

**Welcome to
CHNET-Works! Fireside Chats**

Built Environments and Health

February 3, 2006

1:00 – 2:00 PM



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Go for Green ...

- ... encourages outdoor physical activity that protects, enhances, or restores the environment.
- ... works with organizations, businesses, governments at all levels, and community groups




What are the issues?

Physical Inactivity


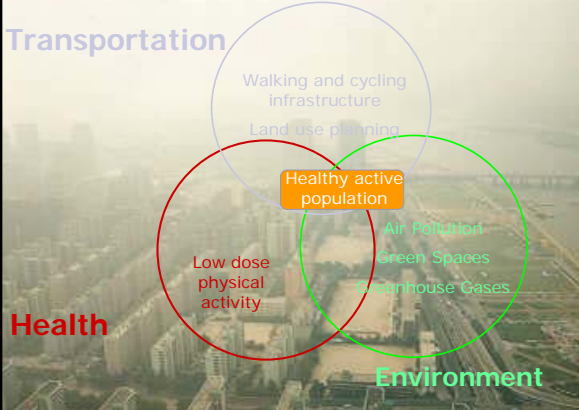
The personal health of Canadians is being compromised by physical inactivity.

- **Two thirds of all Canadians are not physically active enough to achieve health benefits.** (Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute, 1999 and 2002)

Health of the Environment

The health of our environment is in danger from the negative impact of our current lifestyles.

- **92% believe that environmental problems will affect the health of future generations.** (The 2003 International Environmental Monitor: GlobeScan Inc.)

Transportation

Walking and cycling infrastructure
Land use planning

Healthy active population

Low dose physical activity

All-terrain Green Spaces
Greenhouse Gases

Health

Environment

Active Transportation is...
any mode of transportation that requires **human power**

- walking, bicycling
- wheel chairing
- in-line skating
- skateboarding
- skating
- skiing

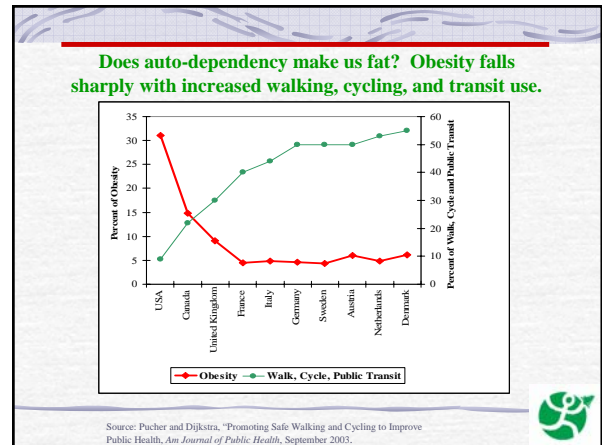
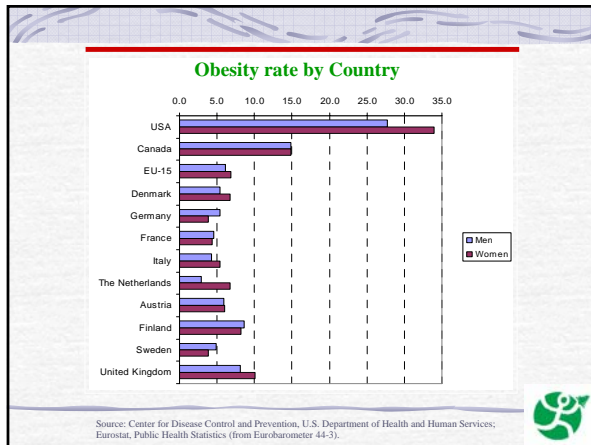
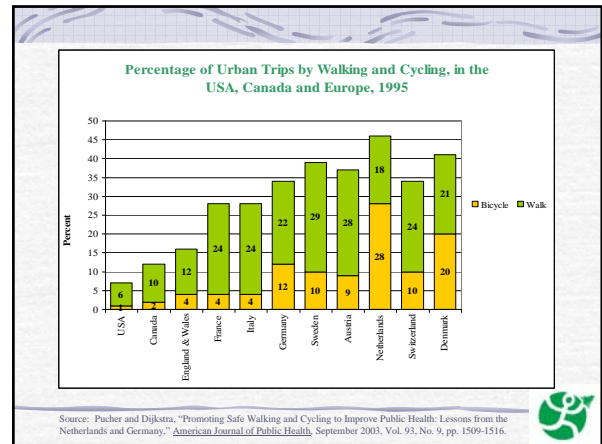


Short trips - less than 30 mins
(2.5 km of walking, 8 km of cycling)



Disease and Conditions influenced by Physical Activity

- Coronary Heart Disease
- Hypertension
- End Stage Renal Disease
- Type II Diabetes
- Osteoporosis
- Colon Cancer
- Surgical Trauma
- Depression and Anxiety
- Loss of function and independence in Old Age



Can Active Transportation Improve Health?

YES!

There is a growing consensus among Scientists, Health Organizations, Environment and Transportation groups and Governments that people who walk and bike are slimmer and healthier than those who don't and people in "sprawled" communities do not walk and bike as much.



Target

- Currently 6.6 % of Canadians walk to work and 1.2 % cycle, a combined total of 7.8 % (Statistics Canada 2001 Census)
- Recommended increase of mode share to 10.4 % for walking and 4.8 % cycling for a combined total of 15.2 % (current mode share for Victoria, B.C.)



Business Case for Active Transportation

- Created as a follow-up to the first National Roundtable on Active Transportation hosted by Go for Green.
- Outlines the economic, environmental and health benefits of walking and cycling.



Total Economic Benefits

- Total economic benefits of active transportation at the current levels (7.8%) are estimated at:
 - \$3.5 billion dollars per year.
- If active transportation mode share for all of Canada increases to the modest target of 15.2%, the direct benefits would increase to:
 - **7.0 billion dollars per year.**



Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reductions

- Equivalent of 3.3 million tones of CO2 will not be emitted into the atmosphere.
- The equivalent of nearly two-thirds of the goal set under Environment Canada's "One Tonne Challenge" can be achieved.



Conclusions from Business Case

- Many countries have significantly higher levels of Active Transportation use indicating much room for growth in Canada especially in cycling.
- A major barrier is the lack of safe, convenient facilities. Legislation to promote and support Active Transportation at all levels is critical.
- The economic benefits realized with a modest increase in mode share are enough to support increased government investment in Active Transportation.



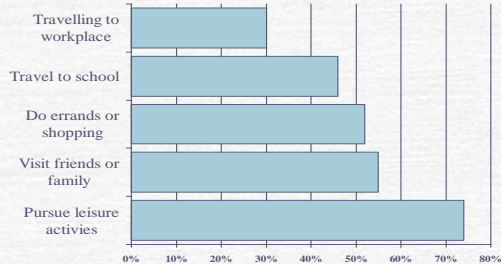
2004 National Survey on Active Transportation

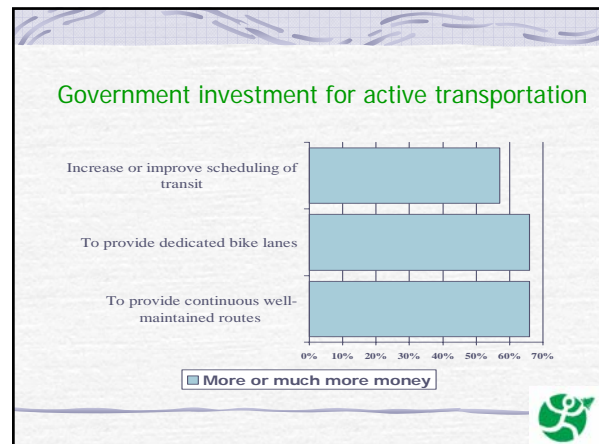
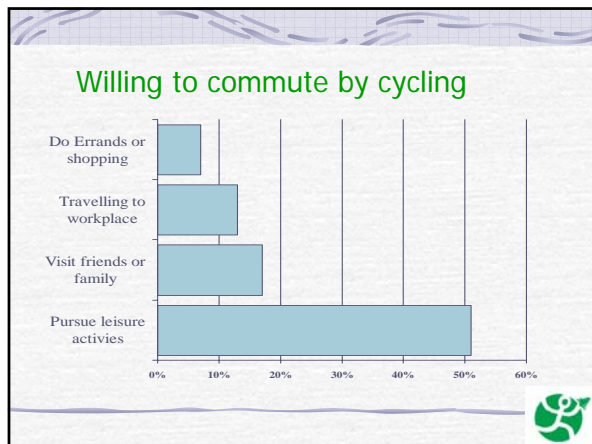
Prepared by: Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute

- Sample of 1,640 Canadians aged 15 and older
- Sample distribution roughly proportional to size of province.
- Data weighted to ensure representativeness of Canadians
- Response rate just over 50%, exceeding that of most commercial surveys



Willing to commute by walking





Opinions about Active Transportation

- 84% of Canadian adults somewhat or strongly agree that they would support spending government money on more dedicated bicycle paths in my community to make streets safer for cyclists, cars and pedestrians.
- 65% of Canadian adults somewhat or strongly agree 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.

Has the Problem been Recognized?

- Legislation is being enacted in some jurisdictions that highlights the need to encourage Active Transportation: Ontario "Places to Grow" Act.
- Many municipalities are creating walking and biking plans as part of their regional planning process: Toronto, Vancouver, Region of York, Ottawa, and the Halifax Regional Municipality.
- Considerable walking/cycling infrastructure has been developed in some cities: Calgary, Montréal, Ottawa, and Vancouver.
- Professional Associations are promoting the need for change: New Urbanism, Transportation Association of Canada guidelines, Canadian Institute of Transportation Engineers.

What Tools are Available?

- Federal funding to municipalities for the development of infrastructure has been directed to improvement of Public Transit and walking/biking facilities in some provinces.
- A wide range of capacity building workshops are in development: Vélo Québec, CITE, PARC Committee, Public Health Agency of Canada, Go for Green.
- New Research is being conducted and new tools developed: AT Toolkit, AT Survey, Business Case for AT, CITE Design guidelines, Listservs.
- National programs have been created that encourage Active Transportation: One Tonne Challenge, Active and Safe Routes to School, and the Commuter Challenge.

What are the Challenges?

- Funding is a problem; very little is dedicated to walking and cycling.
- Awareness of AT is different across the country.
- Rural communities have few strategies available.
- Research in Canada is lacking.
- Dominant land development models in use still promote unhealthy communities.
- Walking rates continue to decline and walking is the most dangerous mode of travel.