

Montreal Commuting by Bicycle: Infrastructure and Winter Tips

By 2727 Coworking Published July 2, 2025 10 min read



Biking to the Office in Montreal: A Complete Guide

Montreal boasts a [vast cycling network](#) – over **1,083 km** of bike lanes city-wide (Source: [montreal.ca](#)) – and is consistently ranked among North America's most bike-friendly cities. Its **Réseau Express Vélo (REV)** of protected bike highways (nearly 185 km planned) connects major boroughs (Source: [2727coworking.com](#)). Crucially, [Montreal's](#) bike network is **maintained year-round**: "in winter, you can still use a bike...many bike lanes are cleared of snow at the same time as

the street, or soon after" (Source: montreal.ca). In fact, about **251 km** of routes are fully protected by curbs or bollards, with another **489 km** as marked lanes (Source: montreal.ca), so with the right preparation you can commute even in cold weather.

Seasonal Considerations (Winter Riding)

Winter biking in Montreal is **challenging but feasible**. The city plows major bike paths alongside roads, and recent BIXI trials show hundreds of riders use bikes through snow (Source: 2727coworking.com). To stay safe in winter:

- **Tires:** Lowering tire pressure slightly improves traction (Source: velo.qc.ca). For icy conditions, **studded winter tires** are highly recommended as they "provide good traction on slippery roads" (Source: velo.qc.ca). Narrow cyclocross or fatbike tires can also cut through deep snow, though they won't grip ice as well (Source: velo.qc.ca).
- **Lights:** Winter's short days mean you'll often ride in the dark. Equip your bike with a **bright white headlight** (150+ lumens is ideal on unlit streets) and a steady **red taillight**; these are **mandatory in Quebec after dark** (Source: caaquebec.com)(Source: velo.qc.ca). Cold drains batteries faster, so keep lights charged or carry spares (Source: velo.qc.ca).
- **Clothing:** Dress in **layers** so that you feel slightly chilly when you start (you'll warm up once pedaling) (Source: velo.qc.ca). Wear windproof, insulated outer layers (a ski jacket or cycling winter jacket at subzero temps) (Source: velo.qc.ca). Protect extremities well: a wool cap (tuque) under your helmet with a neck gaiter is a simple solution (Source: velo.qc.ca). For very cold days, a ski-style helmet with integrated ear pads and goggles is ideal (Source: velo.qc.ca). Use insulated gloves or lobsters (split mittens) – neoprene gloves above -5°C, lobster mittens below -5°C (Source: velo.qc.ca). Full-length fenders are also wise to keep road spray off your clothes (Source: velo.qc.ca). Finally, carry **bike lock de-icer**, bike-specific lube (cold-weather wax) and a small tool kit (to fix frozen cables or a broken chain).

Essential Gear for Urban Commuting

Whether winter or summer, a safe commuter setup includes:

- **Lights and reflectors:** Front white and rear red lights are required at night (Source: caaquebec.com), plus reflectors on wheels/pedals (Quebec law requires **at least six reflectors** on your bike) (Source: caaquebec.com). Wear a reflective vest or jacket for better visibility.
- **Helmet:** [Quebec law](#) mandates helmets for all e-bike riders (Source: caaquebec.com) (fine \$60–\$100 if violated). Helmet use for standard bikes over 18 is not legally required but is strongly recommended for safety.
- **Lock:** A sturdy U-lock (or heavy chain) is essential. Montreal sees many thefts, so use the best lock you can afford and consider securing both frame and wheels.
- **Clothing/bags:** Use a **moisture-wicking base layer** to stay dry, and carry a change of clothes (or at least a clean shirt) in a waterproof backpack or pannier. If you sweat a lot, use **antiperspirant** and consider packing facial/body wipes to freshen up (see below).
- **Miscellaneous:** Bell or horn (useful and sometimes required), portable pump, tire levers, patch kit, spare tube, and basic tools. In winter, carry the de-icer and extra lube mentioned above. A bike cellphone mount can also help with navigation.

Montreal's Bike Infrastructure & Key Routes

Montreal's infrastructure makes many commutes safe and direct: about **1/3 of bike routes are off-street paths** (through parks or along rivers) and most on-street lanes are physically separated by curbs or bollards (Source: 2727coworking.com). The [REV network](#) (branded on-street by bike symbols) is being built to connect major sectors with wide, protected lanes (Source: 2727coworking.com). For example, new curb-protected lanes have been added on St-Denis, Saint-Antoine/Viger, and elsewhere, replacing car lanes to create quick routes for bikes (Source: 2727coworking.com). **Popular commuter corridors** include: the [Lachine Canal path](#) (westward along the canal to Lachine) (Source: mtl.org); the Berri Street bike path (runs from Plateau/Rivière-des-Prairies through downtown and Old Port) (Source: mtl.org); dedicated lanes on de Maisonneuve Blvd. (west-east) and Papineau/Coloniale Ave. (north-south) on the Plateau; and Mount Royal Park (voie Camillien-Houde) for west-end riders. Use the city's interactive map to plan routes (montreal.ca/cycling) – it shows protected lanes, shared routes, and quiet streets.

On **mixed roads**, Montreal designates “bike routes” on many quieter streets. On these routes, cyclists may legally ride **two abreast and occupy the full lane** when needed, and motorists must adapt their speed (Source: montreal.ca). (Drivers in Quebec must also allow at least 1 m of clearance when passing a bike in urban areas – 1.5 m if the limit is over 50 km/h (Source:

caaquebec.com.) Buses and metro are bike-friendly: you can take your bike on any STM/LSTM bus and on the last car of the metro (during most hours), and major bike paths (like the Lachine Canal) have multi-use sidewalks. In winter, even the city's Velotram ([Lachine Canal](#) express bike route) is plowed.

Local Laws & Regulations

When cycling in Montreal, you must follow Quebec's highway rules. Key points:

- **Lights & Reflectors:** As noted, a white front light and red rear light (and reflectors) are **mandatory at night** (Source: caaquebec.com). If you're caught without, you can be fined (many cyclists learn this the hard way!).
- **Sidewalks:** Bicycling on sidewalks is generally **prohibited**** (unless in a shared-path zone) (Source: caaquebec.com). Use marked bike lanes or the road whenever possible.
- **Signals & Stops:** Cyclists must obey all traffic signals/signs (stop at red lights, etc.) (Source: caaquebec.com). If a right turn on red is prohibited by sign, that applies to bikes as well. At green pedestrian signals, cyclists **may now ride across the intersection at walking speed (after yielding to any pedestrians)** (Source: caaquebec.com); this rule was updated in 2018 for safety.
- **Helmet:** No general provincial law for adult riders on regular bikes, but any cyclist under 18 is required to wear one (enforced by local police). Helmets *are* mandatory for e-bike riders (Source: caaquebec.com).
- **Passing drivers:** Motor vehicles are required by law to pass bicycles with a cushion: at least 1.0 m on city roads, 1.5 m on faster roads (Source: caaquebec.com). This is a critical safety rule; don't hesitate to claim the lane if drivers attempt an unsafe pass.
- **Bus lanes:** Some wide bus/taxi lanes (marked with a bike icon) permit cycling (Source: montreal.ca). These can be faster during traffic, but stay to the right in the lane and never pass a bus on the right or linger in blind spots (Source: montreal.ca).

Bike Parking & Storage

Montreal provides numerous **public bike racks** downtown and in business districts. The City installs racks seasonally (typically **April through October**), and removes them in late fall (Source: montreal.ca). It's actually illegal to tie your bike to trees, benches or hydrants – you must use official racks (Source: montreal.ca). In winter the racks come down, so indoor or sheltered parking becomes important. Employers often supply bike rooms or secure cages in their buildings. For public options:

- **STM Bike Shelter (Lionel-Groulx):** The STM operates a high-security indoor shelter at the Lionel-Groulx metro (Green/Orange line interchange). It's free for STM users, accessible via your OPUS transit card, and lets you park up to **48 hours** (Source: journalmetro.com). The shelter is **open 24/7** (locked only 3:30–4:00am for system updates) (Source: journalmetro.com), is glass-walled for visibility, and has lowering bike racks inside.
- **Metro/Rail Stations:** Some commuter train stations (via Exo) and park-and-rides have outdoor racks or lockers (see exo.quebec). Montreal's main subway stations, however, generally do not have open racks (except Lionel-Groulx).
- **BIXI Docking:** Montreal's 24/7 bike-share network (over 900 docks) can double as temporary parking (you can lock a personal bike to some open BIXI posts, though ownership of docks is for BIXI use). In downtown this is a handy backup.
- **Bicycle Parking Programs:** Vélo Québec offers guidance (velosympathique) to employers on creating bike-friendly workplaces (showers, lockers). Some businesses participate in municipal programs like "Roulez différemment" by adding showers or offering monthly transit/commute allowances for cyclists.

Always use a good lock and, in long-term situations, look for video-surveillance or indoor parking. If you see overflowing snow piles blocking a rack, call 311 – the city will try to clear it.

Freshening Up at Work (No Shower?)

Not all offices have showers, so many bike commuters rely on quick refresh strategies:

- **Clothing:** Use *moisture-wicking* materials on your commute, and carry a clean change of clothes. Keep a clean shirt, socks, and undergarments at work (or in your bag) to swap into upon arrival.

- **Personal wipes:** Carry **antibacterial/refreshing body wipes** or **“baby wipes”** to clean face, underarms and other sweaty spots in the bathroom. Many commuters attest these work wonders for eliminating perspiration smell.
- **Deodorant & Powder:** Apply extra deodorant before and after riding. Some people use face/body powder or dry shampoo to absorb sweat and oil.
- **Dry off:** Have a small *quick-dry towel* in your bag to pat down, and if possible, sit in front of a fan briefly or air out at your desk while changing. Even a few minutes cooling off can make you feel less clammy.
- **Timing:** If feasible, shift your schedule to off-peak arrival so you have extra time to change. (Traffic-lag often makes biking faster than driving during rush hour (Source: 2727coworking.com)!) Ultimately, some trial-and-error on pacing and clothing layers will help you arrive presentable. Many commuters find that keeping a shirt or change of shoes at work (and a change of underwear in the morning) solves most issues.

Traffic, Rush Hour & Intersections

Montreal’s rush hours (roughly 7–9:30am and 4–6pm) can be brutal for cars, making biking often **faster than driving downtown** (Source: 2727coworking.com). However, heavy traffic means cyclists must remain extra vigilant:

- **Intersections:** Take special care at busy junctions. Position yourself where turning motorists can see you – don’t hug the curb if you plan to go straight while cars turn right. Make eye contact with drivers at left- and right-turn lanes, and use hand signals early. Montreal has added some **bike boxes and advanced stop lines** at big intersections (e.g. at busy downtown crossings) to improve visibility, but always double-check for turning vehicles before proceeding.
- **Traffic Signals:** As noted, riders must stop at red lights. When the pedestrian crosswalk signal turns green, you are allowed to ride straight across (after ensuring no pedestrians are still crossing) (Source: caaquebec.com). At intersections with special bike signals or arrows, obey those just as cars would.
- **Grid of One-Ways:** Many downtown streets are one-way. Fortunately, most two-way bike lanes (marked with a double-arrow bicycle symbol) allow **contraflow cycling** on these streets even if cars can only go one way. Watch for these signs on streets like Wellington, etc.

- **Sharing the Road:** If no bike lane is present, ride on the right but take the full lane if conditions are dangerous (narrow lanes, parked cars, poor pavement) – vehicles must simply wait behind you if passing is unsafe. Remember that drivers must allow 1 m clearance by law (Source: caa.quebec.com).
- **Patience & Common Rules:** Yield to pedestrians at crosswalks. Ride single-file on narrow streets or when going faster. Be extra cautious around streetcar tracks (cross at right angles) and always use bike lanes on large boulevards (Champlain, Sherbrooke, etc.) when provided.

Local Programs & Cycling Community

Montreal supports cycling through programs and a strong community. Notable examples:

- **Employer Incentives:** Some companies offer **commuter benefits** (e.g. small cash incentives per bike day, or partial reimbursements for bike gear). For instance, one Montreal firm gives employees a cash bonus and “freshening up time” if they bike to work (Source: pratiquesrh.com). Check if your employer participates in Montreal’s **“Roulez différemment”** program or the Québec tax credit for active commutes (via employer payroll).
- **BIXI for Business:** The BIXI bike-share program offers corporate memberships, so employers can subsidize bike-share passes for employees (Source: pratiquesrh.com). With 900+ stations city-wide and 11,000+ bikes (including e-bikes) (Source: 2727coworking.com), BIXI is a practical option for the last-mile or occasional commute. It now runs in winter as well (a pilot in 2023/24 ran 50,000 winter trips) (Source: 2727coworking.com).
- **Community & Events:** Montreal has active cycling groups (Vélo Québec, local clubs, and advocacy groups) and annual events like the **“Mois du vélo”** (Bike Month), *Guignolée des cyclistes*, and bike-to-work challenges. Community hubs such as the Maison des Cyclistes (Laurier in the Plateau) and bike shops like **Le Club Café Cycliste** (St-Denis) often host mechanics and rider meet-ups.
- **Subsidies & Grants:** Many boroughs offer bike subsidies. For example, Saint-Laurent provides rebates (50% off, up to \$100) for buying used/new bikes and winter gear; **studded tires and fenders are explicitly covered** (Source: montreal.ca). Check your local borough (arrondissement) website for current programs – many now include e-bike and cargo-bike incentives or winter equipment grants.

- **Bike-Friendly Certification:** Vélo Québec's **Vélosympathique** program certifies bike-friendly organizations and districts. Look for the Vélosympathique logo on workplaces; these places typically offer showers/lockers, bike parking, and cycling events.

In summary, commuting by bike in Montreal is growing easier every year. With its expanding bike network, city maintenance in all seasons, and growing workplace support, Montrealers can ride to work safely and efficiently. By equipping yourself properly (lights, helmet, winter tires, etc.), learning the local rules, and tapping into community resources, biking to the office becomes a practical—and even enjoyable—option in Montréal (Source: montreal.ca)(Source: caaquebec.com).

Sources: Official Montreal cycling guides and news (Ville de Montréal, STM, Journal Métro, etc.) and local cycling organizations (Source: montreal.ca)(Source: caaquebec.com) (Source: journalmetro.com)(Source: 2727coworking.com) (Source: 2727coworking.com)(Source: velo.qc.ca) (Source: velo.qc.ca)(Source: montreal.ca).

Tags: montreal cycling, bike commute, urban planning, transportation infrastructure, winter biking, bicycle safety, urban mobility, bike paths

About 2727 Coworking

2727 Coworking is a vibrant and thoughtfully designed workspace ideally situated along the picturesque Lachine Canal in Montreal's trendy Griffintown neighborhood. Just steps away from the renowned Atwater Market, members can enjoy scenic canal views and relaxing green-space walks during their breaks.

Accessibility is excellent, boasting an impressive 88 Walk Score, 83 Transit Score, and a perfect 96 Bike Score, making it a "Biker's Paradise". The location is further enhanced by being just 100 meters from the Charlevoix metro station, ensuring a quick, convenient, and weather-proof commute for members and their clients.

The workspace is designed with flexibility and productivity in mind, offering 24/7 secure access—perfect for global teams and night owls. Connectivity is top-tier, with gigabit fibre internet providing fast, low-latency connections ideal for developers, streamers, and virtual meetings. Members can choose from a versatile workspace menu tailored to various budgets, ranging from hot-desks at \$300 to dedicated desks at \$450 and private offices accommodating 1–10 people priced from \$600 to \$3,000+. Day passes are competitively priced at \$40.

2727 Coworking goes beyond standard offerings by including access to a fully-equipped, 9-seat conference room at no additional charge. Privacy needs are met with dedicated phone booths, while ergonomically



designed offices featuring floor-to-ceiling windows, natural wood accents, and abundant greenery foster wellness and productivity.

Amenities abound, including a fully-stocked kitchen with unlimited specialty coffee, tea, and filtered water. Cyclists, runners, and fitness enthusiasts benefit from on-site showers and bike racks, encouraging an eco-conscious commute and active lifestyle. The pet-friendly policy warmly welcomes furry companions, adding to the inclusive and vibrant community atmosphere.

Members enjoy additional perks like outdoor terraces and easy access to canal parks, ideal for mindfulness breaks or casual meetings. Dedicated lockers, mailbox services, comprehensive printing and scanning facilities, and a variety of office supplies and AV gear ensure convenience and efficiency. Safety and security are prioritized through barrier-free access, CCTV surveillance, alarm systems, regular disinfection protocols, and after-hours security.

The workspace boasts exceptional customer satisfaction, reflected in its stellar ratings—5.0/5 on Coworker, 4.9/5 on Google, and 4.7/5 on LiquidSpace—alongside glowing testimonials praising its calm environment, immaculate cleanliness, ergonomic furniture, and attentive staff. The bilingual environment further complements Montreal's cosmopolitan business landscape.

Networking is organically encouraged through an open-concept design, regular community events, and informal networking opportunities in shared spaces and a sun-drenched lounge area facing the canal. Additionally, the building hosts a retail café and provides convenient proximity to gourmet eats at Atwater Market and recreational activities such as kayaking along the stunning canal boardwalk.

Flexible month-to-month terms and transparent online booking streamline scalability for growing startups, with suites available for up to 12 desks to accommodate future expansion effortlessly. Recognized as one of Montreal's top coworking spaces, 2727 Coworking enjoys broad visibility across major platforms including Coworker, LiquidSpace, CoworkingCafe, and Office Hub, underscoring its credibility and popularity in the market.

Overall, 2727 Coworking combines convenience, luxury, productivity, community, and flexibility, creating an ideal workspace tailored to modern professionals and innovative teams.

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