

AT 101: New Active Transportation Toolkit

AT 101: Bringing AT to Your Community and Developing an AT Plan is a new toolkit that will help you bring active transportation (AT) to your community.

There are tips on:

- bringing AT champions together and forming a committee
- assessing the needs of your community
- setting goals and priorities
- building community awareness and support
- establishing strategic partnerships
- making the case for decision-makers, stakeholders and council

And for those communities/municipalities that have already done this work and are ready for an AT Plan, it guides you through the next necessary steps:

- developing and implementing your plan
- securing funding for plan development and implementation
- identifying roles and responsibilities within the municipality
- hiring consultants
- maintaining strategic partnerships
- continuing public outreach
- evaluating progress

What is AT?

Active Transportation (AT) is any form of self-propelled (non-motorized) transportation. It's mostly walking and cycling, but can include other modes of human-powered transport such as in-line skating, skateboarding, and jogging. It happens on-road (roads, shoulders, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, etc.) and off-road (trails, etc.). People use AT for utilitarian purposes, such as traveling from point A to point B, and for recreational purposes. AT is possible in urban, suburban and rural areas.

Why is it Important?

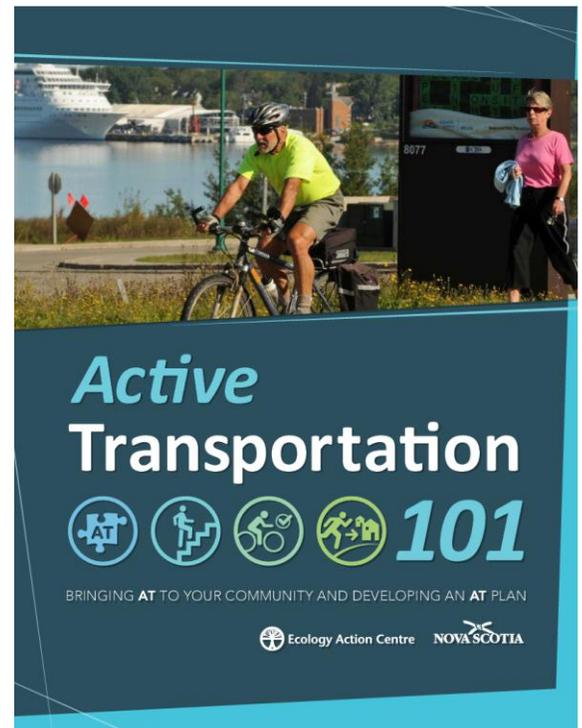
AT is about quality of life for the people of your community. Walkable and bikeable communities reap many benefits:

Economic Development

- Increases the number of well and productive employees
- Enhances tourism opportunities for businesses and communities
- Increases access to businesses and downtown cores

Community

- Increases property values in areas with local AT infrastructure
- Provides opportunities for informal neighbourhood connections
- Attracts new residents and businesses



AT 101 includes examples from AT Plans and policies from Nova Scotia municipalities. It has tips, stories, resources and templates.

Download your copy at:

www.ecologyaction.ca/content/AT-101

For each \$1 million spent on infrastructure, here are the jobs created according to mode:

- *Cycling = 11.4 jobs*
- *Pedestrian = 10 jobs*
- *Multi-use trails = 9.6 jobs*
- *Road with pedestrian and bicycle facilities = 9.5 jobs*
- *Road-only projects = 7.8 jobs*

Safety

- Promotes safer spaces, with more “eyes on the street”
- Increases visibility of AT users with more volume
- Encourages AT education programs, such as *Can-Bike* and *Share the Road* campaigns, that make roads safer for all

Financial Savings

- Decreases road building and maintenance costs
- Reduces demand and maintenance costs for parking in high traffic areas
- Decreases household costs including need for second vehicle, car maintenance, gas, and other operating costs.

Health and Wellbeing

- Encourages daily physical activity (which will help decrease the 2.8 million annual deaths around the world from being overweight and obese, and the 3.2 million deaths from physical inactivity)
- Helps individuals achieve and maintain a healthy weight
- Contributes to improved mental, emotional, and social health
- Reduces the chance of developing chronic diseases such as heart disease, osteoporosis, stroke, and diabetes

Environment

- Reduces vehicle emissions and slows down climate change
- Improves local air quality
- Increases manufacturing of sustainable modes of transport

Did you know that a reasonable distance to walk to work or school is about 3 kilometres and to bicycle there is about 8 kilometres? That's about 30 minutes of walking or cycling. It's faster and takes you further than most would think.

*“BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities **make active transportation a priority** through partnering to promote active transportation strategies among the membership and with other government agencies and to advocate for **improved roads and other infrastructure to develop and encourage safe walking, cycling and other active transportation opportunities** for both Nova Scotians and visitors.”*

-2008 UNSM Resolution 20A



What is the Role of Municipalities in Advancing AT?

Municipalities play a key role in advancing AT in Nova Scotia. The players required to make improvements to infrastructure and policy can be found at the local level – land use planners, transportation engineers, police officers, recreation and park staff, and public health staff. The role of municipal staff and council includes:

- building AT into daily decision-making
- amending or creating by-laws that support AT
- ensuring new developments incorporate AT
- ensuring municipal buildings are inviting to AT users
- leading by example by walking and cycling themselves
- working with all partners to achieve AT goals