, school, visit friends, run errands or go other places include jogging (12%), in-line skates (11%), ice skates (9%) and cross country skis (7%).

**Other Modes of Traveling to Work used in the previous twelve months**



# Benefits of, and Barriers to, Walking and Cycling

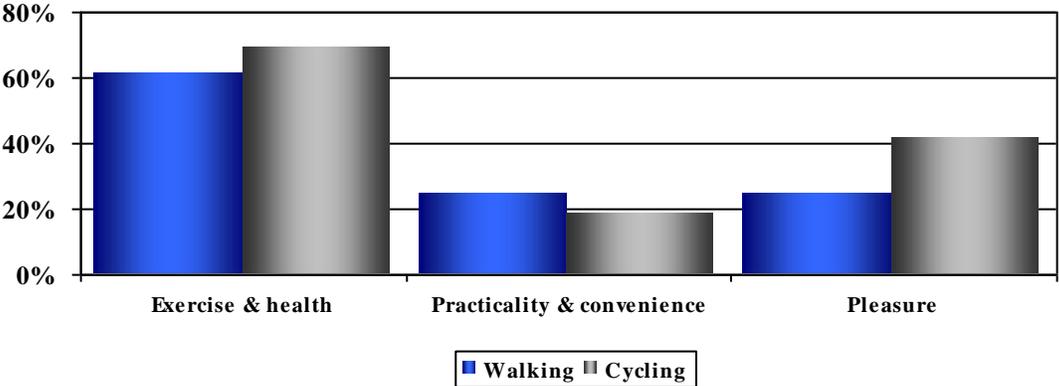
## Walking

- People state that main reasons they choose to walk as a mode of transportation are exercise and health (61%), practicality and convenience (24%), and pleasure (24%). The importance of these reasons has not changed from 1998.
- The main thing preventing Canadians from choosing walking as a mode of transportation more often than they do is distance or environment (42%), followed by time or work (20%), the weather or climate (18%), convenience, car or baggage (15%), health or age (twelve%) and lack of motivation or interest (9%). In 1998 barriers mentioned were not substantially different.
- An analysis of the proportion of people citing walking benefits by whether or not they lived within a reasonable walking distance of routine destinations did not reveal any differences in perception of benefits by distance. The barriers of ‘distance’ and ‘time or work’ are of greater importance to those who lived more than 2.5 kilometres from routine destinations.

## Cycling

- The main reasons people choose to cycle as a mode of transportation are exercise and health (69%), pleasure (41%), practicality and convenience (18%), and environmental concerns (14%). The proportion mentioning these reasons has not changed since 1998.
- The main thing preventing Canadians from choosing cycling as a mode of transportation more often than they do is the weather (29%), followed by distance or environment (28%), safety in traffic, storage, or security (17%), time (15%), and practicality (children, lack of shower, etc.) (11%).
- An analysis of the proportion of people citing cycling benefits by whether or not they lived within a reasonable distance of routine destinations revealed that people who lived within a reasonable cycling distance from at least one destination are more likely to cite exercise and health as a benefit of cycling than those who lived further away from all routine destinations. Those who lived within a reasonable distance are more likely to cite weather as a barrier.

Reasons to Walk or Cycle for Transportation



## ***Opportunities for Promoting Walking and Bicycling***

- Overall 54% of Canadians live within reasonable walking distance (2.5 km) of at least one routine destination:
  - 30% live within reasonable walking distance of the places where they go for leisure or recreation opportunities.
  - 39% live within reasonable walking distance of the place they usually shop and do errands.
  - 27% live within reasonable walking distance of the friends or family they visit most often.
  - 17% live within reasonable walking distance of their workplace.
  - 75% of Canadians live within reasonable walking distance of the nearest public transit stop to their home.
  - 93% of Canadian parents live within reasonable walking distance of their child's school bus stop.
  - 44% of Canadian parents live within reasonable walking distance of their child's school.
- Overall, 83% of Canadians live within reasonable cycling distance (8 km) of at least one routine destination:
  - 62% live within reasonable cycling distance of the places where they go for leisure or recreation opportunities.
  - 71% live within reasonable cycling distance of the place they usually shop and do errands.
  - 50% live within reasonable cycling distance of the friends or family they visit most often.
  - 41% live within reasonable cycling distance of their workplace.
  - 83% of Canadians live within reasonable cycling distance of the nearest public transit stop to their home.
  - 96% of Canadian parents live within reasonable cycling distance of their child's school bus stop.
  - 71% of Canadian parents live within reasonable cycling distance of their child's school.
- 45% of respondents have changed the amount they walk compared with the previous year. Overall 61% say that it has increased.
  - The proportion who have changed the amount they walk diminishes with age. Those who are in the oldest age group are least likely to have made a change.
  - For those who increased the amount they walked (or wheeled) in the past year, the main reasons for doing so are health (36%), recreation or exercise (26%) and distance or environment (14%).
  - For those who decreased, the main reasons for walking (or wheeling) less often in the past year include health (29%), work or time commitments (22%), convenience (20%) and distance or environment (15%).
- 15% of people would like to bicycle much more in an ideal situation, 60% would like to do more, and 22% would like to maintain their current level.

- 39% of adults have changed the amount they cycled compared to the previous year. Half of those who made a change cycle more often.
  - For those who increased the amount they cycled, the main reasons are recreation and exercise (40%), and health (22%).
  - For those who decreased their cycling in the past year, the main reasons for doing so are work or time (26%), and health (18%).

## ***Facilitating Walking and Bicycling***

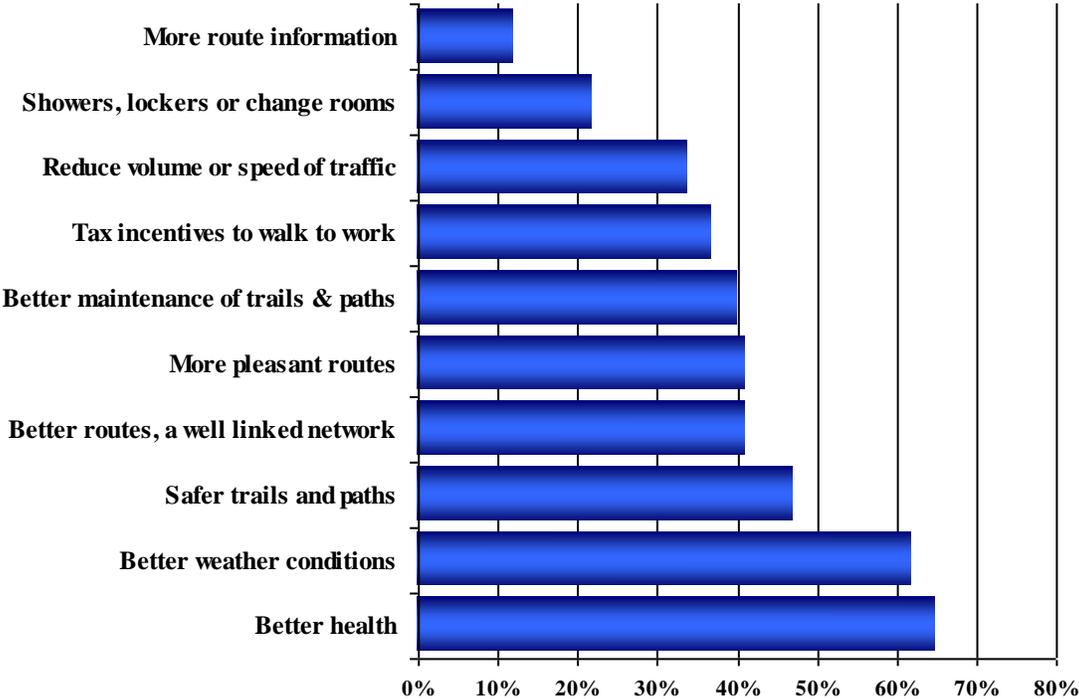
### **Walking**

Respondents were asked if any of a list of possible changes would help them to walk (wheel) as a mode of transportation more often than they do now.

- 65% cited better health as something that would help them.
  - Canadians with the lowest household income level are more likely to cite this than those who had the highest level.
- 62% felt an improvement in weather conditions would make it easier to choose walking more often.
  - Weather was more of a factor for women than for men.
- 47% of respondents stated that safer trails and paths (i.e., lighting, security patrols) would help them.
  - Women are more likely to cite this than men.
  - Safer trails and paths are of greater importance to 18-24 year olds, and to those who report the highest levels of household income, than Canadians overall.
  - Residents of the smallest communities are less likely than those who live in the largest communities to cite this as an incentive.
- 41% state that better routes, and a well-linked network of continuous sidewalks, walking trails, and paths would help them.
  - Respondents in the oldest age group are less likely to cite this as an aid.
- 41% stated that more pleasant routes with better scenery would make them more likely to make this choice.
  - Respondents with household incomes of less than \$20,000 are the most likely to believe this would help them to walk as a mode of transportation while those with household incomes of \$60,000 or more are least likely.
  - Support for this is higher among respondents in the 18-24 year old group.
- 40% cite better maintenance of trails and paths.
  - The youngest respondents are most likely to cite this as an aid while the oldest respondents are least likely.
  - Respondents with the lowest level of household income are the most likely to believe this would help them to walk as a mode of transportation while those with the highest level are least likely.
- 37% felt that tax incentives from governments to walk (or wheel) to work would assist them in choosing walking as a transportation mode more often.
- 35% felt that a reduction in the volume or speed of traffic would help them.
  - This factor was more important to women than men.

- 22% stated that showers, lockers or change rooms at the workplace, school, or in the community would help them.
- 12% of respondents stated that more information on routes would help them.

**Facilitating Walking**



**Cycling**

- 39% of Canadians have changed the amount they bike compared to the previous twelve months. Overall half of those who made a change increased the amount.
  - The main reasons people cycled more often in the previous year were health (23%) and recreation or exercise (40%).
  - The main reasons that they cycled less often over the past year were health (19%) and the demands of work or time (26%).
- 65% of Canadian adults somewhat (22%) or strongly agree (43%) that if there was a dedicated bike lane which would take them to their workplace in less than 30 minutes at a comfortable pace, they would definitely use it.
  - Younger Canadians are more likely to agree than older Canadians, as are those with the lowest levels of household income when compared to those with the highest.

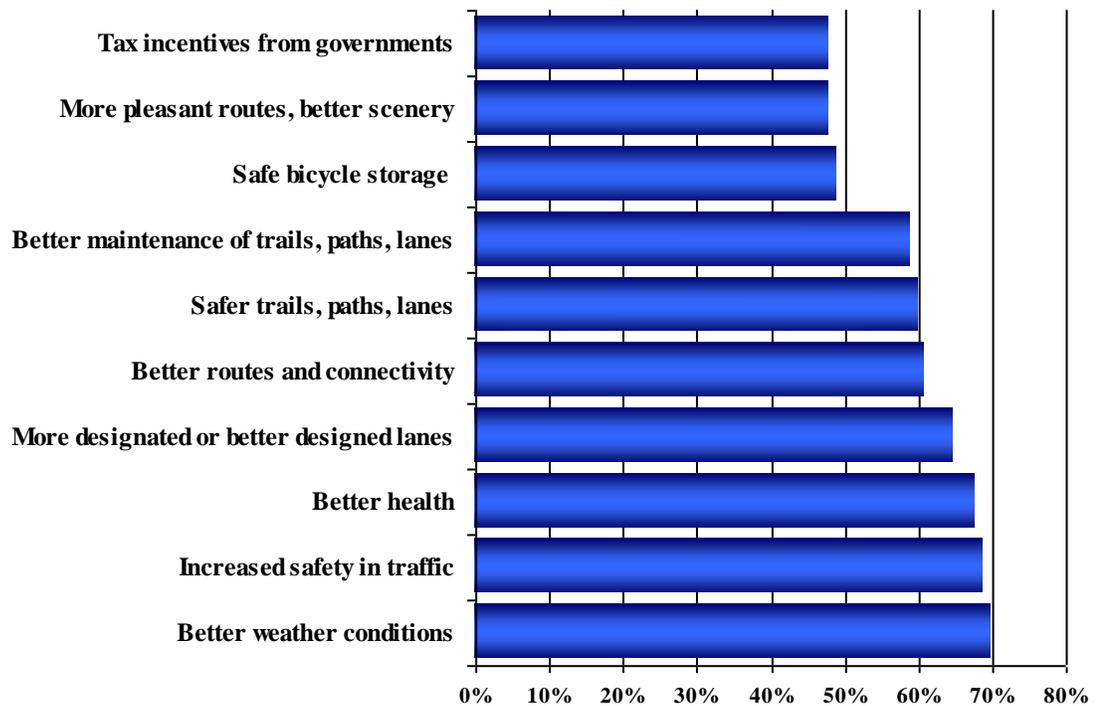
Respondents were asked about a number of possible actions which many help them to bicycle more often than they do currently.

- 70% cite better weather conditions would help.

- 69% state that increased safety in traffic would assist them to cycle more.
  - This factor is less likely to be identified as an incentive by successively older age groups.
  - This factor appears to diminish in importance with decreasing population size of a respondent's community.
- 68% cite better health.
- 65% state that more designated and better designed cycling lanes on roadways would help them to cycle more.
  - This factor is more likely to be an attractive incentive to the university educated.
- 61% state that better routes, with a well linked network of continuous cycling trails, paths or laneways to key locations in the community would help.
  - Women are more likely to say this than men.
- 60% of the population state that safer trails, paths and lanes (i.e., lighting, security patrols) would help them to cycle more.
  - This was cited with greater frequency among women than men.
  - This safety concern was most important to those living in a city with a population of one million or greater.
- 59% state that better maintenance of trails, paths and cycling lanes would help them to choose cycling as a mode of transportation more often.
  - This factor diminishes in importance with decreasing community size.
- 49% state that safe bicycle storage facilities at work or in the community would assist them in taking their bicycle more.
  - Those in the youngest age group are most likely to state it is important.
- 48% stated that tax incentives from governments would help.
- 48% state that more pleasant routes and better scenery would aid their traveling more frequently by bicycle.
- 37% of Canadians believe that an increased amount of bicycle racks at work or in the community would help them to cycle more.
  - The likelihood of citing this as an incentive declines with successively older age groups.
  - The popularity of bicycle racks at work or in the community increases with population size.
- 32% state that bicycle storage facilities at major bus and transit stations would help.
  - Montréal residents are more likely to claim that this would help.
  - Residents of cities with populations of one million or more are more likely to state that this is important.

- 31% state that more information on bicycle routes, including maps and guides, would help them.
  - Receptivity to this factor declines with successively older age groups.
  - Such information is more greatly desired by those living in communities with populations of one million or greater.
- 24% state that adding lockers, showers or change rooms at the workplace, school or in the community would help them to cycle more often.

### Facilitating Cycling

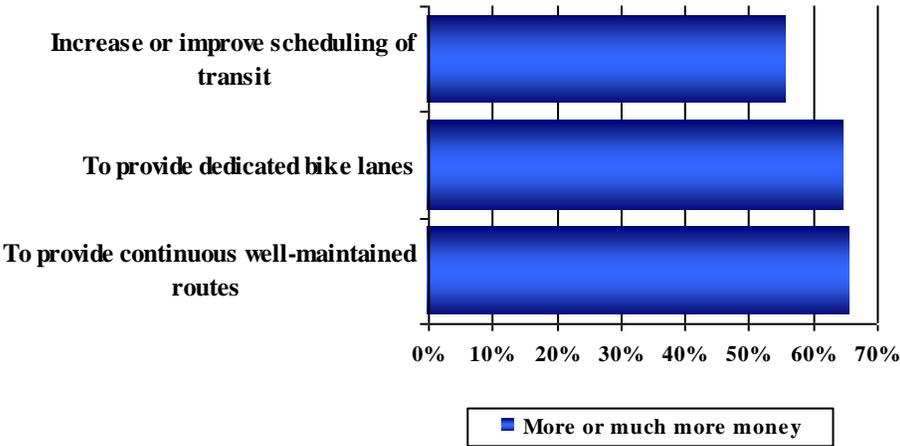


**Support for Government Involvement**

Canadians were asked about the extent to which they would support government investment or spending to support walking and bicycling as active transportation:

- 10% of Canadians felt that governments should spend much more money, 56% felt more money should be spent, and 27% specified the same amount, to provide continuous routes of well-maintained sidewalks, paths and trails to get from place to place.
  - Increased spending was more likely to be supported by Montréal residents than Vancouver residents.
- 15% stated that governments should spend much more, and 50% stated that more money should be spent to provide dedicated bike lanes on roadways.
- 16% felt that much more should be spent and 40% felt that more should be spent by governments to increase the amount or improve scheduling of public transportation.

**Support for Government Investment in Active Transportation**

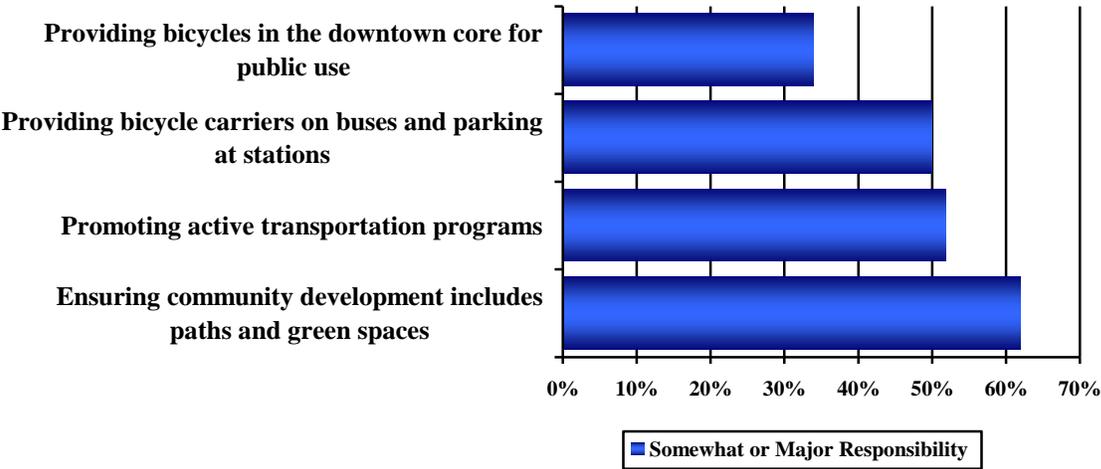


Respondents were asked the degree of responsibility they thought governments should have for each of the following:

- Ensuring that community development includes walking and bike paths and green spaces. Overall 62% agree that there should be at least some responsibility (35% see it as a major responsibility and 27% as some responsibility).
- Ensuring public transportation enables active commuting by providing bicycle carriers on buses, and providing for bicycle parking at transit connections. Overall half of Canadians believe there should be at least some responsibility (27% see it as a major responsibility, and 23% believe there should be some).
- Promoting active transportation programs including Rails to Trails, Walk to School Day, and the Commuter Challenge. Half (52%) of Canadians see it as a responsibility of governments (25% cite some responsibility and 27% cite a major responsibility).
  - Women are more likely than men to say that governments have a major responsibility.

- Providing inexpensive bicycles in the downtown core for public use. Overall, 34% of Canadians agree there should be some level of responsibility (14% cite that there should be some, while 20% see it as a major responsibility).
  - Canadians who fall into the youngest age group are much more likely to cite government responsibility for this than those in the oldest age group.
  - Those who live in households with under \$20,000 of annual income are more likely to cite government responsibility than those with annual household incomes of \$60,000 or greater.
- 84% of Canadian adults somewhat or strongly agree that they would support spending government money on more dedicated bicycle paths in their community to make streets safer for cyclists, cars and pedestrians. This has not changed since 1998.

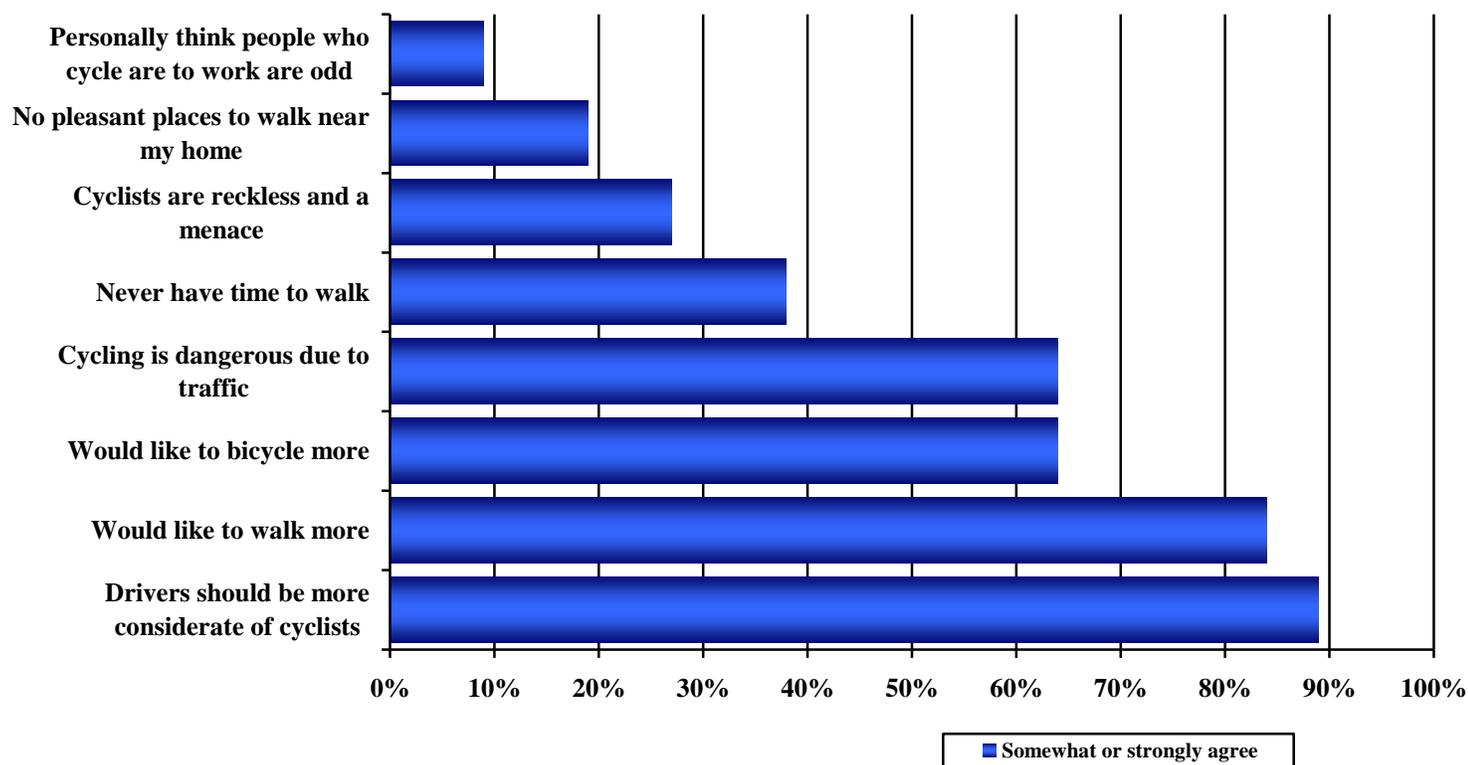
**Government Responsibility**



## Attitudes toward walking and cycling

- 49% of adults strongly agree that they would like to walk more than they do at present and 35% somewhat agree. The proportions of people who agree have not changed since 1998.
  - Women are more likely to strongly agree than men.
- 16% strongly agree and 22% somewhat agree that they never have time to walk. The same proportions of people felt this way in 1998.
- 33% of adults strongly agree that they would like to cycle more than they do at present and 31% somewhat agree. There was no change in overall proportions since 1998.
  - Men are more likely to agree overall than women (There were no gender differences in 1998).
  - Québec residents most likely to say so than Canadians overall.
  - Residents of Vancouver are much less likely to agree than residents of Montréal.
- 80% of Canadians strongly or somewhat disagree that there are no pleasant places to walk near their home. There has been no change since 1998.

### Opinions about Active Transportation



- Two thirds of respondents agree to some extent that cycling on the streets in their community is dangerous because of vehicle traffic.
  - Respondents with the highest levels of household income are less likely to feel this way than those with the lowest levels of income. This was also true in 1998.

- People who live in communities with populations of less than 10,000 are less likely to agree.
- Almost one third of Canadians agree with the statement that *most Canadians* view people who bicycle to work as ‘a little odd’ (10% strongly agree and 20% somewhat agree). This is up from the roughly one quarter of Canadians who agreed in 1998.
- Very few (9%) respondents *personally* agree (either somewhat or strongly) that people who bicycle to work are a little odd. There has been no change since 1998.
- 27% of Canadians agree that cyclists in their community are reckless and a major menace to pedestrians and cars (9% agree and 18% strongly agree). There has been no change since 1998.
  - Retired individuals are more likely to agree than Canadians overall
- The vast majority of Canadians agree (58% strongly and 31% somewhat agree) that vehicle drivers should be much more considerate and aware of cyclists than they are at present. There has been no change since 1998.

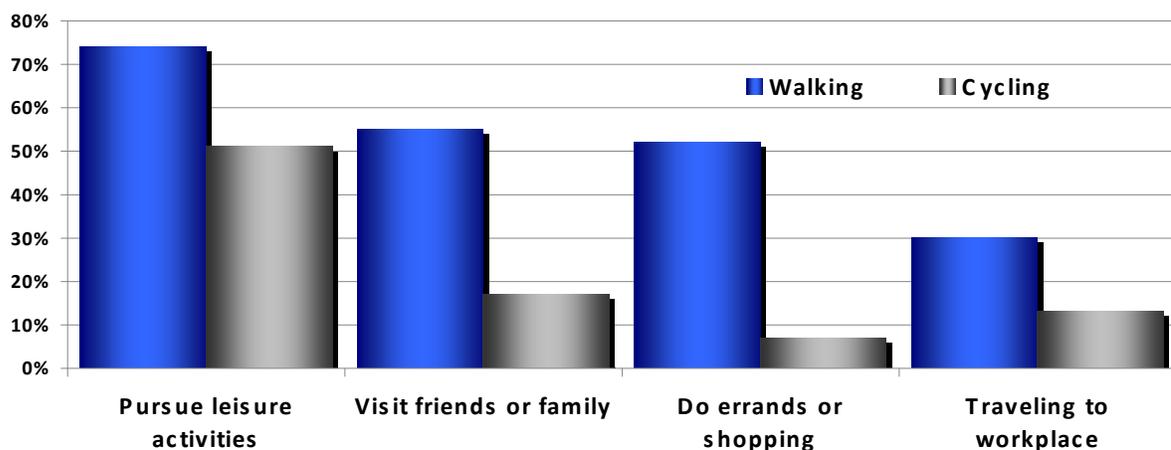
## Potential Shifts to Walking and Bicycling as Modes of Transportation

- Only 18% of Canadians never or rarely travel to work by car while 62% do so most of the time.
- 86% of Canadians aged 18 or older have regular use of a car.
  - There is increased reporting of car use with increasing income levels.
  - Regular use of a car is less likely to be reported by residents of cities with populations greater than 100,000 than by residents of smaller communities.

Of the trips that people would be most willing to do more often by walking (wheeling)<sup>4</sup>:

- 30% stated willingness to walk to their workplace.
- 52% were willing to do errands and shopping.
  - Residents of cities with populations of more than 1 million are more likely than those who live in the smallest communities.
- 55% would walk to visit friends or family.
  - The willingness to do so decreases with successively older age groups.
  - Those with annual household incomes of more than \$60,000 are less likely than those with incomes of less than \$20,000.
  - The likelihood of being willing becomes greater as community size decreases.
- 74% would do so to pursue leisure activities.
  - Canadians in the oldest age group are least likely to be willing.
- 46% would go to school.

### Willing to Travel Actively More Often



Respondents were asked which of the following trips would they be most willing to do more often by bicycling:

- 51% would do so to pursue leisure activities.
- 17% would be willing to visit friends or family.

<sup>4</sup> Not compared to 1998 due to sub-sampling issues.

- 13% would be willing to travel to the workplace.
- 7% would be willing to run errands and shopping.

When asked how willing they would be to take each of the following actions to reduce vehicle air pollution in their area, adults would be somewhat or definitely willing to:

- take public transit twice a week more than they currently do (47% would be willing: 20% would definitely be willing and 27% would be somewhat willing). 13% state that there is no public transit available to them.
  - Adults aged 18-24 are more likely to be willing than those aged 55 and older.
  - Those with annual household incomes of greater than \$60,000 are less likely to be willing than others.
  - While willingness to take public transit more often decreases with community population it is much less likely to be available in communities with population of less than 10,000.
- walk or ride a bike instead of driving for two or more shorter trips per week (70% would be willing: 32% would definitely be willing and 38% somewhat willing).
  - Adults aged 18-24 would be the most willing while those over the age of 55 would be the least willing.
  - Students are more likely to be willing than Canadians overall.
- share a ride with others twice more a week (69% would be willing: 38% would definitely be willing, and 31% would be somewhat willing).
  - Women are more likely than men to be willing to do this.
  - Willingness is more prevalent in younger age groups than older.
  - Individuals with the lowest household income levels are much more likely to be willing than those in the highest household income group.

## **Active transportation and children**

- 21% of parents report that they live within one kilometre of their child's school, 26% report a distance of between 1 and 3 kilometres, 13% report a distance of 3 to 5 kilometres, and 39% report a distance of more than 5 kilometres.
- In 2004, 88% of Canadian children owned a bicycle and there was no difference by household income level. This is not statistically different from parental reports in 1998, where 91% of children are reported as owning a bicycle.
- About half (54%) of parents report that their child does not take the school bus to get to school. The proportion who never do decreases as city population decreases. In 1998 a similar proportion of parents reported that their children did not take the school bus and the relationship to community size was also present.

### **Walking:**

- Half of children never walk to school while 17% of children report that they do so most of the time and 6% said they always do. This has not changed from 1998.
- When asked for the main reason their child does not walk to school more often, 48% of parents say the school is too far to walk to. The proportion of parents reporting this is not different from 1998 reports.
- 40% say it is very safe and 33% say it is fairly safe to walk to school in their community. Ratings have not changed since 1998.
- Traffic is the main concern when safety is an issue for walking to school as it was in 1998.
- If safety were improved, it would *not* change the amount a child walks to school for 59% of parents who do not feel it is safe. This figure has not changed since 1998.
- Of children who take the school bus 78% walk to the school bus from home. The likelihood of taking the school bus increases as city population size increases. In 1998, only 68% walked from the school bus to home while a greater percentage did not have to because the school bus stopped in front of their house. The community size related increase in school bus ridership was not seen in 1998.

### **Cycling:**

- Three-quarters of children *never* used their bicycle to get to school in 2004 and this figure has increased from the 64% who said they never did in 1998.
- 33% of parents state that the main reason their child does not cycle to school is that it is too far while 20% of parents cite traffic safety as the main reason. The prevalence of these reasons is not different from 1998.
- 27% say it is very safe and 39% say it is fairly safe to cycle to school in their community and these figures have not changed significantly since 1998.
- Traffic is the main concern when safety is an issue (cited by 55% of parents in 2004); however it seems to be less of a concern to parents than it was in 1998 when 88% of parents who felt that it was fairly or very unsafe to do so cited traffic as the reason.

- If cycling were made ‘very safe’, it would *not* change the amount a child cycles to school for 63% of parents who feel it is not safe. This is an increase from 1998 when 47% of parents who did not feel it was safe said that if cycling to school were very safe then their child would cycle no more often than they already did.

**Public Transit:**

- Very few children take public transit to get to school (80% of parents say children never do)
  - The likelihood of a child taking public transit to school decreases with increasing household income.
- This overall figure is not different from parental reports from 1998; however the income pattern was not present.

**Other ways of getting to school**

- 43% of parents say their child never gets to school via a car or other family vehicle. In 1998 30% said they never do. In 2004 22% were driven most of the time or always, while the proportion who were driven nearly all the time in 1998 was 13%. While this increase in traveling to school by private vehicle is a disturbing trend, as the percentage of children who are driven to school has increased over time. It is unknown whether this reflects a change in school location (although there was no difference in the percentage of parents who said the school was too far to walk to), parental beliefs, or time constraints, or some other factor.

**Transportation to School**

