



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

Car drivers face pollution levels inside the car 2 to 3 times higher than those experienced by pedestrians and cyclists.¹

What are the benefits?

Most Local Governments are searching for ways to lessen the impact that increasing traffic is having on local congestion as well as air and noise pollution. 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 – the more people walking and cycling around your neighbourhood the 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 health problems;
- Access for all – walking and cycling are low cost activities that are available to the whole community;
- Less global warming – every litre of petrol saved reduces greenhouse gas emissions by 2.9 kilograms;² and
- Reduction in local government expenditure – providing and maintaining increasing amounts of infrastructure for cars adds up. This money could be spent elsewhere.

How can Local Government 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.³ You can help make your community more active by helping to create an environment that fosters physical activity. There are many ways Local Government 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;



1. Environmental Transport Association (1997). “Road user exposure to air pollution”, a literature review published on behalf of DETR (UK).
 2. Department of Environmental Protection (2000). Baseline Air Toxics Project. www.environment.wa.gov.au
 3. Owen et al. (2004). “Understanding Environmental Influences on Walking”, American Journal of Preventive Medicine. 27(1): 67-76.

- Keep the community informed – produce and distribute a Local TravelSmart Guide (see 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 information sheet on TravelSmart Officers);
- Demonstrate leadership – prepare a Green Transport Plan for your Local Government to set a good example for the community;
- Support the TravelSmart Workplace Program - encourage larger workplaces in your area to become a TravelSmart Workplace (see information sheet on TravelSmart Workplaces); and
- Participate in the TravelSmart Household Program – this program contacts households directly and provides them with information that helps them make changes from private car use.

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 Melville is installing and upgrading 100 bus shelters over the next five years;
- The Town of Victoria Park provides staff with a bicycle if they commit to riding to work for a year;
- 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;
- The City of Gosnells is spending more than \$5.7 million to rehabilitate existing footpaths,

construct new shared paths, create dedicated cycleways on roadsides and develop a seven kilometre bridle/walk trail;

- The City of Nedlands has amended its Town Planning Scheme so that suitable new developments must install end of trip cycling facilities; and
- The Town of Cottesloe has recently installed a walk trail from the train station to the beach and along the coast.

Excluding the cost of the land, a multi-level car parking bay costs about \$13,000 per space to construct and an open air public car bay costs at least \$1,000.

Where do I find out more?

The Department for Planning and Infrastructure's Travel Behaviour Strategies Unit is a good first point of contact:

Email: travelsmart@dpi.wa.gov.au
 Phone: (08) 9216 8000 (ask for TravelSmart)
 Website: www.dpi.wa.gov.au/travelsmart

The following websites provides information on:

Encouraging cycling

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

Encouraging walking

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

Encouraging physical activity

www.beactive.wa.gov.au
www.vtppi.org



Department for Planning and Infrastructure
 Government of Western Australia

be active wa
 Premier's Physical Activity Taskforce

It's how you get there that counts