



Green Matters

Actions today for a healthier tomorrow

Avoid Rising Summer Gas Prices and Stay Healthy— Ride a Bike!

Has your bike been sitting in your garage, basement, or yard collecting dust? The warm weather is coming, and that means it's time to get your bike tuned up and ready to ride! Since 1956, May has been designated National Bike Month by the **League of American Bicyclists** and is celebrated in communities throughout the country. Join thousands of fellow Portlanders commuting to work on two wheels by celebrating the National Bike-to-Work Day on May 20 or the entire Bike-to-Work Week May 16-20.

Advantages of Biking to Work

Commuting to work by bike can be a pleasant way to get to and from work while increasing your daily exercise, reducing traffic congestion and lowering your carbon footprint. While all of these are good reasons to switch to two wheels, perhaps the most enticing benefit is the amount of money you can save. The estimated **yearly expense** of owning and operating a car is around \$9,000, roughly 18% of the average household income when maintenance, parking and gas are accounted for. A bike, on the other hand, can cost as little as \$100 dollars a year to both own and maintain. Use **this calculator** to see how much you can save by biking to work!

In 2010, Congress passed a bill allowing bicycle commuters eligibility for a transportation tax benefit. Just as employers offer tax-free compensation for parking and transit expenses, they can now subsidize the cost of biking to work. Benefits-eligible City employees can earn \$38 each month by biking or walking to work 80% of the time. Learn more about the **Bike and Walk Bucks** program.

Let's Talk About Safety

Although biking to work is a great alternative to driving, it is not the same as a leisurely ride through the park, so always be prepared and exercise bicycle safety:

- Make sure you have a durable helmet. The majority of annual **bicycle deaths** (75%) are attributed to head injuries, and wearing a helmet can prevent nearly 90% of these injuries.
- Invest in front and rear lights. Buying an inexpensive white LED headlight and a red blinking rear light will make your early morning and nightly commutes much safer.
- Follow the rules of the road. Cyclists must ride with traffic and obey the same laws as motorists. This means stopping at stop signs and traffic lights, and always using hand and arm signals to indicate your intention to stop, turn or merge.
- Make yourself as visible as possible on the road by wearing bright colors and always riding where drivers can see you.

To find out more about bicycle safety read **Five Steps to Riding Better**.

Join the Annual Bike-to-Work Breakfast at Pioneer Square!

Whether you are an avid bicycle commuter or just enjoy a slow Sunday ride along the Willamette, join the Transportation Options staff in celebrating the 55th anniversary of National Bike Month. Enjoy a continental breakfast from 7:30 to 9:00 am on Tuesday, May 17th, at the Pioneer Courthouse Square. Bike Gallery mechanics will also be available to assist with basic maintenance to bikes in need of a quick tune-up.

PBOT staff will also have information on this year's **Sunday Parkways** locations. Sunday Parkways events are organized the fourth Sunday of every month (May – Sept) to provide traffic-free rides for Portlanders.

