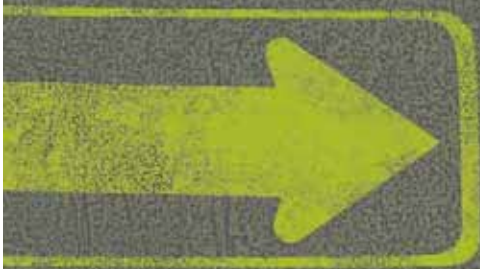


BICYCLING IN QUÉBEC IN 2005



A STUDY BY: **Vélo Québec** ASSOCIATION **JUNE 2006**



INTRODUCTION

Bicycling in Québec in 2005 is designed to provide an overall portrait of cycling in Québec at the present time. As a sequel to editions published in 1995 and 2000, this report makes it possible to identify a certain number of trends, particularly with regard to the number of cyclists in Québec and their transportation habits. It also outlines the development of the Québec cycling industry and cycling facilities, and provides an update on the progress that has been made in terms of health and safety.

Bicycling in Québec in 2005 is based on various sources of information: first, a survey conducted in the fall of 2005 covering a broad range of topics (bicycle ownership, trip frequency, incentives and disincentives to cycling, etc.); second, a series of counts indicating the rates of use for various bikeways; and lastly, individual studies and data collection that made it possible to take stock of various elements (cycling network, parking facilities, tourist services, etc.). Please note that this document summarizes the information contained in the full-length version of this report, available on line, in french, at www.velo.qc.ca.

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CYCLING HABITS

A STRONG CYCLING PRESENCE

In Québec, everyone—or almost everyone—has cycled at one time or another: 86% of adults have used a bicycle at least once in their lives. In 2005, over half of the population (54%) identified themselves as cyclists, amounting to a total of 2.6 million adults (18-74 years old) and 1 million children (6-17 years old).

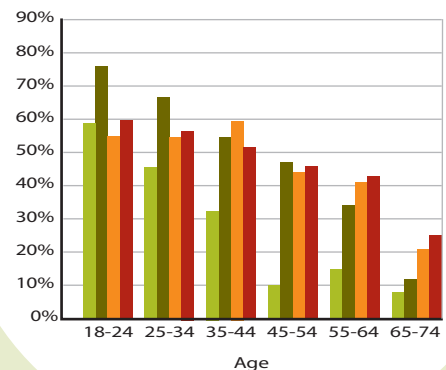
Over the past 25 years, enthusiasm for cycling has increased overall among 18-74 year olds: in 1981, 38% of them cycled at least once a year, and by 2005 this had increased to 47%. Although this rate has fallen slightly since 2000 (-2%), the decrease is primarily attributable to the least active members of the cycling population since the number of committed cyclists has actually increased. On the whole, the situation has remained stable.

An interesting new fact has come to light this year: almost 36% of those in Québec who have cycled previously, but not in 2005, say that they may start cycling again within three years.

Over the past decade, the rate of cycling has remained stable among 35-54 year olds, while the rate among the 55-64 age group has increased substantially, from 34 to 43%. However, the most spectacular increase has been among 65-74 year olds, with the proportion of active cyclists more than doubling in 10 years, jumping from 12 to 25%. Lastly, in 2005, 55% of men and 40% of women in Québec used a bicycle.

PROPORTION OF CYCLISTS IN THE POPULATION

- 1981
- 1995
- 2000
- 2005





DISTANCE NO LONGER MATTERS

Over 2.5 million cyclists in Québec use their bicycles at least once a week, which represents one out of three people between the ages of 18 and 74 (1.8 million adults), and two out of three of those aged 6 to 17 (750,000 children). Québec has proportionally almost three times as many committed cyclists as the United States but only half as many as the Netherlands and Denmark.

On average, Québec cyclists pedal 54 km per week during the summer, for a total of 785 km per year; in 2005, they passed the mark of two billion kilometres cycled!

Most of the trips made by cyclists in Québec (90%) are on bike paths or on roads with little motorized traffic. More specifically, half of the trips are on bike paths or mountain-bike trails, in terms of both duration (52%) and distance (48%); cyclists thus travel an average of 24 km per week on such facilities. A further two-fifths of trips are made on streets or roads with little traffic (37% by duration, 42% by distance), with cyclists travelling 21 km per week on such routes.

FIRST CHOICE FOR LEISURE

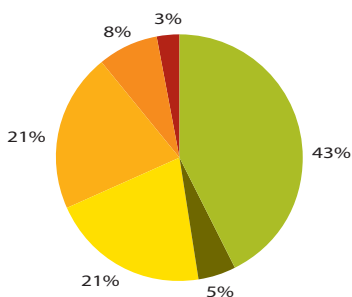
It is no secret that cycling is among the most popular leisure activities in Québec: cyclists spend an average of 3.8 hours per week on their bikes. Their main reasons for doing so are pleasure (90% of cyclists), exercise (89%) and the opportunity to engage in an activity as a family (81%)—all of which are regarded as great incentives to hop on a bicycle.

While some enjoy the solitude cycling can afford, other more gregarious types prefer group outings. This explains why Québec had over 91 active cycling clubs with upwards of 11,000 members in 2005. Furthermore, 62,000 people took part in one or several of the 41 one-day outings for the general public, while another 6,500 cycling enthusiasts registered for 12 athletic outings, including 8 increasingly popular competitive events. Overall, the total number of kilometres covered by the various participants remains as impressive as in 2000, with five million kilometres cycled in 14 regions of Québec.

As for the realm of truly competitive cycling, it comprises at least 129 clubs and 7,000 racers. Road and mountain-bike specialists combined, this group participates in 300 events on an annual basis in Québec.

ROUTES USED BY CYCLISTS

- Bicycle path
- Mountain-bike trail
- Quiet street
- Quiet rural road
- Busy street
- Busy rural road



FUN AND PRACTICAL

Now that traffic jams have become virtually chronic, the bicycle continues to gain in popularity as a practical vehicle. In addition to parking-control officers, it is used by neighbourhood delivery people and other urban workers. Police officers are also opting for bicycles more and more often because this provides them with greater mobility and brings them closer to the people they serve.

Accordingly, at least 23 of the 43 municipal police forces in Québec have bicycle patrols, and no fewer than 18 of these 23 police forces are based in the 25 largest municipalities in the province. There are a total of 170 bicycle officers (or 3% of the 6,700 assigned to patrol duty). This group serves a population of four million and does not include officers who work for the Sûreté du Québec, the provincial force responsible for policing in municipalities without their own forces. All of these bicycle officers are trained at the École nationale de police du Québec, which offers 21 hours of courses over three days.

Bicycle ambulance attendants are also becoming increasingly common in urban settings: in Montréal, about a dozen such attendants are able to respond to the same calls as their motorized colleagues and can sometimes do so more quickly, especially in difficult-to-reach locations such as within large urban gatherings. Lastly, bicycle couriers have been part of the Montréal urban landscape for many years, even in winter: the number of couriers ranges from 250 to 400.

CYCLING MEANS FITNESS—AND MORE IS BETTER

STAYING ACTIVE

Along with walking and at-home exercise, cycling is one of three most popular forms of physical activity in Québec. Among boys aged 12 to 17, it is the most popular of all, and it comes second among girls in the same age group and among men aged 18 to 65.

People cycle alone, in groups or as families, and it is one of the few activities in which young children can take part. Among households with children aged 5 or under, one out of three families is equipped with a seat or trailer; among those with children aged 5 to 14, two out of three have one or more children's bicycles.

On average, cyclists aged 18 to 74 spend 3.8 hours per week on their bikes between May and September, while a quarter of the adult population (24%) devotes two hours per week to cycling, or 15 minutes a day. However, the amount of physical effort people put into cycling varies: for three out of four cyclists (72%), it is generally moderate; one out of five cyclists (19%) pedals with intensity; and one out ten prefers to expend little effort.

This data demonstrates that from May to September 2005, cycling allowed 13.3% of people in Québec aged 18 to 74 to be sufficiently active to remain physically fit, whether they cycled for recreational or practical purposes. During the same period, cycling allowed 4.8% of those in this age group to remain moderately active and a further 12.4% to be slightly active. In other words, for five months of the year, bicycling helps improve the physical fitness for nearly one-third of the Québec population aged 18 to 74 (30.5%).

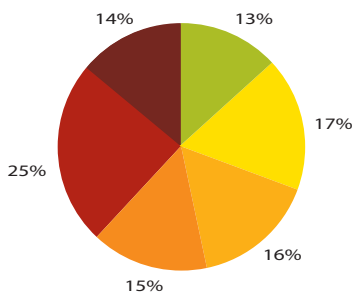
Also bear in mind that among those in Québec who did not bicycle in 2005, almost one-third (15% of the population) say that they may start cycling again within three years, and two-thirds of these people (10% of adults) already own a bicycle.

Irrespective of gender, age or level of education, nine out of ten people in Québec (89%) say that they cycle not only for exercise but also for the sheer pleasure of doing so. Access to bicycle paths is another motivating factor for 84% of those in Québec, while 81% see the opportunity to cycle as a family or with friends as an incentive to participate in the activity.

On the other hand, as is the case for physical activity in general, lack of time is the main reason that people in Québec do not spend more time on their bicycles, with 57% of them identifying this as a hindering factor. That being said, this same factor is much less of a disincentive for cyclists who use their bicycles as a means of transportation (31%), while motorized traffic is a disincentive for 56% of Québec cyclists.

CYCLING'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE FITNESS OF QUEBECERS

- Enough to maintain fitness
 - Enough to somewhat improve fitness
 - Not enough to improve fitness
- Did not cycle in 2005:
- May cycle again within 3 years
 - Has cycled in the past
 - Has never cycled



SAFETY MATTERS

Cycling remains one the safest physical activities. In 1999-2000, cyclists consulted health professionals a total of 25,000 times, or approximately seven consultations per 1,000 cyclists. By way of comparison, this rate is at least 10 times higher for karate (113 consultations), football (104), hockey (79) and jogging and running (78).

During the years 2000 through 2003, an annual average of 26 people died as a result of cycling accidents in Québec, which has a cycling population of 3.6 million. According to the Québec coroner's office, the vast majority of these deaths (83%) followed accidents involving a motor vehicle. By contrast, 82% of injuries are associated with falls or collisions not involving motor vehicles.

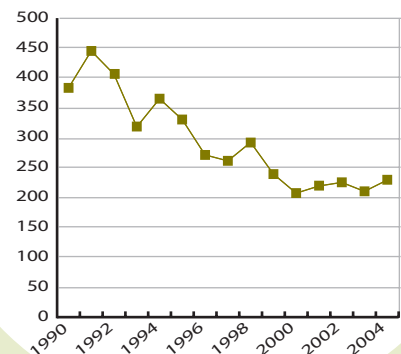
Since 2000, the road safety record of cyclists has remained stable, with an annual average of 198 serious injuries and 20 deaths between 2000 and 2004. During this same period, the number of cyclists and bicycle use have also remained stable. This contrasts with the 1990s, when the number of cyclists killed or seriously injured in road accidents fell by half, declining from a peak of 445 in 1991 to a low of 207 in 2000.

As for cycling behaviour, few statistics are available on compliance with the Highway Safety Code. However, in 2005, the police department of Montréal issued 1,800 tickets to cyclists, of a total of 325,000 traffic tickets issued. Furthermore, 85% of cyclists still ride without lights at night; even though the number of cyclists who use a white headlamp and a red rear light has doubled since 2000, barely 12% of those who cycle after dark use the lights required by the Code. Lastly, the SAAQ (the Québec motor vehicle bureau) reports that the proportion of cyclists who wear helmets ranged from 24.5% to 28.6% between 1996 and 2002 but reached 36.6% in 2004.

In terms of infrastructures, the vast majority (92%) of the population believes that the development of bicycle path networks is a very (63%) or quite (29%) effective means of making cyclists safer. Two out of three people in Québec (69%) also feel that reducing speed limits for motorized traffic also helps to enhance the safety of cyclists.

Furthermore, over three-quarters of the Québec population shares the view that education and awareness initiatives aimed at motorists (81%) and cyclists (87%) are effective ways to make cycling safer. As for the wearing of helmets, 87% of the population continues to believe that this is an effective safety measure, while the proportion of those who consider it to be very effective has fallen by 10% since 1995.

CYCLISTS KILLED OR SERIOUSLY INJURED IN ROAD ACCIDENTS





THE BICYCLE AS A MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION

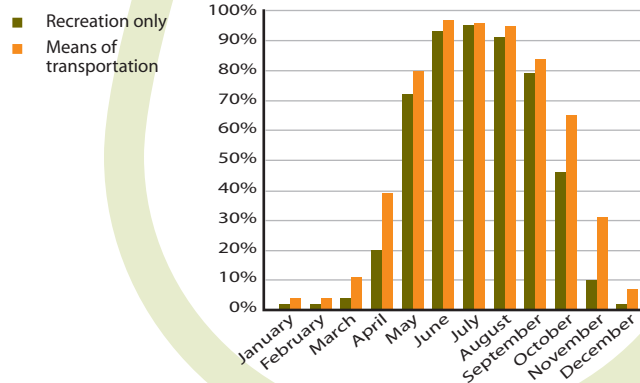
ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

In urban areas, the bicycle is the most efficient, rapid, cost-effective and environmentally friendly means of transportation. In addition to all the advantages it provides in terms of mobility, the use of the bicycle as a means of transportation allows people to remain at least moderately active.

In Québec, slightly more than one percent of trips are made by bicycle. But this modest figure obscures broadly different local realities as well as markedly greater potential. For example, cycling accounts for only 1.6% of transportation in Montréal as a whole but for more than 6.5% in the borough of Plateau-Mont-Royal. The potential is that much greater in such neighbourhoods because the residents generally travel short distances: in major metropolitan centres (Montréal, Québec City and Gatineau-Ottawa), one out of three trips to work is less than 5 km long, while in medium-sized centres (Trois-Rivières, Sherbrooke and Saguenay), one out of two commutes falls into this category.

In short, one out of six adults (16%) uses the bicycle as a means of transportation, for a total of 900,000 people; among 18-24 year olds, this proportion climbs to one out of three (32%). Including children, nearly 75,000 of whom cycle to school, a total of almost a million people in Québec rely on the bicycle as a means of transportation.

CYCLING SEASON BASED ON TYPE OF USE

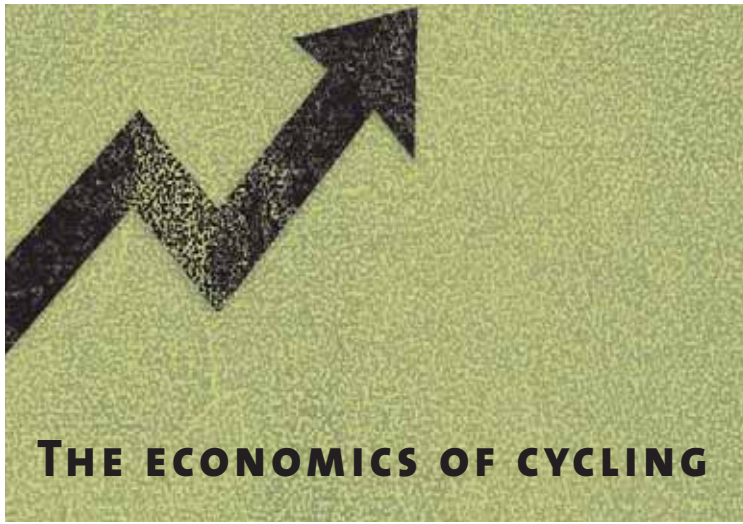


FOR A GREENER FUTURE

The environmental friendliness of the bicycle is glaringly obvious. First, it emits no unhealthy pollutants or greenhouse gases (GHGs); second, more often than not it produces hardly any noise; and lastly, the space it takes up on roadways and in parking areas is minimal—up to ten times less than a car.

In Québec, cyclists make 16% of their trips for transportation purposes, representing an annual total of 330 million kilometres. If these trips were made in a motorized vehicle, more than 30 million litres of gas would be consumed, producing 76,000 tonnes of CO₂.

This has led several towns and cities to implement measures designed to reduce GHGs, including the expanded use of the bicycle. In Montréal, for example, the Master Plan recognizes the bicycle as “a full-fledged mode of transportation for all kinds of trips.” Currently being developed, the city’s transportation plan calls for reducing dependence on cars by encouraging the increased use of mass transit and active transportation. Québec City has adopted and implemented a GHG reduction plan, which will make self-service bicycles available to municipal employees. Lastly, in 2005, the cities of Montréal, Québec, Gatineau, Trois-Rivières and Sherbrooke participated in the worldwide “In Town, Without My Car” day. In Montréal, not only was the emission of air pollutants reduced by up to 95% within the perimeter closed to motorized traffic, there was also a nine-decibel reduction in noise, or ten times less ambient noise than normal.



THE ECONOMICS OF CYCLING

BICYCLES BY THE NUMBER

Throughout the world, the total number of bicycles in a given area is good indicator of the size of the cycling population. In Québec, this number remains stable, at 5.3 million units, or 760 adult bicycles for every 1,000 adults. Three out of four households (74%) own at least one bicycle, as do 61% of adults. This last figure has varied very little over the past 10 years. As for bicycle thefts in Québec, 1% of the total number of bicycles in the province is stolen every year—a situation that also remains stable, but no less irritating.

Furthermore, one out of three bicycles (33%) is equipped with a rack or basket, making them more useful as a means of transportation. This figure has increased significantly since 2000 (28%) and 1995 (27%). Finally, one cyclist out of three (32%) buys specialized cycling clothing (bicycle shorts, shoes, etc.), a proportion that peaks at 42% in Québec City.

THE BICYCLE INDUSTRY

Concentrated mainly in Québec, the Canadian bicycle industry generated sales of slightly over \$777 million in 2004, including parts and accessories. From 2000 to 2004, the number of bicycles produced in Canada nevertheless fell by 35%, declining from 740,000 to 480,000 units. However, the increase in the unit value of bicycles, which jumped from \$167 to \$209 over the same period, offset the impact of lower production, with the total value of bicycles produced in Canada falling by only 20%, from \$123 million in 2000 to \$99 million in 2004.

As you might expect, the significant decline in Canadian production was accompanied by an upturn in imports from Asia, which doubled over the same period, climbing from 540,000 to 1,080,000 units and increasing in value from \$114 million to \$214 million.

Among major players in the industry, Montreal-based Dorel paid US\$310 million for the American company Schwinn in 2004, immediately inheriting 30% of the North American market and annual sales of 5.5 million bicycles, or 5% of worldwide sales.

Québec-based Procycle of Saint-George and Ontario-based Raleigh, which also has a plant in the Eastern Townships, are the two largest manufacturers in the country. At the high end of the market, Cycles Devinci of Saguenay and Marinoni of Lachenaie have carved out prominent positions.

The bicycle industry also plays a role in social reintegration: in Montréal, SOS Vélo produces an average of 1,000 bicycles per year and has trained over 350 people. In Québec City, Vélo Vert has hired 55 apprentices and sells 700 recycled bicycles per year, made from 3,000 recovered bicycles.

As for accessories, the Québec market is dominated by Louis Garneau Sports of Saint-Augustin-de-Desmaures, which sells over 1,500 products manufactured primarily in Québec as well as in Asia, where the Company also makes bicycles. Lastly, some small- and medium-sized businesses in Québec are also active in this field, such as the thriving panniers manufacturer Arkel, which exports products to the United States and Europe.

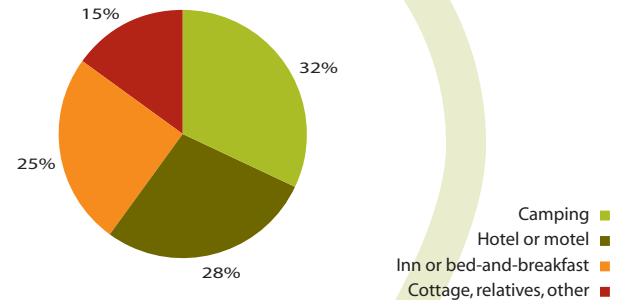
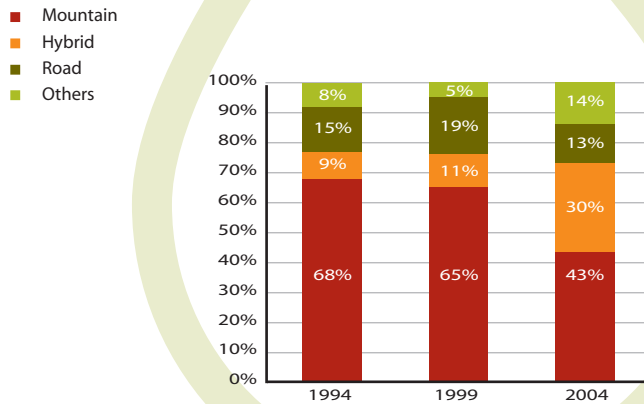


A SIZEABLE MARKET

In 2005, people in Québec bought 600,000 bicycles, two-thirds of them adult bicycles and one-third children's. Although mountain bikes are becoming less popular, they still dominate the market, with 43% of sales, followed by hybrid bicycles, which account for 30% of depleted stock.

And there is certainly no shortage of places to buy bicycles, with no less than 700 retail outlets scattered throughout Québec. These include 250 bicycle shops and 200 sports stores, which have captured 50% of the market, selling bicycles with an average wholesale price of \$350. Of these 450 retail outlets, 150 are part of large chains. The remaining 50% of the market is made up of large retailers, which sell bicycles with an average wholesale price of \$109. Interestingly, the number of specialized merchants has remained stable in Québec over the past five years while it has declined by almost a third in the United States, falling from 7,000 in 1998 to 5,000 in 2004.

BICYCLE SALES BY CATEGORY IN CANADA



ACCOMMODATION PREFERENCES OF ATHLETIC BICYCLE TOURISTS

THE TOURING BICYCLE

In 2005, about twenty tour operators in Québec offered bicycle tourism packages. Seven of them organized tours in Québec, as did six Canadian and five American operators and one British agency.



One of the most popular bicycle travel excursions in Québec is the Grand Tour, an eight-day trip organized annually since 1994 that attracts almost 2,000 participants. The majority of these participants camp at a site set up daily in a different stopover location, but 10 to 15% of them choose to stay at tourist accommodations: from 2003 to 2005, the Grand Tour organizers have thus booked a total of 1,400 double-occupancy nights.

In order to meet the specific needs of touring cyclists, Vélo Québec Association launched a certification program known as *Bienvenue cyclistes!*^{MD} ("Cyclists Welcome!") in 2005. Establishments (inns, campsites, etc.) qualify for this certification if they offer services specifically designed to meet the needs of touring cyclists: a covered and locked location for storing bicycles, tools for making minor repairs, energy-rich meals and information useful to cyclists. As of April 1, 2006, almost 300 establishments had received this certification.

As for bicycle rentals, approximately a hundred different outlets throughout Québec offer this kind of service, maintaining fleets comprising an average of twenty bicycles. In the regions of Montréal, Québec City and the Laurentians, over 200 bicycles are available for rent, while in the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean and the Eastern Townships there are about a hundred. The target market, which remains quite small, is made up mainly of people interested in renting a bicycle by the hour or by the day to go on short outings.

Lastly, it is important to note that touring cyclists can count on finding bicycle retail/service outlets in every region of Québec, whether they want to purchase an additional accessory or have a repair or adjustment made. These include 227 Route verte-friendly retailers that distribute information about the cycling network; these merchants are listed in the official guide to the Route verte and on its site: www.routeverte.com.

BICYCLE-CRAZY TOURISTS

Bicycle tourism is a natural part of the trend known as "adventure tourism", which has been gaining steadily in popularity since the 1990s. It has seen a genuine resurgence in popularity over the past decade, and the range of travel options available to touring cyclists is now more vast and varied than ever.

If the number of people for whom cycling is the main motivation for travel (athletic bicycle tourists) is combined with those for whom cycling is one of a number of vacation activities (vacationing bicycle tourists), 20% of Québec cyclists, or 10% of the population, can be referred to as touring cyclists. These 500,000 cycling enthusiasts are well educated (45% of them are university graduates, as compared with 31% of the general population) and relatively affluent (68% earn more than \$40,000 per year).

Of the 200,000 athletic bicycle tourists identified in Québec in 2005, two-thirds are men and over a quarter (28%) earn at least \$80,000 per year (compared with 17% of the general population). They take an average of 2.2 bicycle trips and spend an average of 6.8 days vacationing by bicycle per year; 53% of them choose to stay at tourist accommodations (bed-and-breakfasts, hotels, motels, etc.), while 32% opt for campsites. They spend an average of \$83 per day, making them a more lucrative clientele than Québec tourists in general, who spend an average of \$66 per day.

As for vacationing bicycle tourists, over 410,000 of them cycled during vacations taken in 2005. They took an average of 3.5 trips and cycled for an average of 5.4 out of 9.7 vacation days. In terms of accommodations, 35% of them prefer hotel establishments and 35% campsites; their vacation spending averages \$200 annually for the bicycle portion of their trips.

Overall, slightly less than half of touring cyclists prefer bicycle paths, 30% favour rural roads, while the others use both types of infrastructure. Lastly, the Laurentians, the Eastern Townships and Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean are the favourite bicycle tourism regions of people in Québec.



INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

PATHS OF THE FUTURE

In 2005, the Québec cycling network comprised over 6,750 km of bikeways, representing an increase of more than a third over the 5,000 km identified in 2000. Much of this increase can be attributed to paved shoulders: non-existent in 1995, they doubled in length between 2000 and 2005, increasing from 700 km to 1400 km. Bike paths and lanes also expanded significantly, increasing from 2,300 km in 1995 to 4,000 km in 2005.

Between 1978 and 2005, the Government of Québec invested over \$104 million in the development of bikeways, including the \$60 million spent on the Route verte. The various municipalities along these bikeways invested at least as much in addition to covering all costs associated with the maintenance of non-Route verte bikeways. Route verte maintenance costs, which total \$2.3 million annually in municipal areas, are shared equally by the municipalities and Transports Québec. Furthermore, 24 municipalities plan to invest over \$10 million in their bicycle networks in 2006.

As for off-road facilities, Québec has about sixty mountain-bike centres with 3,000 km of trails, most of which are marked and groomed. Some of these centres, particularly Bromont and Mont-Sainte-Anne, are well known outside of Québec, as a result of hosting national and international competitions.

THE ROUTE VERTE, THE REALM OF THE BICYCLE

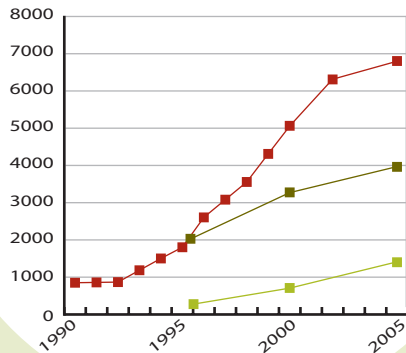
Québec is about to celebrate the realization of a great dream. In 2007, it will be possible to crisscross the entire province by bicycle on 4,300 kilometres of the Route verte. Based on a concept that originated with Vélo Québec, the longest bicycle network in North America is being developed in collaboration with the Government of Québec, Transports Québec and a multitude of regional partners, including the 319 municipalities and 72 regional county municipalities that it traverses.

When first opened in 1995, the Route verte comprised 1,000 km, including the P'tit Train du Nord linear park, which was inaugurated the same year. With 3,600 km completed to date, it now encompasses over half of the Québec cycling network. It includes about thirty regional routes linked by local bikeways and roadway segments. A further 400 km of bikeways are accessible via this province-wide route. Overall, this 4000-km tourism network is made up of roughly equal proportions of bicycle paths—mainly built on abandoned rail corridors—and roadway routes. In addition to cycling facilities, the Route verte is studded with almost 500 rest areas and marked with 5,000 identification signs.

Finally, year after year, public awareness of the Route verte continues to grow: while in 2000 just 27% of people in Québec had heard of the cycling route, this proportion had increased to 46% by 2005; among those who cycle at least once a week, awareness has climbed to 60%.

QUÉBEC'S BICYCLE NETWORK

- Total
- Bike paths and lanes
- Paved shoulders



STATE OF PROGRESS ON THE ROUTE VERTE AS OF OCTOBER 31, 2005

	Projected total (km)	Existent (km)	Currently being developed (km)
Bike paths	1569	1380	189
Bike lanes	146	123	24
Paved shoulders			
Provincial roads	1689	1263	426
Other roads	130	105	25
Shared roadways	824	728	96
TOTAL	4350	3508	760
	100%	83%	17%



POPULAR BIKEWAYS

The bicycle paths are very important to cycling enthusiasts: they cycle on them 43% of the time, almost twice as much as reported in 1995, reflecting the corresponding increase in the combined length of paths.

Counts indicate that there is a considerable amount of traffic on numerous paths: for example, in 2005, a total of 600,000 cyclists used the De Brébeuf Street path in Montréal. During the same year, in Québec City, 120,000 cyclists crossed the St. Lawrence on the Lévis ferry, while 70,000 chose to use the Pont du Québec; this considerable increase is attributable to the Parcours des Anses, a magnificent bike path running alongside the river in Lévis. Also in 2005, the passage of 150,000 bicycles was recorded on the Parc linéaire des Basses-Laurentides in Blainville. Lastly, the *Bicycling in Québec in 2005* survey indicates that during last year's cycling season, two million people cycled on at least one of the paths comprising the Route verte, or over three out four Québec cyclists (76%).

BICYCLE PARKING

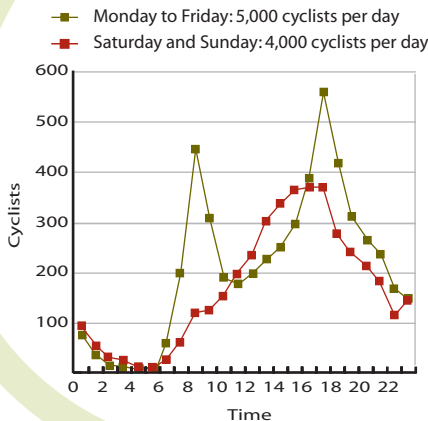
Initiated in 1996, the program to install bicycle parking spaces on Montréal sidewalks was an immediate success. There are now 1,700 two- to five-space bike racks on the sidewalks of central neighbourhoods and along a number of commercial arteries. This is in addition to about twenty 10- to 20-space roadside parking areas on St. Catherine Street and the Plateau-Mont-Royal, bringing the total number of available spaces to 7,500. There are 1,200 spaces at subway stations and over 2,000 at suburban train stations, bus terminals and park-and-rides managed by the Agence métropolitaine de transport in the Montréal region. Parking spaces have also been installed on the sidewalks of several other Québec municipalities, including Québec City (400 spaces), Trois-Rivières, Drummondville, Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu and Roberval.

There are also numerous bicycle parking spaces on university campuses: Université Laval in Québec City has over 3,000 spaces for bicycles, including 1,500 sheltered spaces, while Université du Québec en Outaouais in Gatineau has outfitted two storage rooms for students' bicycles. Both Université de Montréal and McGill have over 700 parking spaces, while Concordia and Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM) have installed 300 and 500 spaces, respectively. At UQAM, 225 spaces, will be added at the Complexe des sciences in 2006, and 575 other spaces will be created at the Îlot Voyageur in 2008.

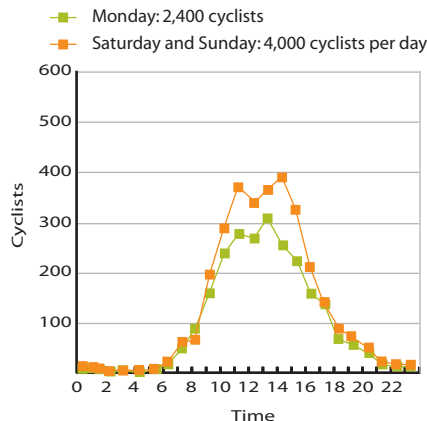
Lastly, numerous buildings provide bicycle parking spaces for employees and visitors: there are, for example, 850 spaces at government buildings in downtown Gatineau, while in Montréal, the Ville-Marie borough (downtown district) has over 2,000 at institutional buildings and an additional 2,000 at private buildings, half of them inside garages in the latter case. Furthermore, in Québec City, eight government buildings have a total 200 garage parking spaces for bicycles.

USE OF URBAN BIKEWAYS

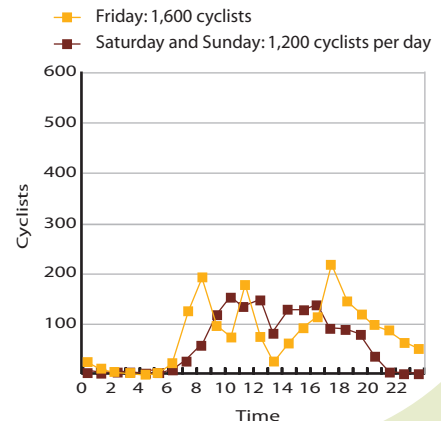
MONTRÉAL
DE BRÉBEUF STREET PATH
JULY 11 TO 31, 2005



QUÉBEC CITY
CORRIDOR DU LITTORAL
AUGUST 6 TO 8, 2005



GATINEAU
TACHÉ BLVD. AND MONTCALM STREET
JUNE 10 TO 12, 2005





INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES (suite)

MADE FOR EACH OTHER

The complementarity of cycling and public transportation allows cyclists to travel further afield and provides transportation companies with an opportunity to expand their clientele: whether cyclists board vehicles with their bicycles or use them to get to a station, the resources of both the bicycle and transportation networks are maximized.

As of 2005, 3 of the 19 transit organizations in the greater Montréal area had buses equipped with bike racks. This service is available on 54 of their 192 routes; in 65% of cases, users rely on this service to get to work. Cyclists have been able to board Montréal subway cars with their bicycles for no extra charge outside rush hours for over ten years now. It is also possible to transport your bicycle on two of the five suburban train lines, namely the Deux-Montagnes and Dorion-Rigaud lines. Cyclists can board or disembark at all stations (except the Hudson and Rigaud stations) as well as at Central station—a marked improvement since 2000 when this service was available at barely 11 of 30 stations. The service is now offered at all times except during rush hours in the high-traffic direction.

In 2001 and 2003, Vélo Québec launched the Taxi + Bike service—a pilot project involving five taxi companies (Taxi Diamond, Taxi Coop de Montréal, Taxi Union Longueuil, Coop Taxi Laval, Coop de Taxi de l'Ouest métropolitain) and a hundred cars in Montréal, Laval and Longueuil—which more than 1,500 people used between July and September 2001. In 2002, a similar service was set up in Rimouski by the “Rimouski ville cyclable” service.

Today, ten taxi companies in Québec offer this service: in addition to the six aforementioned companies are those that serve the P'tit Train du Nord in the Laurentians and the Petit Témis in the Lower St. Lawrence, as well as two others that transport users of the Véloroute des Bleuets in the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean.

Intercity bus companies also allow passengers to travel with bicycles, but the bicycle transportation services of Via Rail remain almost as limited as in 2000. Only trains with baggage cars accept bicycles, which automatically excludes all express trains linking the major cities along the Québec City-Windsor corridor.

Lastly, the air carriers serving Québec's two international airports (Montréal and Québec City) transport bicycles on board their planes as standard baggage (free of charge) or as a third piece of baggage (for an additional charge). In the latter case, carriers charge between \$60 and \$150 for one-way transportation



INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

QUÉBEC IN THE WORLD

Cycling is far more popular in Québec than anywhere else in North America: proportionally, there are one and a half times as many cyclists here as in Ontario (44%) or British Columbia (30%), and twice as many as in the United States, where barely 27% of those aged 7 and up cycle.

As a mode of urban transportation, cycling accounts for 1.2% of trips in the greater Montréal area and 1.6% on the island of Montréal. In the case of the Plateau-Mont-Royal borough, this figure (6.5%) approaches the 10% share observed in Swiss cities but still falls far short of the 15% recorded in Munich and of the 25% for the Netherlands as a whole. In Copenhagen, 36% of trips to work are made by bicycle.

As for the total number of bicycles, Québec has 760 per 1,000 inhabitants, compared with 400 in France and England. In Germany, this proportion climbs to 800 bicycles per 1,000 inhabitants, while it reaches 900 in Denmark and 1,000 in the Netherlands.

Several countries around the world have adopted national cycling strategies or policies that take into account the impact of transportation on health and the environment. Examples include the *National Cycling Strategy* and the white paper *A New Deal for Transport* in Great Britain, the *Bicycle Master Plan* in the Netherlands and the *National Cycling Strategy 2005-2010* in Australia, which addresses issues such as the reduction of greenhouse gases. It should be noted that in the Netherlands, people who cycle to work can claim a tax deduction.

At the municipal level, numerous Canadian cities have adopted bicycle network master plans, including Toronto in 2001, Vancouver in 1999 and 1988, and Ottawa in 1994. In Québec, Montréal adopted its plan for bicycle access to downtown in 2005.

While Montréal now has 7,500 parking spaces for bicycles, Toronto and Chicago are the North American champions in this regard: the former has 15,000 post-and-ring bike stands (providing 30,000 spaces), and the latter installed its 10,000th inverted-U rack (20,000 spaces) in 2005. As for Vancouver, it has over 350 bike lockers at its various SkyTrain stations.

In Europe, Switzerland has 18 bike garages at stations, with space for 100 to 600 bicycles. In Germany, Land Nordrhein-Westfalen has over forty bike garages with 100 to 3,000 spaces (Münster).



THE ROUTE VERTE FROM A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

While **Cycling in Switzerland** has a network of cycling routes comprising over 3,300 kilometres, the **D-Route**, the German equivalent of the **Route verte**, will extend for 10,200 kilometres. No less than 3,300 accommodations establishments in Germany have received *Bett & Bike* accreditation, which is similar to *Bienvenue cyclistes!*^{MD} certification.

As for Spain's **Vías Verdes**, they extend for 1,200 kilometres on abandoned railway lines with a rich architectural heritage that includes 500 tunnels and 1,100 viaducts and bridges. In the Walloon region of Belgium, the **RAVeL** was launched in 1995 and includes 1,600 kilometres developed specifically for "soft" users such as pedestrians and cyclists. Across the North Sea, Britain's **National Cycle Network** extends for over 16,000 kilometres; it is managed by the Sustrans organization, which also promotes non-motorized transportation through various initiatives, including Safe Routes to School.

Closer to home, in the United States, the **Rails-to-Trails Conservancy** has overseen the conversion of 21,000 kilometres of defunct railways into trails. In this country, the **Trans Canada Trail** is being developed on a province-by-province basis. In Ontario, the **Waterfront Trail** runs alongside Lake Ontario, and the network's 450 marked kilometres will soon be extended by 290 kilometres to the Québec border, where it will link to the Route verte. Lastly, the mixed-use **Sentier NB Trail** is made up of sections comprising a total of 1,100 developed kilometres that link various communities in New Brunswick. This network includes the Petit Témis, which links Edmundston, New Brunswick, to Cabano and Rivière-du-Loup, as well as to the Route verte.

CONCLUSION

In 1995, Transports Québec adopted its cycling policy and the Route verte was officially launched. Ten years later, Québec is clearly even more bicycle-friendly. Not only has cycling become a genuine craze, the bicycle network—including the Route verte, which is now 83 % complete—is being expanded at a very impressive rate. What's more, it is now quite obvious that Québec has developed a cycling culture that is unique in North America from the point of view of bicycle use, organized activities and economic spinoffs.

Given this great momentum, now is the perfect time for the cycling community to tackle certain other challenges. One of the most pressing is to provide more support for bicycle use by people in general. This effort should initially focus on young people—the segment of the population most likely to reverse the trend toward a sedentary lifestyle, since a third of those aged 18-24 (32 %) are already fans of active transportation. Furthermore, it is equally appropriate to solicit the involvement of municipal authorities, by encouraging them to complete the integration of cycling networks and to adopt policies designed to stimulate bicycle use.

To achieve these objectives, several different means could be employed. It would be advisable to implement programs promoting not only active transportation but also organized outings for the general public as well as bicycle tourism. It is important to support the development of services that meet the accommodations, transportation and bicycle-rental needs of touring cyclists. The associated promotional campaigns should target clientele within Québec as well as the most promising foreign markets.

In terms of facilities, the linking up of individual cycling networks and the adoption of traffic-calming measures can facilitate the creation of a universal network for recreation, tourism and transportation. Moreover, the addition of bicycle parking spaces around public buildings or workplaces is the single most cost-effective way to encourage active transportation. No matter what type of project is envisaged, it is always important to consult specialized manuals and technical standards to effectively and properly develop cycling facilities.

Lastly, although these facilities greatly enhance the safety of cyclists, compliance with the Highway Safety Code also plays an important role in this regard. It not only obliges motorists to slow down but also requires cyclists to obey road signs and equip their bicycles with a lighting system when riding after dark.

As we have seen, Québec is doing very well in terms of cycling, but there are number of milestones to reach before we cross the finish line. In light of everything noted above, we look forward to updating you on the situation when the next edition of *Bicycling in Québec* is published in 2010. We will then see if we have individually and collectively risen to these many challenges, and we will also be in a position to accurately assess the distance travelled over a full 15-year period.

In 1995, the ministère des Transports adopted the *Politique sur le vélo*, with the intention of promoting bicycle transportation and improving cycling conditions in Québec. Since then, in order to evaluate the effect of this policy on bicycle use in Québec, Vélo Québec, in conjunction with the Ministère, will provide an overview of bicycle use in Québec every five years.

The publication of the third study on the state of bicycle use in Québec has provided the Ministère and its partners with important tools for reflecting on transportation, tourism, health and the environment. The information it contains will, I hope, help illustrate the important place that cycling occupies in Québec society.

Julie Boulet

Minister for Transport
Minister responsible for the Mauricie region



Concentrated around the 45th parallel in the St. Lawrence River Valley, the Québec population must contend with a winter that is far from bicycle-friendly. Despite this constraint, Québec has, in recent decades, developed a cycling culture like no other in North America. Fully half of the population cycles—a third of people do so at least once a week—and the Route verte is now over 3,600 km long. Here are some highlights from *Bicycling in Québec in 2005*, a vast study summarized in the present document. The full report is available on line at www.velo.qc.ca.

BICYCLING IN QUÉBEC IN 2005

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