



BUGS at work!

A Bicycle User Group Guide

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All photos appearing in this Guide are courtesy of Brett Delmage.

BUGs at Work!

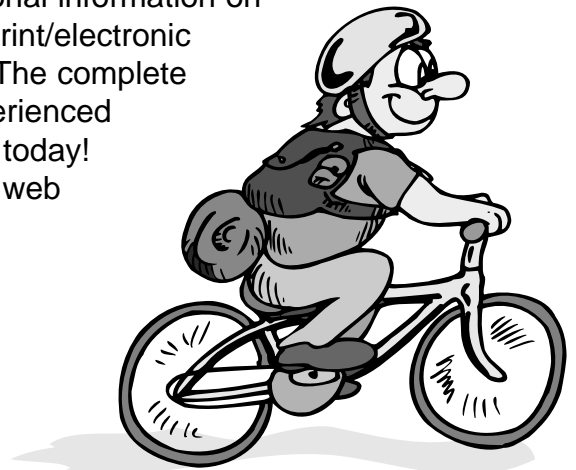
A Bicycle User Group Guide

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Just a taste!

This guide is only a taste of the comprehensive version. Contact Citizens for Safe Cycling at (613) 567-1288 or e-mail at promo@cfsc.ottawa.on.ca to order the complete BUG guide which offers additional information on clothing lockers and bicycle rack suppliers, BUG print/electronic resources, cycling safety, and much, much more! The complete BUG guide is an invaluable resource for both experienced and beginner cyclists at the workplace. Order one today! The BUG guide can also be downloaded from the web in pdf format at <http://www.cfsc.ottawa.on.ca/BUGmanual2002>.



1.0 INTRODUCTION

First things first. Who is this guide for? This guide is aimed at commuter cyclists who wish to join efforts with other cyclists at their workplace to improve facilities for cyclists and who would like to work at eliminating barriers that are keeping others from commuting by bicycle. What is 'BUGs at Work' about? In a nutshell, the guide will provide:

1. Practical tips on starting a Bicycle User Group (BUG) at your workplace
2. Essential information on maintaining a BUG
3. Resources useful to BUG members and potential cyclists as well as tools with which to encourage your employer to be proactive with respect to commuter cyclists.

There are also appendices with lists of locker retailers, websites, cycling safety tips and much more commuter cycling information that is invaluable for both experienced and beginner cyclists.

2.0 THE INS AND OUTS OF BUGs

2.1 What is a BUG?

It is social, it can move fast and it can be persistent but that is about all a BUG has in common with an insect. A BUG is one of the best ways to support and encourage cycle commuting at the workplace. How do they originate? Often a BUG is formed by employees who want to improve workplace facilities for cyclists. We have all, at some point, complained about inadequate bicycle racks, lack of showers and how to get others out of their cars and into the saddle. BUGs are one effective way to turn complaints into positive action.



The term "BUG" for Bicycle User Group was first coined by some bicycle commuters at the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto. They had come together to organize a single bicycle project but the group slowly transformed into all year round, bicycle-using and bicycle-promoting organization. Since then, many BUGs have formed for many different reasons. Many BUGs work towards getting better parking and shower facilities at their workplaces. Other BUGs organize Bike to Work days or other bicycle commuter activities with work colleagues. Some are involved in transportation planning and/or policy change at their workplace.

Size doesn't matter...

Some BUGs are big and electronically connected. The CIBC BUG in Toronto has over 120

members who communicate by office e-mail. There are also a few "BUGs of one" in which one person simply acts as a provider of info and resources to colleagues or BUG members. And there are all sizes and raison d'être in between.

2.2 Why start a BUG and what can a BUG accomplish?

If you have a beef, almost certainly some other employees share it. By starting a BUG, you can gather like-minded people who support cycling at your workplace and will ultimately encourage decision makers to provide and/or improve facilities. Still need more convincing to start a BUG? Here are just some of the many reasons to start a BUG at the workplace:

1. Pedalling influence and starting projects

One of the main reasons to form a BUG is to influence those who can improve bicycle facilities at your workplace. If you've ever tried to convince a store owner or a local politician to install bicycle facilities, you'll know that it's difficult on your own. Many hands not only make lighter work, but they also have much more clout. Having a group of cyclists at work who are ready to tackle a specific project can make it happen. Furthermore, if you have a great idea, but not all the skills or resources to make it happen on your own, then a BUG can be a forum for airing these ideas and putting them into action.

2. Provide expertise

BUGs provide an easy source of expertise when human resources or building facility managers want to upgrade or change facilities. Managers may not want to consult just one outspoken commuter cyclist; a group may be much more approachable and credible. A BUG also ensures that everyone's needs have been considered. For example, when a new bicycle rack is being planned, a BUG can assure that it will accommodate both a 6'4" technician and a 5'0" engineer.

Expert Route Advice

NORBUG and the informal bicycle user group at Watchfire Ottawa have found that by simply offering route advice and posting cycling maps around the office, they have attracted attention and provided a useful service to other cyclists.

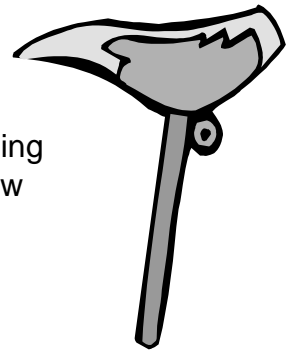
3. Promoting cycling

Having a BUG as a central cycling information source also provides a very personalized forum for other people to get inspired, involved, and informed about commuter cycling. This can range from having some cycling maps and pamphlets available at your desk or on a bulletin board, to having a commuter cyclist forum on your office e-mail or organizing an event for BUG members and other interested people in your workplace. One of the important functions of a BUG at any workplace is overcoming some of the psychological barriers faced by would-be cyclists. BUGs raise the profile of cyclists and therefore can 'normalize' the image of cyclists at the workplace.



4. A social venue

Sometimes a BUG performs a social function. It can serve to organize rides, get-togethers, and social events among people who cycle or would like to cycle. Bringing in successful local BUGs in the area can also be the focus of a social event. Or how about organizing a CAN-bike course to bring cyclists together at the workplace?



2.3 HOW TO START A BUG?

There are several approaches depending on your environment at the workplace. Does a 'green' attitude already exist at the workplace? Ideally, if you have the ear of cyclists in upper management or in the property management company, you should solicit their involvement. Initial 'buy-in' from someone in management can definitely facilitate the formation and activities of a BUG. For instance, employers like Mountain Equipment Co-op or Export Development Corporation, who are already convinced of the benefits of supporting commuter cyclists, are much more likely to entertain proposals and suggestions brought forth by a BUG than a company or a building manager where such an environmental corporate culture is absent. But even if it is not in the corporate culture, BUG start-up is easy! Below are suggested steps in starting up a BUG:

1. Identify interested cyclists

How? You could approach other commuter cyclists in person as you leave or arrive at work with your bicycle. Too shy? You could leave a note on bicycles parked outside your workplace. For instance, NORBUG members stickered bicycles (paper and staples only) at Nortel sites during the annual Commuter Challenge. Alternatively, then you can try the e-mail route (if this is allowed at your workplace) or for the ambitious, you can create an internal website like NORBUG does. See Appendix I for a sample e-mail that could introduce the idea of a BUG to your co-workers. No access to e-mail at your workplace? If there is a workplace newsletter, insert a notice about starting a BUG with your contact information. You could also post a note on an employee noticeboard.

While initially you probably want to focus on existing commuter cyclists for the formation of a BUG, there may well be those who would cycle given different conditions and encouragement. You could use the same approaches to solicit their interest at a later date.

Western BUGs

Here are some ideas that have worked for BUGs in Vancouver. They have put up posters in rest rooms and in the parking garage. Others have set up an information booth in their workplace lobby and created a simple cafeteria display. Some BUGs have convinced their human resources department to insert BUG information sheets with company pay cheques. One BUG was especially creative and shot a simple video of staff cycling which, with humorous accompaniment, was shown to staff members at lunch.

2. Hold a short meeting

Once you have identified interested people, chose a date and time for your first meeting. Remember to keep it short since people are unlikely to give up large amounts of their free time. Circulate an agenda prior to the meeting so that the objectives of the meeting are well defined. This will help towards a short and directed meeting. You could include brief introductions (circulate a name and contact information sheet) and some time to set out goals of your BUG (you can do this by identifying everyone's concerns, then focussing on the most common ones).

Your BUG will likely easily come up with a set of goals to accomplish, but in case you are looking for more ideas:

- secure, easily-accessible, visible and well-lit bicycle parking, bicycle lockers or a caged-off area
- sufficient numbers of showers, changing facilities or lockers for cycle clothing
- suitable levels of travel expenses for cycle journeys in work time
- policies that encourage cycling, including casual dress on Fridays, use of a company car if needed during the work day for company business or ride arrangements if a cyclist has an emergency and doesn't have a car at work
- flexible work hours for cyclist commuters
- reimbursement for the subsidized cost of providing free car parking for employees



One issue at a time!

The bicycle user group at Environment Canada (St. Joseph Blvd., Hull) location believes in tackling issues one by one. For instance, first there was the issue of insufficient bicycle racks. One active member surveyed the use of the indoor parking for motorists for one week during the summer and found that on average 35 spots were unused. With much persistence and a turn of events (where bicycle parking spots were actually reduced to accommodate a generator leaving the parking managers in a compensation position), there are now 5 parking spots with bicycle racks for use over the summer. Next issue - ventilation in the shower facilities!

3. Volunteers

Identify a core group of volunteers who would be interested in working on strategies to present these ideas to management. This step might take longer than one meeting. Rather than have one long meeting, hold several short ones. It is also important to remember that not everyone is an activist. Those who are interested in the idea of a BUG at the workplace may not be necessarily be interested in participating in projects. Still their support is necessary and is important in lobbying management.

High-tech volunteers!

Watchfire Ottawa is a dynamic start-up in the region with some very dynamic cyclists who form the core of an informal fledgling bicycle user group. It all started by posting bicycle maps, offering route advice and e-mailing fellow employees during the cycling season. Since the company consists of young and active professionals, the promotion of cycling should meet with enthusiasm in the coming years.

4. Support from management

Gain support from management if possible. Locate someone in management who cycles or at least recognizes the benefits of cycling and ask them to either represent your group or advise you on the best approach for presenting your ideas and suggestions to management.

Not just management!

If you are in a large private or public organization, it might be a good idea to nurture your contacts in all departments that might have input into bicycle facilities and issues. NOR-BUG members maintained a good working relationship with Nortel's facilities people and found keen cyclists as representatives for their different sites. They also kept a current list of important people and their contact information.

5. Workplace survey and site inventory

Assessing what facilities exist and thus, what the needs are at your workplace can be done through a site inventory. Knowing your workplace cycling facility statistics (including an approximate number of cyclists and potential cyclists) will be useful background information for your BUG. If you have some time and a few volunteers at your disposal, a survey of the cyclists and facilities at your workplace can be extremely important (see Appendix II). Surveys, in addition to your BUG member discussions, can help you fine-tune your goals. For instance, is it reasonable to expect to attract one-third of the employees to commute by bicycle when 80% live more than five miles away? Survey results can carry a lot of weight in convincing your managers or property managers that bicycle facilities need improvement. What about surveying non-cyclists in order to determine how many potential cyclists there could be given different conditions? (See Appendix II for a sample survey)

The CMHC BUG conducted a cyclist/runner/exercise survey by e-mail and on paper, to determine locker room usage and requirements. Armed with the results of this survey and other well thought out arguments, the BUG presented an excellent case to management. Although the initial plans proposed a men's change room with reduced facilities, lobbying by cyclists and runners convinced management to appropriately expand the space allocated for lockers.

6. Setting priorities

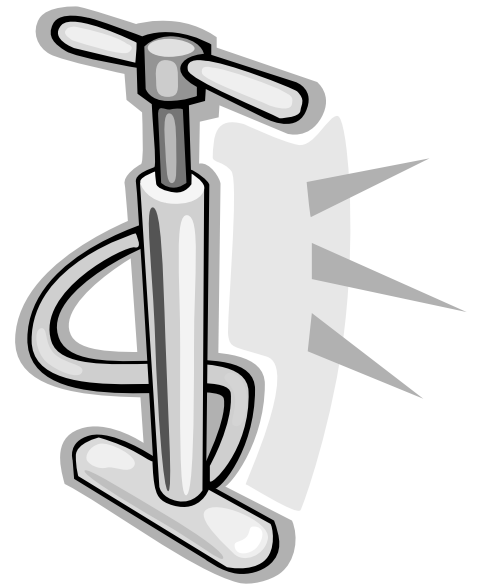
Your meetings should eventually result in specific goals and a set of priorities that your BUG wants to pursue. While everyone's needs may not be addressed at once, assure all BUG members that their concerns will be brought forward to management once the first set of priorities have been presented.

7. Background research and statistics

With your list (keep it reasonable) of issues to be addressed by management, you will also need some research into the feasibility and economics of the solutions (e.g. the costs of lockers or installing showers). This requires some time but the resources in the appendices of this guide as well as discussions with existing BUGs should help.

What have some BUGs asked for?

The CBC BUG in Toronto secured the resources to provide tools and other bicycle repair equipment for cycling employees. More locally, the CMHC (Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation) BUG rallied around the plans by management to renovate the men's locker room. By approaching the facilities planning group and the "Active Living" committee with a cyclist-friendly proposal, the CMHC BUG was able to negotiate a very acceptable and economically feasible alternative. Now their men's locker room has a mix of half



and full lockers with another room across the hall holding full lockers.



8. The Meeting

Presenting your ideas to management is the most important step. Here are some suggestions for your first presentation:

- Book an appointment (set the time and length).
- Your BUG may choose to have a copy of your action plan ready for distribution (the presentation may need to be discussed with other colleagues), although you may want to be less formal.
- Be ready to answer questions from management (e.g. financial outlay, space, etc.).
- Grants may be available from the local council or environmental groups. Not all cycling improvements require financial outlay. Some may even save the organisation money.
- Be positive when you're selling the benefits of cycling.
- Show that support for cycling exists within the organisation (i.e. management will pay attention to survey results).
- Present information about how good cycling is for staff, the organisation and the community. Stress the cost effectiveness of cycling. The organisation may also benefit from favourable local press that a BUG could attract
- Fix the next meeting date.

Government vs. Private

It may be much easier to approach management in private industry or organization than in government. At least that has been the experience of the bicycle user group at Environment Canada. Different bodies are responsible for shower installation, lockers and for bicycle parking. Just tracking down who to talk to can take a lot of time. And then there are the intricacies of government budgets. What if there is no specific budget allocated to bicycle racks? In that case, it is likely that your BUG will have to fundraise unless someone in upper management takes initiative. Another big vs. small perspective comes from NORBUG whose members have found that once they were part of the corporate process (which took a lot of lobbying!), they were consistently consulted for such things as new building construction.

If your initial proposal isn't accepted, don't give up. Perhaps you may need to adjust your objectives and re-think your approach. Did you overwhelm management with too many issues at once? Focussing on one issue may be your best option. Whatever you do, be persistent. These are wise words from the members of the Environment Canada bicycle user group who know that perseverance pays off. They have slowly and sometimes, painstakingly, tackled one issue at a time (i.e. first indoor bicycle parking, then lockers and showers and coming next - ventilation), but with results!

The Commuter Challenge helps launch the EC Riders!

The bicycle user group at Environment Canada (St. Joseph Blvd., Hull location) was born when a few interested cyclists used the annual Commuter Challenge as a way to launch their own one day Cyclist Challenge. Posters were put up and news of the challenge was spread by word of mouth. The end result was 40 cyclists who became part of the group. Since that time the group has grown to about 100 members over 6 years. It has remained an informal group that communicates mostly by e-mail and is issue-oriented.



BUG achievers!

One of Ottawa's BUG success stories is the bicycle user group at Nortel - NORBUG. It was created in the early 1990's by some very keen cyclists. Initially it existed as an e-mail list whose members received monthly newsletters in the cycling season which included names of bicycle shops, route information, bicycle facilities and security information. Since its humble beginnings NORBUG has achieved a lot. Now there is bicycle parking and showers at almost every Nortel site.

2.4 A BUG IS BORN! HOW TO SUSTAIN IT?

Once an issue has been moved forward and a solution has been successfully implemented, your BUG might lose momentum or key BUG organizers may retire or leave the workplace for other reasons. These are inevitable events that can result in waning interest in the BUG, and sometimes even the total shutdown. Unfortunately, there are usually other cycling issues that come up at the workplace and having an organized group ready to address them is invaluable. A BUG will have better chances at survival with a significant number of members. The more members a BUG has, the easier it is to get members, and to get things done.

Western Ways

There are many things your BUG can do to maintain its membership and even attract new members. Looking out west to what Vancouver BUGs have done, might provide some food for thought. If you have management support for a BUG at the workplace, as these Vancouver BUGs did, you could for instance, arrange for massages for commuter cyclists or for discounts on the purchase of bicycles, parts and service at a nearby bicycle shop.

In order to keep your BUG going and to attract members to the BUG, try some of the following easy ideas:

1. Offer something and advertise the benefits of a BUG membership! For instance you can produce leaflets or an e-mail newsletter that talk about improved cycling facilities, social activities, cycling-related information, CAN-BIKE courses, discounts in local bicycle shops as well as cycling safety and/or maintenance classes.

CAN-BIKE and BUGs

Residents of the Ottawa area are lucky to have access to the wide variety of CAN-BIKE courses offered by Citizens for Safe Cycling. From intensive cycling safety courses to introductory short courses, they are all designed to increase cyclists' confidence in traffic. A BUG can organize several CAN-BIKE courses at the workplace - for seasoned cyclists and for beginners. The courses will not



only attract more members to your BUG but also give you more resources to work with as a commuter cyclist.

2. Make it rewarding! Very few people become advocates or volunteers unless it is rewarding. Work out how to reward people with recognition, fun events and other incentives. You could include a BUG award with your company's annual recognition awards.

3. Make it easy to join! Always have a contact name, phone number, e-mail address and meeting place. Most BUGs are free. If your BUG wants to charge a membership fee such subscriptions could cover costs of locker facilities, newsletters, CAN-BIKE courses and social events. The fees should not be so high as to deter potential members (e.g. \$2 - \$5). If possible, have your Human Resources department mention your BUG as a company activity during new employee orientation, along with other activities such as ultimate frisbee and softball.

4. Take advantage of events where you can promote cycling, whether an employer-sponsored health fair or a relocation of employees to a new building. Involve your BUG and therefore, your company, in the local annual Commuter Challenge.



Still Recalling Recumbents!

In conjunction with other events, NORBUG would promote cycling by showcasing a Bike Friday or a recumbent bike. Employees still recall those events. So if your BUG knows someone with an interesting cycling show and tell, it could prove to be a good draw for other employees.

5. Provide cycling information! Have copies of brochures with cycling information, laws, bicycling tips, safety, etc. available at an obvious location (e.g. lunchroom). You can obtain many of these resources from Citizens for Safe Cycling (see Appendix X).

6. Have regular social events or meetings to keep up the momentum! This allows new members to get easily involved. You could, for instance, have an inter-departmental cycling challenge, host a cyclist breakfast or a group commute with work colleagues from your area of residence.

7. Get members involved! Ask them to help (without overwhelming them) and be specific with the tasks you would like them to complete. Studies show that the most common reason people don't contribute volunteer time or donate money is because they were never actually asked.

The Name Game

Members of the bicycle user group at Environment Canada had a bright idea last summer. They felt that giving their group a name would personalize it more and would provide an opportunity to involve not only its members but also new cyclists. They set up a contest

for a name for their bicycle user group. Potential names were submitted and posted. Then everyone who was interested cast their vote. What was in it for them? Not only a new name but also a designer T-shirt (with the new name of the group and logo) to the winning name and a random draw from all those who voted. The end result? A new name - ECRiders and more interest in the group!

What else?

Knowing why your BUG exists is also important in terms of promoting your group to potential members. People may be deterred if a group has no clear vision. The latter can be clarified by defining a mission statement. What is your BUG seeking to accomplish? Have a brainstorming session with core BUG members to figure this out before involving more people. After this you should be able to articulate your mission to others in simple words.



Cyclists who join a BUG do so for a particular reason. It may be because they have a genuine interest in improving cycling facilities at the work place, or they might enjoy being a member of a group which organizes great social events and fun rides. It is important to determine why it was people joined in the first place, and to establish what their objectives were. A good way to do this is to include such questions on a membership form (if you have one, or on a quick questionnaire at your first meeting). It is only when the BUG understands why people joined that it

can plot the best course of action to keep them as members. It is crucial to maintain the interest of members. If a BUG does not fulfil this requirement, members may leave.

3.0 PRESENTING YOUR CASE TO YOUR EMPLOYER

So you have started a BUG at work? Now it's time for action. If your BUG has formed in large part to change conditions at the workplace, then you need arguments, factual and convincing, as well as being able to point to other employers who are supportive of their commuter cyclists. We have provided some ideas and examples that will, hopefully, help you on the road to converting management to the commuter cyclist cause.

'We were subsidizing people who drive to work with free parking, and realized it's not sensible to support one type of commute over another. If your goal is to improve everyone's commute, you've got to support biking and walking as well.'

- Bill William, Training and Development Manager, The Calvert Group.

If, like many workplaces, active transportation is not part of the corporate culture at your workplace, then there is work to do. This may be easier if your workplace is located downtown where many employees and even management may already live. Living and working away from a very accessible downtown core can put more limits on what you can ask for as a BUG.

3.1 Why should employers support commuter cyclists?

1. Reduced Health Care Costs

As with other physical exercise, cycling benefits the heart and lungs, lowers blood pressure, and helps with weight control. There are many studies that indicate healthy employees contribute to savings for company health plans as well as to the public health care system. For instance, cycling to work can save up to 12% in annual medical costs, according to the Centers for Disease Control in the U.S. A 35 year-old man cycling 12 miles a day extends his life expectancy by two-and-a-half years compared with someone who does not exercise, says the British Medical Association.

Export Development Corporation, an employer of nearly 1000 people, knows exactly why they should support active lifestyles. Management is convinced that by offering fitness facilities and encouraging active transportation, such as cycling, they will not only have healthier and more productive employees but will also keep their current employees and attract new ones more easily.

2. Decreased Absenteeism and Turnover

Physical fitness has a direct effect on employee absenteeism. A study from the U.S. National Center for Health Statistics found that physically active employees resulted in a significantly lower absentee rate – an average of 2 days per year.

3. Increased Productivity

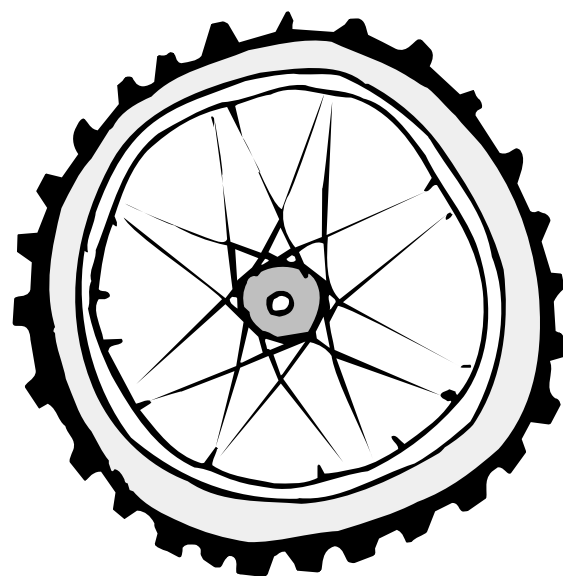
It is well known that exercise reduces stress. Many cyclists and walkers report feeling relaxed and more alert after arriving at work. Automobile drivers generally arrive at work with higher stress levels and blood pressure, lower tolerance, greater likelihood of negative moods and aggression. Freed from bus timetables and traffic jams, employees travelling by bicycle arrive on time.

4. Reduced Parking Costs

Automobile parking for employees costs money. By encouraging alternative means of transport, the cost savings per year for management or the property managers can be substantial.

5. Lower Company Transportation Bills

Many short trips on company business could easily be made by bicycle. Encourage your employer to think of the savings in taxi and bus fares, and car travel payments, in return for payment of a reasonable cycle mileage allowance. If your workplace were to provide a company bicycle and a cash alternative it could encourage more employees to forego a company car, thus cutting the cost of that scheme. Company cars are now a much less attractive 'perk' than they used to be. You could also discuss possible tax breaks for cyclists with your employer. For example, employees in the Netherlands have the options of spending their pre-tax dollars on a new bicycle, thus reducing the total amount of taxable income.



A 'greener' corporate image

In these competitive times, forward thinking companies are keen to promote a 'green' image as a means to tapping into the potential market of environmentally aware consumers. A pro-cycling policy will not only enhance a company's green credentials with customers but also with potential employees.

3.2 How can your employer support cyclists at the workplace?

Management will have influence or control over what facilities are provided for cyclists at the workplace. This includes bicycle storage rooms, bicycle racks, lockers, shower facilities and / or clothes storage. Employers can also provide many incentives to encourage employees to cycle commute. For instance, they can recognize cyclists at company functions, offer flex-time schedules so that cycle commuters can avoid peak traffic hours and permit a relaxed dress code. Other employers have awarded employees who cycle to work points which can be redeemed for prizes. Some have offered financial assistance to help purchase a bicycle or bicycle accessories, given cash back to cyclists for part or all of their unused parking spaces and allowed bicycle commuters extra time for showering and changing after arriving at work.

Another Idea

Employees at Social Research and Development Corporation (SRDC), a centretown Ottawa company of about 20 employees, used the annual Commuter Challenge to "encourage" a few executives to forego their parking spaces and take the bus or cycle to work. Since this was a team activity, they were willing to oblige and thus began the 'green' corporate culture at SRDC.

Mountain Equipment Co-op walks (cycles) the talk!

In Ottawa, MEC offers indoor, secure bicycle storage, staff lockers, 2 showering facilities, a bicycle repair stand and bicycle repair tool kit, as well as bicycle repair manuals. That's not all, on a casual basis, the store offers free or very low cost bicycle repair seminars for staff given by an experienced staff member.



Other incentives that employers could offer:

- policies that encourage cycling such as the use of company cars for business-related trip that cannot be cycled
- ride home insurance (ride arrangements if an employee can't cycle home for some unforeseen reason)
- time off to take CAN-BIKE courses and possibly subsidizing the cost as well
- interest-free loans or subsidies for the purchase of a bicycle or cycling equipment and clothing
- a repair kit for flat tires and other tools or equipment for emergency repairs to be kept at the workplace, or an arrangement for repairs at a local bicycle shop
- reimburse your cyclists for using their bicycles on company business. The allowance should be on a cent-per-kilometre basis and should ideally match the rate offered for using a small car

Bringing CAN-BIKE to the workplace!

A Hewlett Packard facility in Britain ran a well-attended cycling safety course for adult cyclists in partnership with a local bicycle shop that loaned bicycles to novice cyclists. The course resulted in greater cyclist confidence and in more commuter cyclists at the workplace! A BUG at the workplace, in conjunction with employer-sponsored CAN-BIKE courses can provide positive reinforcement for existing cyclists and lure more potential cyclists into the wonderful world of commuter cycling.



3.3 Approaching building managers

In some cases, particularly in downtown Ottawa, your employer may have limited say about bicycle facilities in your building if the building is managed by property management firm. Similar to the approach you would use with company management, a survey of cyclists (in this case in the entire building) would lend strength to your case to the property managers. Economic arguments are always useful to support your case to a property manager. By providing bicycle facilities, property managers will have a positive environmental image to present to potential tenants.

A far-sighted property manager!

In Burnaby, Pioneer Pacific Property Management manages Station Tower and has implemented a program known as TravelChoices which was commissioned by the developer of the building. By promoting a trip reduction program to 700 employees of 30 different organizations, the developer was able to save costs on 50 parking spots, totalling \$500,000. How does it work? Pioneer Pacific Property Management has provided showers and secure bicycle lockers, free access to nearby fitness facilities (including showers and lockers), TravelChoices members have guaranteed ride home insurance and there is a TravelBucks incentive program that gives members one TravelBuck for each day they use alternative transportation to and from work (TravelBucks can be exchanged for prizes such as free coffee, transit FareSaver Tickets, ski passes and rental car certificates). The employee participation rate? Nearly 50%!

In Conclusion.....

Bicycle User Groups are definitely not new. In fact, they have been around for a long time in various forms and have been successful in rallying support for improved conditions for workplace cyclists. History shows that there are real benefits that a workplace BUG can provide, including greater cyclist support, a sense of community and enhanced employee/employer relations. Nonetheless, BUG start-up requires some time and effort. With a small group of dedicated volunteers, you can accomplish many things from installing secure bicycle parking to implementing flexible work hours for cyclists. A BUG can be a small, low-input group that primarily responds to cyclists needs or it can evolve into a larger, well-organized group that acts not only as a lobbying organization but also as a social focus for employees. No matter the size why not get BUGged at your workplace? This "BUGs at Work" user guide will get you started. One of the best resources in the Ottawa when it comes to cycling information is Citizens for Safe Cycling. So, if you need more details on BUGs or have other cycling questions don't hesitate to phone (613)567-1288 or e-mail promo@cfsc.ottawa.on.ca.