Employers are increasingly taking advantage of biking and walking as a smart business strategy. Businesses that embrace biking and walking see direct benefits to their bottom line through reduced costs, increased productivity, and growing sales. Additionally, BikeWalk Friendly Businesses enjoy healthier and happier employees, a boost to their brand, and a stronger connection with their local community.
This guide is packed with ideas and resources to help your business realize the benefits of walking and biking. There’s something here for everyone, whatever the type or size of your business. We invite you to begin your journey to become a Bike/Walk Friendly Business!
THE BUSINESS CASE FOR BIKING AND WALKING

Efforts to promote biking and walking for your business can be fun, low-cost, low-risk, and high-return. Bike/Walk friendly workplaces have been shown to simultaneously improve financial return and employee performance.

Active Employees are More Effective
Physically active employees make fewer errors and are better at multitasking. They benefit from improved concentration, memory, and mental stamina. They also learn faster, with enhanced creativity.

Active Employees are More Productive
Employees who exercise by walking or biking to work tend to have fewer sick days, increased punctuality, and fewer commute-related delays.
Bike/Walk Friendly Businesses Have More Customers
Customer expenditures are higher for bike customers than car customers over time. Bike/Walk Friendly Businesses also facilitate unplanned and incidental visits, increasing the total number of customers.

Bike/Walk Friendly Businesses Attract and Retain Talent
Young people are driving less, and increasingly prioritize walking and biking when making decisions about where to work and live.

Active Employees Lower Healthcare Costs
Direct medical costs for businesses fall by about $3.27 on average for every dollar spent on wellness programs. Lost productivity costs due to absenteeism fall by about $2.73 for every dollar spent.
Active Employees are Happier
Research shows that physical activity improves mental health, mental performance, and mood. Employees who walk or bike to work report the highest level of well-being of all commuters.

Biking and Walking Saves Money
Biking or walking to work saves money on gas, parking, and transit. The average annual cost of owning a car in 2015 was approximately $8,700. Employees who bike or walk can put thousands of dollars per year back in their pockets.

Bike/Walk Friendly
Business employees are happier and healthier with more money in their pockets. Add in environmental benefits and community good will, and Bike/Walk Friendly businesses see benefits that go far beyond the bottom line.

Active Employees are Happier
Research shows that physical activity improves mental health, mental performance, and mood. Employees who walk or bike to work report the highest level of well-being of all commuters.
Active Employees are Healthier
Employees who bike or walk to work get valuable exercise every day, improving health and fitness. The average person loses 13 pounds in their first year of bike commuting. Other health benefits include:

• Reduced risk of cardiovascular disease
• Reduced risk for diabetes
• Reduced risk of some cancers
• Strengthened bones and muscles
Many people are interested in biking or walking but aren’t sure where to get started. Here are a few ways you can help:
SHOW THEM THE ROPES
Does someone on your staff commute by walking or biking? Ask them to be a mentor to encourage their coworkers and answer questions about routes to work, bike parking, and other helpful tips.

STAY UP TO DATE
Invite BikeWalkKC to speak to employees about the latest on walking and biking in your area, and share tips and resources on commuting, route planning, and safety. JCDHE is also a resource for a wide range of healthy business topics.

HOST CLASSES AND CLINICS
Promote bicycle education classes and resources. While most people know how to ride a bike, many are uncomfortable riding in traffic. New and experienced cyclists, and even motorists, can benefit from a refresher classes on the rules of the road and traffic safety. Clinics can help aspiring cyclists with instruction and hands-on maintenance.
Encouragement goes a long way in motivating employees to walk or bike to work, and in helping to establish regular routines.
4 START A WALKING OR BIKING CLUB
With new activities, it’s always helpful to have the support of a group, rather than going it alone. Consider starting a biking or walking club, or a regular group ride for employees or customers.

5 TAKE PART IN A COMMUTER CHALLENGE
A little competition can motivate employees, turning walking and biking into a social and team-building activity. Participate with your fellow employees and other companies in a commuter challenge (MARC’s Green Commute Challenge is one popular option). You can log miles and provide awards and recognition for reaching milestones. A variety of mobile apps and fitness accessories make this activity easier than ever.

6 ENCOURAGE ACTIVE WORKPLACES
There are lots of small ways to integrate physical activity into workplace functions. Allow time for walking breaks throughout the day. Try walking meetings to help employees stay alert, active, and efficient. Provide signage to guide employees and visitors around your workplace or campus. Consider how people move through the building. Can employees use the stairs as conveniently as they can use the elevator?
NATIONAL BIKE TO WORK MONTH

The Kansas City region celebrates Bike Month each May. A host of events, workshops, and bike commuter rest stops encourage new and seasoned bike riders alike. Connect with your colleagues and neighbors, and get your event on the calendar by visiting www.kcbikemonth.com
MOBILE APPS & DEVICES

A variety of mobile apps and devices make it easy to plan your walk or bike commute, track your fitness progress, and engage and compete with your colleagues. Strava (strava.com) and mapmywalk (mapmywalk.com) are two popular apps with many different features. Fitbit (fitbit.com) offers a mobile app as well, along with fitness tracker devices and accessories.
The benefits of walking and biking are numerous, but you can make the choice a little bit easier for employees by providing small incentives.
7 SHARE PRIZES
Thank your employees for walking or biking to work with perks or prizes like gift cards, transit passes, or recognition at employee events. Consider discounts for customers who arrive by bike or foot.

8 PROVIDE WELLNESS PROGRAM BENEFITS
Make walking and biking part of wellness programming. Some companies provide unique wellness program benefits, insurance subsidies, or even new bikes to employees who commit to active commutes.

9 OFFER A PARKING CASH-OUT
Allow employees to cash out a portion of their free or subsidized company parking instead of using a parking space. This lets employees make individual decisions about financial tradeoffs between driving and actively commuting. If your business charges for parking, these fees can help to subsidize incentives for walking or biking, and ultimately reduce the total amount of parking the business requires.
Promoting your business as walk and bike friendly can help you attract and retain talented employees, grow your customer base, and provide positive marketing in the local community.
ENGAGE WITH COLLEAGUES
Promote a Bike/Walk Friendly business culture through posters, fliers, newsletters, and internal calendars. Celebrate employees who walk and bike to work through social media and other business communications.

SPREAD THE WORD
Remind visitors and customers you are a Bike/Walk Friendly business by including bike parking location and directions on your external website. Highlight walking and biking in your external marketing, branding, and social media to build awareness of your efforts in the local community.

MARKET TO POTENTIAL EMPLOYEES
Pedestrian and bicycle amenities are increasingly important factors for people choosing where to work. Your business may benefit from promoting a Bike/Walk Friendly culture in recruitment materials, and by highlighting walking and biking initiatives in your new hire orientation process.
Safe and convenient bike parking provides a valuable incentive to potential riders. Bike parking that is well-designed and carefully-located makes biking a viable option and is essential for Bike/Walk friendly businesses. Bike parking can also reduce the cost and physical space required for car parking.
THINK SHORT AND LONG TERM
Short term bike parking should be located as close to the entrance as possible in a highly visible location. Long-term bike parking should provide security and protection from elements indoors or in a sheltered facility. Consider allowing bike storage in individual workspaces.

FOLLOW THE BIKE RACK BASICS
The location, design, and installation of a bike rack can have a big impact on the success of bike parking. Use racks that can support a bike in at least two places so it does not fall. Ensure that both the bike frame and one wheel can be locked to the rack. Secure bike racks to the ground, and leave enough room for people to get around the rack when it is full.

BIKE PARKING ASSISTANCE
Need help figuring out how to provide bike parking at your business? A BikeWalkKC advisor can work with your business to determine specific needs. This free service includes detailed plan drawings and equipment recommendations. Equipment can be purchased directly from BikeWalkKC if desired.
MAKE IT EASY

Small barriers - everything from bad weather to mid-day errands to formal meetings - can discourage employees from walking and biking. A handful of simple solutions can overcome these obstacles to make walking and biking a convenient and comfortable choice.
PLAN AHEAD
Expansions, remodels, and relocations of your business are the most efficient and cost-effective opportunities to incorporate bicycle and pedestrian amenities into your workplace. Consider bicycle parking, showers, lockers, and other amenities when making capital investments in workplace facilities.

PROVIDE MOBILITY OPTIONS
Transit, car sharing services, and company fleet vehicles can support walking and biking by providing alternatives in case of bad weather, variable schedules, and other factors. These alternatives also help make it possible to incorporate walking and biking into longer distance commutes. Some businesses provide free loaner bicycles for short trips, or company vehicles for meetings and appointments.

FRESHEN UP
Employees want to look professional and feel comfortable in the workplace. Shower and locker facilities can remove this potential barrier for those interested in walking and biking to work. Showers and lockers also benefit employees who exercise at work, and can be part of broader wellness programming.
Moving or opening new locations? Data shows customers prefer active, walkable destinations. Customers who walk and bike make more frequent visits and spend more money over time. Employees are seeking companies in high amenity locations with mobility choices and active living options.
CHOOSE WISELY
Include proximity to trails, bike lanes, and other facilities in your business' site selection criteria. Consider locations within walkable activity centers that have nearby amenities that make it easier to walk and bike to your business.

DESIGN THOUGHTFULLY
The design and orientation of your office can encourage walking and biking. Provide prominent, visible entrances with direct access to the street so walkers and bikers can avoid conflicts in driveways and parking areas. Transparency on ground floor facades creates a more active and inviting pedestrian experience, while enhancing visibility and safety. Buildings located adjacent to the street can reduce walking and biking distances for walkers, bikers, and transit users.
ABOUT BIKEWALKKC

BikeWalkKC is Kansas City’s regional non-profit working to build a culture of active living and redefine our streets as places for people. To learn more about biking and walking programs in your workplace, or to schedule a free Bike/Walk workplace assessment, visit bikewalkkc.org or call 816-205-7056.

ABOUT LIVENWELL JOHNSON COUNTY

LiveWell Johnson County is committed to preventing chronic disease through partnerships and environmental designs that make the healthy choice the easy choice. To learn more, visit livewell.jocogov.org.

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