



# THE REFLECTOR

PROMOTING HEALTH FOR PEOPLE AND THE PLANET

A Newsletter from the OHSU Bike Commuter Group

September 2004

## BIKES AND SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is generally defined as a methodology of economic and community development that takes economic, environmental, and cultural resources into account. The use of the term has grown in popularity over the years since it was officially defined in the Brundtland Report in 1987, which was published by the World Commission on Environment and Development. The report defines sustainable development as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

### How does biking fit into sustainability?

**Environmental sustainability.** Your environmental footprint is reduced because biking does not contribute to smog emissions, reduces traffic congestion, and many bicycle parts can be recycled.

**Self-sustainability.** The healthy lifestyle reduces your chances of developing preventable diseases, such as diabetes, obesity, and cardiovascular disease. Cyclists that commute to work regularly are more productive, use less sick time, arrive at work less frustrated, and are more alert after the morning exercise. Cycling saves time by incorporating exercise into your commute and, in urban settings, bicycles are the fastest transportation on wheels (compared to driving a car, urban bicycle trips of three miles or less can actually decrease your travel time, especially when during commute hours). Saved time can be used to enrich your lifestyle by spending more



time with family, finding a place to volunteer, or simply enriching yourself with rest, art, or silence.

**Economic sustainability.** Biking has a positive impact on your personal economy because the cost of a bike and a years worth of maintenance is a tiny fraction of what most people spend on car payments, non-renewable dirty fuel sources, insurance, and parking permits. Even if you do have a car, you can reduce the costs of fuel, maintenance, and wear and tear. Plus, a reduction in the incidence of preventable diseases can decrease the burden on over-extended healthcare facilities and staff.

**Why should OHSU care?** The Parking and Transportation department is forever seeking out ways to alleviate parking problems on Marquam Hill. With fewer employees and students driving cars, less parking space is required. By encouraging bicycling as an ideal mode of transportation, OHSU would be perceived as an employer that is concerned about the sustainability of its employees, community, and larger environment.

To read the Brundtland report, visit [http://www.are.admin.ch/are/en/nachhaltig/international\\_uno/unterseite02330/](http://www.are.admin.ch/are/en/nachhaltig/international_uno/unterseite02330/)

### Bike shops that sell used parts:

- Citybikes, 1914 SE Ankeny Ave and 734 SE Ankeny Ave
- North Portland Bike Works, 3951 N Mississippi Ave
- Community Cycling Center, 1700 NE Alberta Street
- Sellwood Cycle, 7639 SE Milwaukee Ave

## PEDOMETERS BOOST WALKERS: WHY NOT TRY A CYCLE COMPUTER?

A recent study from the University of Minnesota shows that pedometers are not only popular tools for keeping track of steps and promoting moderate exercise, they are also effective in motivating inactive people to increase their number of steps per day. The group that received a brief talk by a physician on the importance of exercise, a one page handout detailing the information and pedometers, increased their daily number of steps slightly more than the control group. The control group received the same brief talk by a physician on the importance of exercise and a one page handout detailing the same information, but was not given pedometers. A pedometer could be especially effective in increasing daily walking distances in a work environment like OHSU. It is a constant reminder to take stairs instead of an elevator, or to get off the bus at the VA instead of riding it around to OHSU. With the rerouting due to construction, it takes the same amount of time to enjoy the view of Portland or Mt. Hood as you cross the skybridge as it does to ride to the OHSU stop.

### BIKE TO WORK!



Why not try using a computer on your bicycle to track and maybe even increase your amount of exercise per week? This list of models is just a small example of the large selection available in local bicycling shops. The Velo 5, \$19.99 — Trek Fusion, \$29.99 — Enduro 8, \$29.99 — CatEye Cordless 7, \$49.99 — CatEye CC-CD300DW, \$149.99 — Ciclo Sport USPS HAC 4, HAC 4 & HAC 4 Plus, \$309.00 to 440.00 (depending on the configuration). For more info, do a Google search on Cycle Computers.

Portland commuters bike to work at a rate double the national average.

## CITIZENS OF THE ROAD

The BTA has launched a new campaign called Citizens of the Road (COTR) in response to a consistent call from its members for safe roads. COTR is an outreach campaign designed to educate motorists and cyclists in an effort to make the streets safer.

The campaign targets bicyclists and motorists through many venues including billboards, brochures, posters, and a website. The campaign evokes an unusual slant on sharing the road through funny images of people with things that are much harder to share than the road, such as a toupee, a bath towel, or a pair of skivvies! Visit the website at [www.easytoshare.com](http://www.easytoshare.com). If you would like brochures or a sticker for your car or bike, please write to [bike@ohsu.edu](mailto:bike@ohsu.edu).



Volunteer opportunity: **CARFREE DAY STREET FAIR**

Help Portland celebrate International Carfree Day! There are a range of opportunities to fit any skill or talent. Be a part of helping Portland see the transportation options beyond their car! Contact: Dat, [datn@mac.com](mailto:datn@mac.com)

## DID YOU MISS THE BIKE FAIR?

On August 4, the BCG hosted the annual bike fair, a two-hour affair dedicated to alternative transportation and individual health. While Think First! fitted people for helmets, Revolution Bike Works demonstrated how to make minor adjustments to bikes and repair tires on the road. TriMet brought a bicycle rack so new commuters could practice putting bikes on the bus. The City of Portland and the Bicycle Transportation Alliance provided information on everything from bicycle advocacy campaigns to maps of bicycle routes in the Metro area. FlexCar representatives answered questions about the OHSU/FlexCar program. OHSU affiliated participants included Employee Wellness, the Fitness Center, Public Safety, Parking and Transportation, and Think First!

Annual Fair	100%
Minor Repair	83%
Know Your Rights	53%
Beginning a Commute	53%
Bike Movies	20%
OHSU Bike Rides	60%

During the fair more than 100 people participated in a survey designed to determine activities that bicyclists would most like to see

on campus. The most requested activities are legal clinics outlining bicyclists' rights, repair clinics focusing on minor repair and seasonal bicycle care, and beginning commuters workshops.

For more information about the Bike Commuter Group or to find ways to get involved, visit our website at [www.ohsu.edu/bike/](http://www.ohsu.edu/bike/) or contact us at [bike@ohsu.edu](mailto:bike@ohsu.edu).

**In a bicycle accident, a helmet can reduce your risk of serious head injury by 85 percent**

## SEPTEMBER BIKE COMMUTE CHALLENGE

The Bike Commute Challenge is a friendly competition hosted by the Bicycle Transportation Alliance workplace against workplace with benefits for companies and individual cyclists in Oregon and Southwest Washington when employees bike to work during the month of September.

It's fun, it's free, and it can help companies to reduce car trips and improve employee health. Spread the word that bicycling is a great way to get to work! To register and keep track of days that you commuted by bike, register at the website below. Our company is listed as OHSU and the company code is BCG.

<http://www.bikecommutechallenge.com>

You will also find kick-off event details, resources, commuting tips, and a list of bikeshops giving discounts to participants.

### Beginning a Bike Commute Workshop



For those of you interested in attending a workshop about beginning a commute by bike, you are in luck. The Bicycle Transportation Alliance will proudly offer a workshop called How to Commute by Bike.

**August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2004  
Noon until 1:00 PM  
PVAMC Auditorium**

