

**Increasing Active  
Transportation in York  
Region**

**Draft Report**

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## Introduction

This report profiles active transportation<sup>1</sup> in York Region and suggests mechanisms to increase its activity based on actions taken by other jurisdictions. Over the past decade, Decima Research has conducted numerous studies of cycling activity in several Ontario municipalities. These reports, along with similar publications on walking research (detailed in the Appendix), have been synthesized in order to provide a sample of some of the key findings that are most relevant to York Region. In addition, these key findings help provide a profile of York Region from other jurisdictions. It is the objective of this report, as part of the York Region Pedestrian & Cycling Master Plan Study, to provide the necessary background information which will allow York Region to take important steps that will promote active transportation among its residents.

## 1.0 Transportation Vision for York Region

York Region officials have articulated a number of long-term goals with respect to active transportation. Goal number seven of the Region's Vision 2026 reads: "In 2026, York Region will have efficient and environmentally sensitive transportation, waste management and water systems." In order to achieve this goal, specific action areas are identified including: "Continuing to improve service and infrastructure for successfully integrating transit service," and "Enhancing the provision of specialized transit services." These goals have been further entrenched in the York Region Official Plan (November 2005), which defines one of Council's objectives as "to promote and facilitate walking, cycling and trails."

### Benefits of Active Transportation

#### Fitness

According to Health Canada, "Canadians live a car-centred lifestyle taking away a great opportunity to incorporate physical activity into their daily lives." There are now 2.8 million obese Canadians between the ages of 20 and 64 – one out of every seven adults. Health Canada urges the promotion of active transportation in order to produce significant health benefits: "Moderate physical activities, such as walking and cycling, reduce the risk of premature death, heart disease, obesity, high blood pressure and many other diseases and disorders."

#### Air Quality

According to Environment Canada, "...transportation in urban centres causes 78% of air pollution. Two thirds of these pollutants are responsible for smog, a phenomenon that causes respiratory illnesses in young people and seniors." In 2003, Ontario's Ministry of the Environment issued five smog advisories covering 12 days for York Region. In its Vision 2026 document, York Region recognizes that promoting alternative transportation such as walking and cycling serves to increase air quality.

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<sup>1</sup> Active Transportation can be defined as any human-powered form of transportation. For the purposes of this report, the scope of this term will focus on cycling and walking.

## 2.0 What We Know About York Region

### Population

York Region is currently home to approximately 900,000 residents – a figure that is expected to increase to 1.3 million by the year 2026. In addition to this growth, York Region will also experience an aging population, as the number of residents over age 50 will increase threefold.

### Transportation

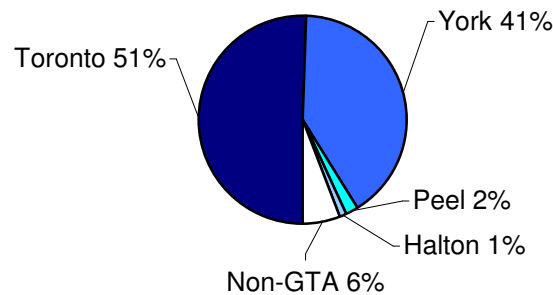
York Region residents are currently dependent on their automobiles. During a typical weekday morning commute, eight-in-ten residents travel by automobile. Fewer than 1 in 10 commuters currently walk or cycle to their place of business. However, as public transit ridership increases, so to does walking since all transit trips start with walking trips, whether from house to transit stop or from car to train station.

### Destinations

When York Region residents travel to work, they either stay within regional boundaries or commute to Toronto. Only a very small percentage of commuters travel to neighbouring regions such as Durham, Halton or Peel.

Figure 1.0

#### Destination of York Region Commuters



(Source: Smart Commute Association: Commuter Attitudes Survey)

## 2.1 Who Cycles & Who Doesn't

### Cyclist Profile

Cycling is a critical mode of transportation and recreation. Our analysis of cycling behaviour in several Ontario municipalities reveals that six-in-ten households own at least one bicycle, and approximately half of all residents over the age of 15 can be classified as cyclists. However, it is important to distinguish between two categories of cyclists - utilitarian cyclists and recreational cyclists.

### Utilitarian Cyclists

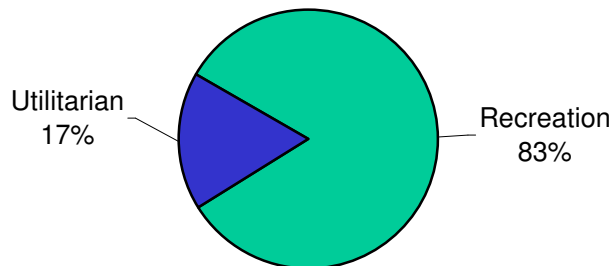
Utilitarian cyclists are categorized as those who use a bicycle to go to work or school, run errands, go shopping or visit friends. Utilitarian cyclists may also ride a bicycle for recreational purposes. Based on our study of other communities, we estimate that one-fifth of York Region residents can be classified as utilitarian cyclists.

### Recreational Cyclists

Recreational cyclists are those who ride a bicycle only for recreational or fitness purposes - not for utilitarian purposes. Based on our study of other communities, we estimate that slightly less than one-half of York Region residents can be classified as recreational cyclists.

Figure 2.0

Classification of Cyclists (Vaughan)



(Source: City of Vaughan – On and Off-Road Trail User Survey)

Beyond these activity classifications, it is possible to identify common demographic trends among cyclists.

### Age

Studies of municipalities throughout Ontario and across Canada repeatedly demonstrate that cycling activity is much more common among younger age groups. However, as Canada's population ages, it will become increasingly important to promote cycling among those in the 55+ age group. This is especially true considering that many older Canadians increasingly choose recreational cycling for fitness and enjoyment.

The Province of Quebec has been extremely successful at increasing cycling activity among this growing demographic. Between 1981 and 2000, the percentage of Quebec cyclists in the 55+ age group tripled. This growth can be attributed to:

- Extensive targeted marketing extolling the health benefits of outdoor activity;
- Creation of an extensive recreational trail system focused on tourism;
- Significant government investment in helping municipalities improve and integrate their bicycle path networks; and
- Building on the vibrant cycling culture that already exists in Quebec.

## Gender

Cycling is much more common among men and those who live in adult-only households. Numerous studies from other municipalities indicate that men account for approximately two-thirds of all cyclists.

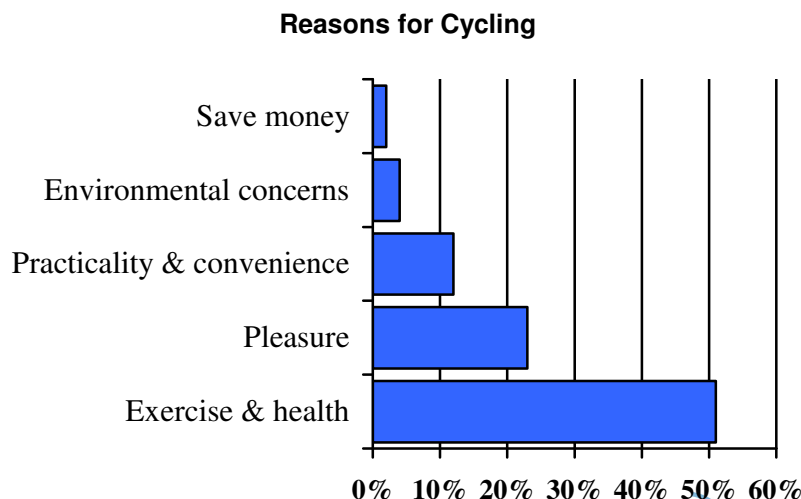
## Socio-Economic Status

Cycling is a more popular activity among those with higher levels of income and education. As would be suggested by the above-noted age demographics, cyclists are more likely than non-cyclists to be actively employed, as opposed to retired. Additionally, university/college students form an important component of the cycling community.

## Purpose and Motivation

According to a 2004 national survey, the vast majority of Canadians cycle primarily for purposes of leisure and recreation. Less than one-quarter of Canadians have used a bicycle to commute to work. However, three-quarters of Greater Toronto Area (GTA) residents who cycle or walk to work report significantly higher levels of satisfaction with their commute than their counterparts who travel by automobile or public transit. Furthermore, those who walk or cycle are significantly more likely than those who drive to say that their commute has improved over the past year. Among those who do cycle, exercise and health factors were cited as the most common motivating factor. Fewer than one-in-five cyclists view practicality or convenience as reasons for their choice of transportation.

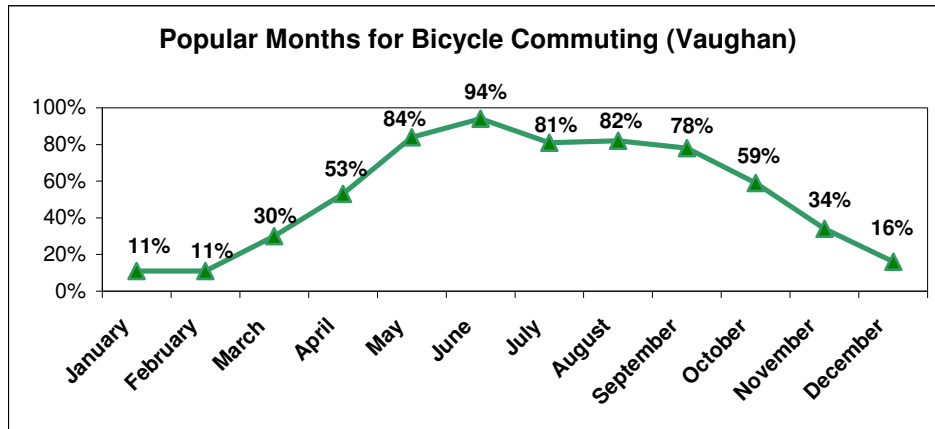
**Figure 3.0**



## Bicycle Commuting Timeframe

Late spring (May/June) and summer (July/August) are the most popular months of the year for GTA cyclists to commute to work using their bicycles.

Figure 4.0



(Source: Smart Commute Association: Commuter Attitudes Survey)

A study of transportation habits in Vaughan shows that 36% of those who cycle do so one to two days per month during good weather months. Three-in-ten say they cycle frequently or 5 to 10 days per month during good weather months.

## 2.2 A Look at Pedestrian Behaviour and Trends in York Region

### Pedestrian Profile

#### Age

As with cycling, walking is much more popular among younger Canadians, particularly the 18 to 24 demographic.

#### Gender

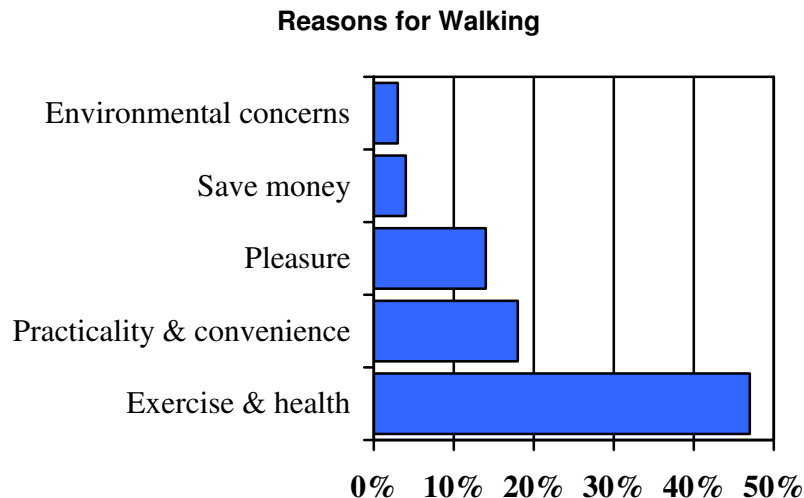
Unlike cycling, walking is equally popular among men and women.

#### Purpose and Motivation

More than eight-in-ten Canadians will walk for recreational purposes. However, seven-in-ten have never walked to work. Data from York Region reveals a similar pattern. A study of Vaughan residents revealed the majority of them consider walking to be a pleasant experience, and half say they enjoy walking on trails and sidewalks. However, fewer than two-in-ten walking trips were intended for purposes other than recreation.

As with those who cycle, Canadians who walk are more likely to cite exercise and health benefits as the reasons for their decision.

**Figure 5.0**



(Source: 2004 National Survey on Active Transportation)

### 3.0 What We Know About Walking & Cycling in Other Regions and Municipalities

There are some barriers to increased cycling behaviour that can be remedied by actions at the government level. Many residents suggest that government can do a number of things to encourage them to bike to work or school. These include providing more bike lanes and paths, and offering secure bicycle parking. Measures like this would considerably improve conditions for cyclists and encourage more people to consider becoming utilitarian cyclists.

**Figure 6.0**

<b>What, if anything, could the city or your employer or school do to encourage you to bike to work or school?</b>	
More bike lanes (on-street)	15%
Secure bicycle parking	9%
More bike paths (off-street)	6%
Enforce regulations to ensure safer conditions	6%
Shower/change facilities at work or school	6%
Nothing	49%

(Source: City of Toronto Cycling Study, 1999)

Although the majority of York Region residents currently use automobiles to commute, there is opportunity to introduce alternative active transportation options. For example, walking and cycling are viable options for those who live a short distance from work or school. For those who live a longer distance from their employment or educational institution, walking or cycling to YRT, VIVA or GO stations is an effective alternative to driving. To encourage active transportation, York Region needs to invest in more bike lanes and bike paths, and also work with local employers and transit bodies to provide secure bicycle parking.

### 3.1 What Prevents People from Cycling More?

#### Distance/Time

Distance and travel time are the primary constraints which prevent recreational cyclists from becoming utilitarian cyclists and commuting to work, school, shopping, running errands or visiting friends. For example, evidence from across Canada suggests the average one-way distance travelled by those who cycle to work is roughly 7.5 km. By contrast, according to data collected by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, the median commuting distance for York Region residents is approximately 12 km, which is among the highest in Canada. This finding is particularly relevant, since approximately half of York Region commuters travel to Toronto.

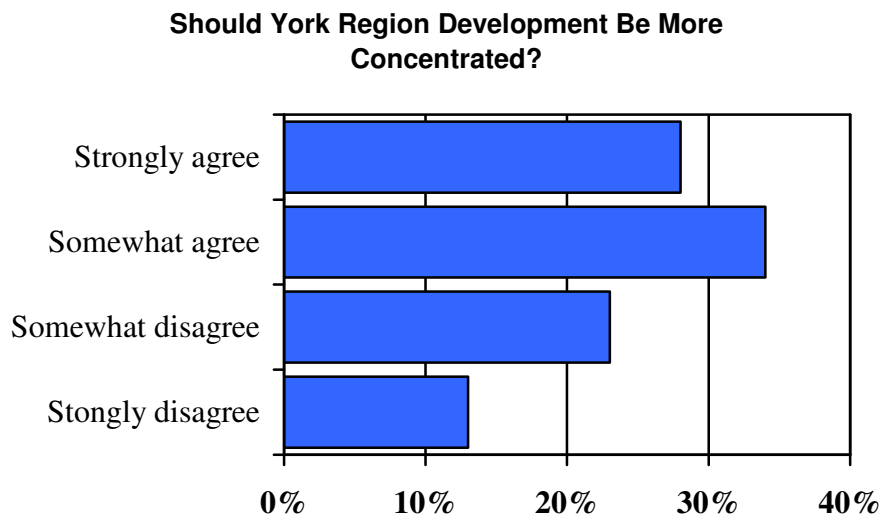
It is true that the further a commuter needs to travel, the less likely he or she is to consider active transportation. However, making residents aware of the ability to integrate walking and cycling into their commute is one way of promoting active transportation. For example, an individual can walk or cycle to their public transit stop or station. One way of increasing active transportation is to foster an interest in covering short distances and short commutes through cycling and walking.

#### Lessons for York Region

##### Urban Planning

Several Canadian municipalities have recognized the crucial effect that planning has on active transportation. Indeed, as York Region notes in its Official Plan, "There is a strong relationship between transportation and urban form." For example, Victoria, BC has set a goal that by 2025, 15% of all commuter trips will be conducted by bike. To achieve that end, the city government has moved towards increasing the density of its downtown core by converting parking lots into mixed use commercial and residential developments. In addition, a report to the City of Winnipeg recommends that the municipal government create a dedicated staff position "to focus and integrate Active Transportation into planning and decision-making processes, and ensure activities move forward." Regarding York Region's development, the majority of residents feel development should be more concentrated. By concentrating development, the ability to create more opportunities for active transportation are increased.

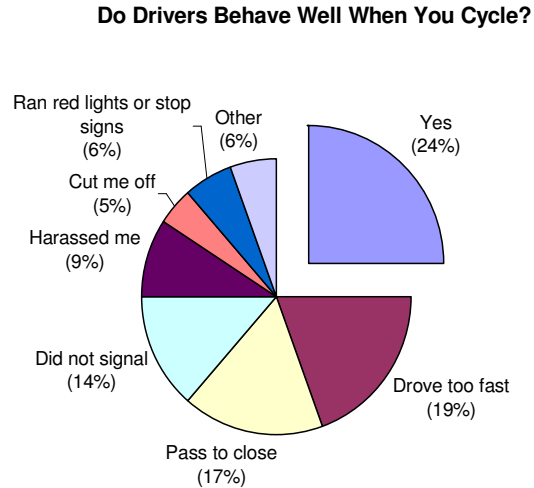
Figure 7.0



## Bicycle Lane Safety

In every municipality studied, cyclists cite the need to improve access to safe and secure on-road bike lanes and off-road bike paths. In addition, cyclists become more comfortable on major roads if there is a separate bike lane or at least a wide curb lane where they have a "safety zone" from vehicles.

Figure 8.0



(Source: City of Vaughan – On and Off-Road Trail User Survey)

As noted above, many commuters are deterred from cycling because they perceive road conditions to be less than ideal for their safety and security. Many cyclists in Vaughan complain about the minimal space provided either on or off-road. Only 22% of the cyclists surveyed felt they had sufficient space to cycle along roads shared with motor vehicles. Improving access to bike lanes and bike paths and widening road shoulders is a vital way in which York Region can provide a cycling-friendly environment.

An additional consideration for York Region is offering ongoing education of cyclists and motorists so that awareness and mutual respect is built. By providing improved access for cyclists to awareness and respect programs, York Region can put into place two important ingredients that will encourage more residents to consider active transportation.

## Lessons for York Region

It is important to note that cycling has become an increasingly safe activity. Cycling fatalities and injuries in Ontario fell by 61 and 37 percent, respectively, over the period of 1984 to 2002. Measures that can lead to further increases in safety include:

*Widened Curb Lanes*

After considerable consultation, the City of Calgary found that widening curb lanes from 3.7 to 4.3 metres on major and arterial roads would enhance cyclist safety and also improved conditions for public transit operations.

#### *On Road Bike Lanes & Coloured Bike Lanes*

Providing on road bike lanes makes cyclists feel more safe and secure when travelling on high traffic routes. In addition to this, coloured bike lanes could be used to increase the visibility of cyclists and clearly define cyclist right-of-way. For example, the City of Portland, Oregon has painted its bike lanes blue (several European cities use different colours). The City's priority has been to paint bike lanes that have high collision rates, such as at the intersections of freeway exit ramps and right-turn lanes.

#### *Advanced Stop Lines*

The City of Vancouver has implemented advanced stop lines at intersections, which give cyclists a buffer zone in front of vehicles while waiting at traffic signals. Drivers may only enter and pass through these areas if they are certain that no cyclist is in or approaching the bike box (designated by red paint). This buffer further discourages vehicles from encroaching into intersections.

#### *High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes*

Allowing cyclists to use high occupancy vehicle lanes is another innovative way to increase cyclist safety. This has been used to good effect in Edmonton, where cyclists are permitted to make use of the City's bus lanes, and in Toronto, where cyclists are permitted to use the HOV lanes. Given York Region's plans for more high occupancy vehicle lanes, the Region should consider allowing cyclists to use these lanes. Doing so will increase cyclist safety and encourage more residents to consider utilitarian or recreational cycling.

### **Automobile Convenience**

In spite of all the measures that can be taken to ensure greater convenience for cyclists, some challenges remain. A number of residents note that they do not cycle because they are unable to carry items necessary for work or school with them. To this end, there is evidence that cycling is a less popular form of transportation for those running errands or shopping. In addition, commuters are unlikely to cycle for utilitarian purposes if they are responsible for the transportation of young children. Finally, a number of residents require the use of an automobile for their job.

### **Lessons for York Region**

Many committed motorists do not imagine it is possible to alter their commuting habits. To counter this common perception, cities such as Edmonton and Ottawa post "Commuter Success Stories" on their municipal websites. Residents who have reduced their frequency of driving in favour of walking or cycling are profiled, and their experience and insights are offered to others considering a similar change.

Additional programs attempt to provide incentives for commuters to try alternatives to automobile transportation. The State of California requires certain employers who provide subsidized parking to offer a cash allowance to those employees who give up their parking spot in order to commute by public transit or active transportation. A Washington State program provides a cash payment to employees who do not use their automobile. Similar employer-sponsored programs offer additional time off for employees who cycle or walk to work.

## Availability and Awareness of Cycling Routes

Evidence from other jurisdictions reveals a critical link between the availability of cycling routes and the willingness of residents to use them. Calgary officials found that more than 90% of residents who cycle into the downtown core originated from those parts of the city with the most developed network of cycling routes. In its most recent transportation plan, the City of Edmonton has stressed the importance of providing bike routes between residential areas and employment centres such as downtown.

A study of Vaughan residents found that 55% of cyclists who use off-road and open space trails live within 10 minutes (by bicycle) of an open space trail. It is possible that a lack of awareness is the primary deterrent to increased cycling activity on the system of trails in York Region.

## Lessons for York Region

Other Canadian municipalities have found the publication and distribution of route maps assist in the promotion of active transportation. Neighbouring Toronto makes its bike map available free of charge and on its website. Some additional examples include:

Vancouver: The regional transportation authority finances and distributes free bicycle route maps to residents.

Ottawa: The municipal government publishes "The Complete Ottawa Cycling Guide," a detailed bicycle route map indicating the location and type of all bike routes as well as bike parking throughout the city.

Moncton: City officials make free cycling maps available at bike parking facilities.

York Region should consider working with the local municipalities to create a Regional cycling map that will show the location of bike lanes and bike paths and the distances between major points of interest.

## Weather Concerns

A national study of commuting habits found that a notable number of Canadians cited weather as a deterrent from cycling as a form of transportation. Weather served as a greater deterrent against cycling than walking.

## Lessons for York Region

In an effort to increase cycling behaviour during off-peak seasons, the GTA Smart Commute program has made advice on all-season cycling available on its website. Tips for commuters include recommendations on clothing, equipment and how to brake in wet weather.

## 3.2 Perceptions & Concerns About Cycling

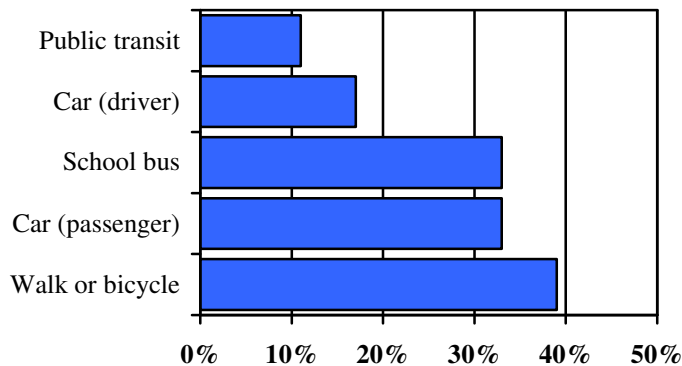
### Children & Cycling

In a Canada-wide survey, 88% of parents reported that their children own a bicycle. In York Region, almost four-in-ten children walk or cycle to school, which is more than any other mode of transportation. Clearly, walking and cycling are popular among children. Programs like the "Walking School Bus" and "Safe Routes to Schools" are proof of this. However, many parents

express concern that the volume of traffic in the Region presents a safety issue. By offering bike education and handling programs for parents and children, York Region can help address parent concerns about safety. In addition, encouraging children to bike to school, and reducing the number of parents driving children to school will have benefits for youth fitness and school zone safety. York Region needs to take a leadership role and work with the school boards so that these programs are implemented consistently throughout the Region.

**Figure 9.0**

**How Children Get to School (York Region)**



(Source: York Region Transportation Master Plan - A Survey of Residents' Attitudes)

### **Lessons for York Region**

In other communities, we have observed a very high level of interest among parents for a cycling safety program offered at the local government level.

Vancouver area schools have achieved considerable success in reducing the number of students who commute in single-occupant vehicles. The "Off Ramp" program has subsequently been launched in several additional communities across Canada.

The City of Portland, Oregon provides a series of 25 transportation safety lessons to all children enrolled in local schools. The "Kids on the Move" program is designed to not only familiarize children with road safety, but to encourage walking, cycling and public transit as regular modes of transportation. Children can be rewarded for choosing cycling with discount coupons from local bike shops.

Private sector interests have also become involved in transportation safety education for youth. The Co-operators insurance firm operates a one-day "Wiserider" cycling safety program in Regina every spring, which typically attracts 5,000 young cyclists. The program also makes safety lesson plans available to local elementary schools. The Wiserider program has subsequently been expanded to Moncton, NB.

### **Road Conditions**

Only 21% of Vaughan cyclists feel comfortable with the surface they traveled on, whether on-road or off-road. The remainder complained about poor maintenance, specifically cracked and broken

pavement (21%) and debris on paths and trails (14%). A particular problem for cyclists is that fast-moving cars in adjacent lanes push debris from the street into cycling lanes or other areas typically used by cyclists.

## **Lessons for York Region**

In 2006, York Region has allocated \$150 million for road projects and maintenance. There are several measures that can be taken to increase bike route utility for cyclists. The Province of Quebec published the following list of its maintenance activities for cycling routes:

- Repairing potholes
- Minor repairs and regular resurfacing of roadways
- Regular clearing of accumulated gravel, leaves, snow and other debris from curb lanes
- Posting appropriate signage
- Improving drainage in curb lanes
- Installing bike-friendly catch basin grates

In order to rapidly identify stretches of road most in need of repair, the City of Ottawa produces wallet-sized cards with the appropriate telephone numbers for cyclists to call and report any problems.

## **Lack of Cycling Facilities**

As with drivers, those who cycle are in need of parking for their means of transportation. Additionally, residents may wish to cycle but are unable to complete their entire commute by bike. Cyclists require the additional option of being able to shower at their destination after actively commuting and being exposed to weather conditions.

## **Lessons for York Region**

### *Showers*

An additional convenience would be shower and change facilities at workplaces or schools. However, it is important to note that very few individuals cite the lack of shower and change facilities as a reason for not cycling to work or school.

### *Bicycle Parking*

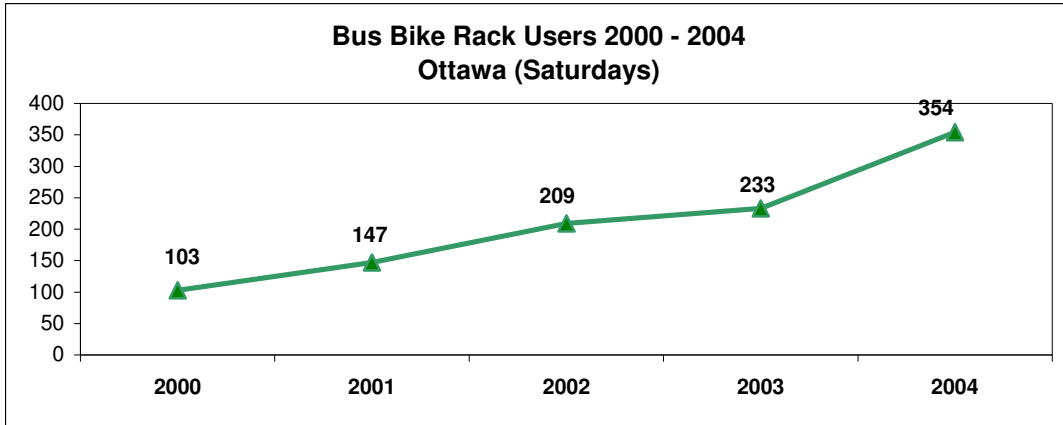
Several Canadian municipalities have mandated that bicycle parking must be provided in all new residential, commercial, institutional and industrial developments. In establishing specific guidelines for bicycle parking, the City of Ottawa found that "facilities should be located in a safe, secure and convenient environment, preferably near an entrance/exit of the building it services, and in direct view of an attendant's booth (if one exists) or security camera."

### *Cycling & Public Transit*

The ability to combine cycling with public transit is a popular option with utilitarian cyclists and could even be expanded where available. Municipalities throughout Canada have taken action in these areas by equipping public transit buses with racks capable of carrying a bus rider's bicycle to his or her destination. The City of Ottawa witnessed a 243% increase in Saturday bicycle rack usage on its buses between 2000 and 2004. Municipalities such as Toronto and Vancouver, as well as GO transit, allow bicycles to be transported on their rapid transit systems or commuter rail

network, but typically only during off-peak hours. York Region should closely watch the recent Bikes on Buses pilot program to see how they can improve or expand it.

Figure 10.0



(Source: City of Ottawa – Transportation Master Plan, 2005)

### *Park & Ride*

In order to encourage more residents to consider cycling, it is important that York Region provide the means by which residents can securely park or store their bikes at transit stations. For example, in addition to providing bike lockers at transit stations, the City of Calgary allows motor vehicle parking in certain city parks, allowing residents to park their automobiles and complete the remainder of their commute by bike. This option is particularly appealing to residents of surrounding suburban communities who would be unable to cycle the entire distance of their commute. The City of Minneapolis provides secure bike lockers at Park & Ride lots and light rail stations for \$60 annually or \$40 for the bike season only (April to November). Ottawa has also set up secure bike lockers in their transit system.

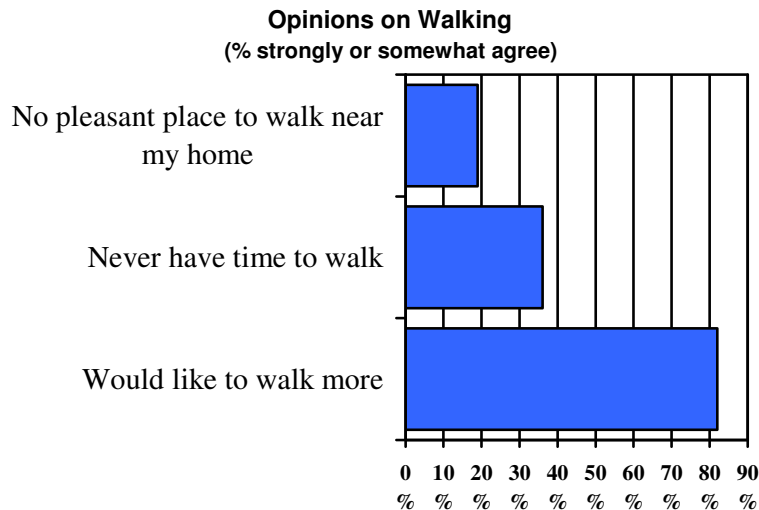
York Region should consider providing secure bike lockers at YRT, VIVA, and GO transit stations to encourage residents to consider cycling as part of their commute. To increase the feeling of security for cyclists and prevent theft, the lockers should be located close to the buses/trains, in view of staff and security, and equipped with camera surveillance.

### 3.3 Pedestrian Behaviour and Trends in Other Regions/Municipalities

#### What prevents people from walking more?

According to a 1998 study, Canadians are motivated to walk more as a mode of transportation. Eight in ten (82%) agree that they would ideally like to walk more often than they do. Comparatively few Canadians feel that they lack either the time or accessible pleasant spaces for walking.

Figure 11.0



(Source: 2004 National Survey on Active Transportation)

The most commonly cited challenge to walking as a sole mode of transportation is the distance and time required to commute on foot. Canadians appear more comfortable walking for leisure purposes such as recreation or visiting family/friends. One-half of Canadians report that they never walk to their workplace or to go shopping/run errands. However, whether realized or not, walking constitutes part of their trip to work or running errands...especially if public transit is used.

Municipal planning and design decisions exert a major influence over individual decisions about walking for utilitarian purposes. A study conducted by the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation demonstrates that reducing walking times by 10% is the most effective method of reducing automobile use. The study further found that residents of medium sized cities (populations of 100,000 to 1 million) lived closest to their routine destination.

As York Region has recognized in its 2002 Transportation Master Plan, encouraging residents to use active transportation and public transit over automobiles requires urban planning that facilitates comfortable, safe and speedy travel between residences and routine destinations.

#### Sidewalks

According to its 2004 Transportation Fact Book, York Region currently provides 394 linear kilometres of sidewalks along Regional roads. Nevertheless, there is considerable room for improvement. "Only 50 percent of Regional roads in the existing settlement areas currently have sidewalks, while only 47 percent of transit routes on Regional roads have sidewalks." According to the York Region Transportation Master Plan, published in 2002, the Regional government

intends to work with municipalities “to provide sidewalks on both sides of all collector roads, with priority given to those with transit service.” When considering the costs associated with improving sidewalks, an important lesson can be learned from the City of Calgary. Local businesses in that contribute to the cost of sidewalk improvement as part of an effort to increase walk-up traffic.

As York Region notes in its 2004 Transportation Fact Book: “Sidewalks are essential to encourage walking to school, to support efforts to reduce obesity and to improve the fitness levels of today’s youth.” The report goes on to cite roadside landscaping and proper lighting as factors that lead to increases in both pedestrian safety and activity. A survey of Vaughan residents found that one-in-five pedestrians claim to be inconvenienced by sidewalks and paths that started and ended abruptly.

In terms of usage, York Region residents are more likely to walk on sidewalks rather than off-road trails. Half of Vaughan residents walk along sidewalks almost daily (5 to 7 days/week), while one-third walk on off-road trails nearly every day.

**Figure 12.0**

Walking Habits of Vaughan Pedestrians		
	Frequency of Sidewalk Use	Frequency of Trail Use
Less than once per week	7%	17%
Once per week	11%	17%
2-4 days per week	33%	34%
5-7 days per week	49%	32%

(Source: City of Vaughan - On and Off-Road Trail User Survey)

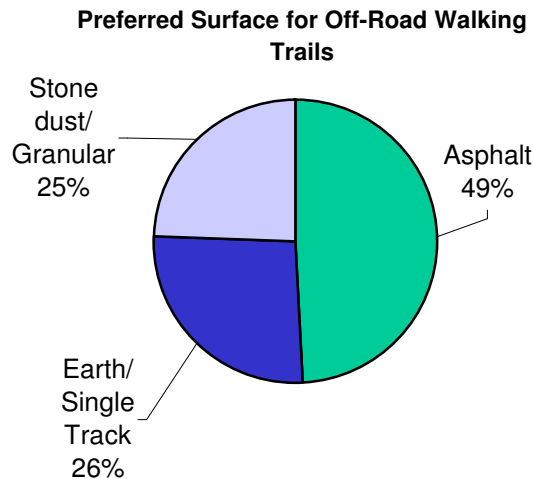
## Off-Road Walking Infrastructure

There is evidence to suggest that walking trails are readily accessible by York Region residents. Decima's study of Vaughan shows that 66% of the total residents live less than a 10 minute walk from a valley or open space trail. Given that the majority of pedestrians and cyclists currently using the on or off-road trail network live close to a trail, expansion of the network into areas that are currently not served by a trail could help to attract more users.

Accessibility is not the only concern when looking to promote walking. Pedestrians place a very high value on the quality of routes and trails. A study of 800 pedestrians in Calgary found that people would choose to more than double the distance of their commute in order to walk on a nice, safe, continuous pathway instead of a faster but riskier, less pleasant route.

When asked which surfacing they preferred for off-road trails, Vaughan residents expressed a preference for asphalt, followed by earth and stone/dust.

**Figure 13.0**



(Source: City of Vaughan – On and Off-Road Trail User Survey)

## 4.0 Building a Future for Active Transportation in York Region

The challenge of motivating and encouraging York Region residents to cycle and walk more often is a significant one. This challenge is made even greater by residents' reliance on motorized transportation and the distances they travel to work or school. However, York Region has strong opportunities to affect change and increase active transportation. More importantly, taking advantage of these opportunities now will pay off over the long term as York Region grows and becomes more densely populated. The following are several innovative measures that York Region can undertake to encourage more residents to integrate cycling and walking into their daily lives. These initiatives include:

- Infrastructure initiatives such as bicycle lanes, paved shoulder bikeways, sidewalks, and walking trails, plus widened curb lanes and shoulders;
- Active promotion and facilitation of these activities by building walking trails and cycling paths and lanes;
- Commitment to integrating local municipal cycling and walking plans;
- Ongoing education of motorists that builds awareness and respect for cyclists;
- Incorporating cycling-friendly road design and maintenance measures;
- Availability of cycling facilities such as bicycle parking and access to showers;
- Integration of cycling and public transit throughout York Region;
- Delivery of youth and adult cycling education programs; and
- Building resident awareness of the location and accessibility of walking trails and cycling paths and lanes.

Using a "build it and they will come" approach, York Region has to first provide the necessary infrastructure that will make cycling and walking activities pleasurable and convenient for residents. Once the infrastructure is in place, building awareness and providing consistent marketing, promotion and on-going support becomes paramount. Ultimately, innovative ideas remain only ideas unless there is a collective will to turn them into reality. This is where York Region can play a leadership role and co-ordinate implementation among municipalities through publications such as Take a Hike - Recreational Trails of York Region 2002. As York Region continues to become more populous and urban in the coming years, the opportunity to plan and implement innovative ideas that will impact the way residents travel is immense. By providing an environment favourable to cycling and walking and by encouraging these activities, York Region can positively impact residents' health and fitness, address increased traffic concerns, and foster civic pride.

# Appendix

## **York Region**

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York Region Transportation Master Plan - A Survey of Residents' Attitudes, (417 sample in York Region), Environics Research Group, 2000

York Region – 2004 Transit Fact Book

“On the Move... Towards Sustainable Transportation” – York Region Transportation Masterplan (Final Report, June 2002)

Smart Commute Association: Commuter Attitudes Survey, (1,000 of which 125 from York Region, Decima Research, 2005

City of Vaughan – Walkability and Bikeability Surveys, Marshall Macklin Monaghan Limited, 2003.

City of Vaughan – On and Off-Road Trail User Survey, Marshall Macklin Monaghan Limited, 2002

## **Ontario Municipalities (Outside York Region)**

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Kids on the Move in Halton and Peel, Centre for Sustainable Transportation, 2003

Region of Niagara Cycling Profile Study, Marshall Macklin Monaghan Limited and Decima Research, 2001

Region of Waterloo Cycling Profile Study, (371 sample across Waterloo Region) Marshall Macklin Monaghan Limited and Decima Research, 2002

City of Toronto Cycling Study, (1001 sample), Marshall Macklin Monaghan Limited and Decima Research, 1999

Waterfront Trail User Survey, Waterfront Regeneration Trust, 2002

City of Ottawa Cycling Plan (Draft) – March 2005

City of Ottawa Commuter Travel Behaviour and Attitude Survey, Decima Research, 2002

City of Ottawa Cycling Profile Survey, Decima Research, 2003

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City of Windsor Cycling Profile Survey, (501 sample) Marshall Macklin Monaghan Limited and Decima Research, 2000

Transportation Tomorrow Survey, 2001

Economic Impact Analysis, Trans Canada Trail in Ontario, PriceWaterhouseCoopers, 2004

## **Other Municipalities**

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Urban Transportation Showcase Program: Case Studies in Sustainable Transportation – Transport Canada

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Portland's Blue Bike Lanes: Improved Safety through Enhanced Visibility – City of Portland, Office of Transportation (July 1999)

## **National-Level Sources**

1998 National Survey on Active Transportation, (1,501 national sample) Go for Green and Environics Research Group, 1998

2004 National Survey on Active Transportation, (1,640 national sample), Go for Green and ISR

National Survey of Pedestrian and Bicyclist Attitudes and Behaviours, United States Department of Transportation, 2002

Cycling Trends and Policies in Canadian Cities – John Pucher and Ralph Buehler

“Quality of Life in Canadian Communities: Growth, the Economy and the Urban Environment” – Federation of Canadian Municipalities (Theme Report #3)

Bicycle Safety for Children – Insurance Corporation of British Columbia