

# Ten Percent Challenge

## Objective

The objective is to reduce motor vehicle traffic by 10% in Carson City during Bike to Work Week. Measurements will be taken at some key traffic locations the week before and the week of Bike to Work Week, so that comparisons may be made.

## Ten Actions for 10% for Bike to Work Week

1. Ride your bike to work!
2. Walk to work!
3. Carpool.
4. Exercise at your house and/or in your neighborhood.
5. Make meals and coffee at home.
6. Let your kids walk, bike, skateboard and scooter to school.
7. Accumulate errands.
8. Steer clear of the mall and big box stores.
9. Use public transportation.
10. Turn off your cell phone.

## Details

1. **Ride your bike to work:** Bicycling has a great number of benefits - daily physical activity, better health, better emotional health (bicyclists are, on average, happier than other people), greatly reduced air pollution, greatly reduced carbon footprint, socialization with other bicyclers, far less money spent on gas and other car expenses, less need for pavement and reduced stormwater runoff, a slower pace of life, and more attention paid to community. If you can't bike every day, at least bike one day (Friday is the big celebration of biking day, but any day is good.)
2. **Walk to work:** All the same benefits as bicycling.
3. **Carpool:** If you can't bike or walk, carpool with fellow workers, or alternatively, someone who lives in your neighborhood and works in the same area. Carpooling even one day a week makes a huge difference - 20%!
4. **Use public transportation:** Carson City has a local transit system called JAC (Jump Around Carson), with information at <http://www.carson-city.nv.us/Index.aspx?page=1436>. Fares are \$1 or less. There is commuter hours service to South Lake Tahoe via a joint BlueGo/JAC 21X Spooner Express service every day, and RTC Intercity commuter hours service to Reno on weekdays ([http://www.rtcwashoe.com/Schedules/schedule\\_files/schedule\\_RTCINTERCITY.pdf](http://www.rtcwashoe.com/Schedules/schedule_files/schedule_RTCINTERCITY.pdf)). Fares are \$4 or less. All these buses have bike racks, so you can combine a transit trip with a "last mile" bicycle trip to work or your home.
5. **Let your kids walk, bike, skateboard and scooter to school:** They need the exercise at least as much as you. If you live in the school bus zone, have them take the bus. If you live in the walk zone, let them get to school by their own muscle power. If you can join them, great! Your kids need at least 60 minutes of moderate to strenuous physical activity a day to be healthy and happy, and they aren't getting that in school and likely aren't getting it outside of school either. Though we don't have good data for Carson City, the national pattern is that 20–30% of morning traffic is parents driving their kids to school, and on streets near schools it may be 95%!

6. **Exercise at your house and/or in your neighborhood:** Instead of driving to the gym, exercise at home; instead of driving to your walk or bike location, walk or bike from home. Yes, there are some great reasons for the gym, particularly weather, and for driving out to the edge of town to be closer to nature, but this week, don't!
7. **Make meals and coffee at home:** Instead of grabbing a meal at a fast food place, or heading to the coffee drive through, stay at home and do these things. Drives to the coffee shop have been the greatest single contributor to increased short trips over the last 10 years.
8. **Accumulate errands:** Instead of running out a number of times to do different errands, accumulate your errands for the whole week and do them once. It helps to make a shopping list rather than running out to get things as you remember them. On the other hand, if you are biking, feel free to run out as often as you want.
9. **Steer clear of the mall and big box stores:** The mall and big box stores have things you want, and rarely things you need. Stay away from them for this week. Not only will you save money, but you'll save all that carbon and pollution that it took to manufacture the item and ship it to the store.
10. **Turn off your cell phone:** When you are in your car, turn off your cell phone. It will still be there if you need it in an emergency, but you won't be tempted to use it. Distracted driving, which of course includes texting, is a tremendous danger to other road users, including drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians. Talking on your cell phone has a similar risk to being at the legal alcohol limit, and texting is similar to being fall-down drunk.

## Logistics

In order to compile data and determine what measurable reduction there has been in motor vehicle traffic, we will need to do surveys on a consistent pattern the week before and the week of. If every board member would volunteer to survey at at least one location for at least one hour, at the same day and time both weeks, we could compile sufficient data. I have tally counters to loan. If you have two counters, or tally by hand on paper, you can keep track of bicycle and pedestrian traffic as well. You'd want to pick a reasonably busy corner. It is critically important to collect data for exactly the same period of time on exactly the same day of the week, since traffic naturally varies so much by time of day and day of week.

## Inspiration

“The most radical thing you can do is stay home.” – Gary Snyder

“And the world cannot be discovered by a journey of miles, no matter how long, but only by a spiritual journey, a journey of one inch, very arduous and humbling and joyful, by which we arrive at the ground at our feet, and learn to be at home.” – Wendell Berry