

Chapter 11 Transportation

Transportation has a significant impact on the viability of the environment. Freight transport, transporting collections, staff business trips, and your visitors' movements are all activities that generate greenhouse gases (GHG). However, you can do your part by encouraging your employees and visitors to use sustainable modes of transportation such as public transit, carpooling, walking or cycling. Naturally, the infrastructure to facilitate these new habits also needs to be made available: lockers, showers, bicycle racks, etc. Agreements can also be reached with service providers, such as public transit corporations. Moreover, your institution can contribute significantly to the promotion of sustainable transportation.

1. Employee travel

In the area of transportation, the image your institution projects is linked with your commitment to sustainable practices. A museum with a sustainable development policy should make plenty of bike racks and reserved parking spaces for carpooling vehicles available to its visitors and employees. Little details like these may have a big impact on your enterprise.

A. Getting to work

You can tell your employees that they have many options for getting to work. Public transit, such as buses, subways, commuter trains, streetcars and ferries, can be the most efficient mode of transport for getting to work. Unless your institution is not well served by public transit, offering transit pass purchase through salary deductions is an excellent incentive for your employees. And there are indeed numerous agreements across the country with the various public transit corporations; these agreements allow the employees to obtain their transit pass right at the workplace, eliminating the need to reach the usual point of sale every month. Further, paying for transit passes by salary deductions is simpler and spreads the cost over the entire year.

Active (human-powered) transportation like walking, cycling, running or rollerblading is also an excellent option. For that purpose, it is desirable for your institution to make the necessary infrastructure available to its employees: bike racks, showers and bicycle repair kits. If such infrastructure is unavailable at your institution, you may be able to enter into a partnership with a fitness centre or another building in the neighbourhood.

Alternatively, your employees may be able to get to work by carpooling. Carpooling can be an ideal economic choice, particularly if your employees must travel a long way or have limited access to public transit.

Telecommuting means allowing your employees to work from a remote location using a videoconferencing instead of face-to-face meetings, training, and conferences. By doing so, the employees cut down their travel time or number of trips. In some circumstances, it might help them reduce their work/life struggles, while providing what is often a more appropriate environment for some types of work, such as writing, revising and planning.

B. Business travel

To rationalize business travel, the number of trips must be reduced; video and teleconferencing are highly effective ways of doing so. A videoconferencing system requires an investment in monitors, cameras, and microphones. You will also need to make sure there is a high-speed Internet connection before implementing such a program.

Here are a few ideas for employee travel:

1. Any meeting within a 2 km radius should be attended to by foot. Bicycles, and possibly an electric bicycle, could be made available for trips of fewer than 10 km (self-serve bicycles). You could also provide employees with bus/subway tickets for any meeting within your territory.
2. Another option—often an excellent one, as the institution need not acquire or maintain a vehicle—is to acquire a corporate membership in a car-sharing scheme. It has the added benefit of contributing to a local company development.
3. For intercity trips of less than 300 km, we suggest you take a train and/or bus. Note that, depending on destination, it is often more advantageous to take the train than to fly, as it goes downtown to downtown and involves much less waiting time than air travel. This essentially applies to travel in the Quebec City–Windsor corridor.

4. If your institution must rent a vehicle, consider a rental company that offers alternate-fuel and/or hybrid vehicles. It is important, too, to suggest to your employees that they rent a vehicle of appropriate size for the trip.

5. Travel, and particularly long-distance air travel, significantly contributes to global warming by discharging carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. Carbon offset programs allow opportunity for travellers to offset their negative impact on the environment by contributing financially to projects, such as renewable energy development or reforestation initiatives, that help to reduce carbon emissions elsewhere.

Often, the carbon offset involves a financial contribution to a project that seeks to reduce emissions in proportion to the quantity of carbon produced by the person's travel, whether by air or by car. Some airlines offer greenhouse gas emission calculators on their websites to allow their clients to calculate the emissions generated by their air travel. Other companies offer their clients the opportunity to buy offsets when they purchase their tickets. The funds raised are usually donated to an individual project chosen by the airline or remitted to a carbon offset provider that runs a variety of projects.

2. Automobile fleet purchasing and management

If a museum institution has an automobile fleet, there are a number of options to make it more sustainable. Here are a few ideas.

When buying a vehicle, set green criteria for the selection process. You can set a greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) criterion, that is, aim to purchase a vehicle with the lowest possible GHG emissions, such as a hybrid, electric and/or biofuel vehicle. You can also consider fuel efficiency. Often, within the same category of vehicle, fuel consumption will be lower for a particular brand; it's important to consider the number of cylinders. It is equally important to make sure your fleet is well maintained. A well-tuned engine will perform better and consume less fuel, reducing emissions and saving you money. Green vehicle maintenance programs are now available. Finally, you can also train your employees on green driving techniques. Such training will, for example, remind them not to let the car idle. You could make up a fact sheet to be put on the car's rear-view mirror, to inform your employees of such important practices.

Last, for vehicle washing, recommend the use of biodegradable cleansers. Consider a green carwash if the option exists in your area. Many of these businesses now offer biodegradable soaps, grey-water filtration and re-use, and water treatment to ensure no chemicals make their way into storm drains.

3. Access to your institution

Your institution can contribute to the promotion of practices and actions that foster sustainable existence. For example, offer a discount to visitors coming by public transit or active transportation. The Biosphère environmental museum offers a 25% discount on entrance fees upon presentation of a transit receipt. You can also provide parking spaces near the entrance for carpoolers

We suggest you inform your potential visitors of your sustainable practices on your website. If your institution is easily accessible by public transit, this too should be mentioned on your website.

Example: How to get to the Biosphère?¹

160, chemin Tour-de-l'Isle
Île Sainte-Hélène
Montréal (Québec) H3C 4G8

- **By metro:** Jean-Drapeau station (yellow line), 2-minute walk
- **By bike:** From the South Shore or downtown Montreal, take the bike path on Jacques-Cartier Bridge. From the Old Port of Montreal, take the Concorde Bridge.

Entrance Fees (taxes included)

General admission:

Adults : \$10

Students (18 and older) and seniors (60 and older) with ID: \$8

Youth (17 and under): FREE*

**Does not apply to groups of 10 people or more.*

25% off to green transportation users with proof (metro, walking, biking or hybrid car)

Montreal Museums Pass and Accès Montréal cards are accepted.

4. Deliveries and collection transportation

The delivery of supplies and transportation of your collections have a significant impact on the environment. You can implement different criteria that will limit the quantity of non-reusable materials during the packing of collections, reducing the GHG emissions due to transportation.

Consolidation of transport

Coordinating the international arrivals or departures in the same day makes it possible to have only one transport by truck for various lenders, lowering the costs associated with transport. It is also possible to do the same for local transport or to extend this practice for several exhibitions' and even for several museums. Specialized transport companies understand environmental issues well and will often agree to facilitate this kind of arrangement if we communicate sufficiently early with them and if we inform them of our ecological concerns.

In addition, it is necessary to question the relevance of borrowing objects from abroad if it is possible to find some in continental museums. There is a need to carefully assess the financial and environmental resources dedicated to loans from foreign collections; a sound assessment might challenge the need of borrowing and moving prestigious collections from abroad, despite the marketing advantages of doing so.

¹ <http://biosphere.ec.gc.ca/default.asp?lang=En&n=E1C6BC4A-1>

You can also include clauses in your goods and services purchase contracts concerning packaging and the delivery procedures and frequency. Packaging is often a single-use option (paper and cardboard boxes). Reusing these items should be considered. It is the same with etafoam and regular foam.

Idling delivery vehicles or school buses are not only a major source of GHG emissions, they also represent a waste of money and fuel. Signs on your site will inform suppliers that this practice is banned. Indeed, an increasing number of Canadian municipalities have outlawed vehicle idling. You can find signage examples on the Transport Canada site.

5. References and tools

- Transport Canada's ecoMOBILITY program
<http://www.tc.gc.ca/programs/environment/ecomobility/menu-eng.htm>
- Transport Canada: Commuter options guide
<http://www.tc.gc.ca/programs/environment/commuteroptions/menu.htm>
- Environment Canada: Sustainable transportation
<http://www.ec.gc.ca/cleanair-airpur/default.asp?lang=En&n=1036DBDC-1>
- Certification for car maintenance shops
(French only) <http://www.cleverte.org/>
<http://www.carcarecanada.ca/>
- Transportation Association of Canada
<http://www.tac-atc.ca/>
- Natural Resources Canada: Energy calculators
<http://oee.rncan.gc.ca/transportation/business/calculators.cfm?attr=16>
- Montreal Bixi bike rental system
<http://montreal.bixi.com/home>
- Communauto (carpooling, French only)
<http://www.communauto.com/>
- The University of Winnipeg's Centre for Sustainable Transportation
<http://cst.uwinnipeg.ca/>
- Green Your Business, Toolkit for Tourism Operators
http://www.tiac-aitc.ca/english/documents/advocacy/2008/green_your_business_toolkit.pdf