

Montreal's Bike-to-Work Boom: A City Pedaling Forward

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! <https://cultmtl.com/2024/04/there-are-29-new-montreal-bike-paths-and-cycling-projects-for-2024/> A cyclist greets the sunrise over Montreal. Across the city, more residents are hopping on bikes for their daily commute.

Montreal is experiencing a two-wheeled revolution on its streets. In recent years, cycling to work has surged in popularity as thousands of Montrealers swap car and bus rides for bike pedals. Morning traffic on downtown boulevards now includes streams of commuters in helmets and reflective jackets, breezing past idling cars. This growing bike-to-work movement is transforming how people get around the city – and Montreal's investments in bike infrastructure, supportive policies, and vibrant cycling culture are fueling the momentum.

More Cyclists on the Streets: The Rise of Bike Commuting

Cycling is becoming a **mainstream commute choice** in Montreal. The city already leads Canada in bike-to-work numbers – about **one in five Canadians who cycle to work live in the Montreal region** [statcan.gc.ca](https://www.statcan.gc.ca). While the pandemic temporarily interrupted commuting patterns (the 2021 census saw fewer bike commuters due to remote work), cycling rebounded strongly as offices reopened [statcan.gc.ca](https://www.statcan.gc.ca). Early data from a 2023 travel survey suggests **active transportation trips (walking and cycling) jumped by 28%** in the Montreal region since 2018 [linkedin.com](https://www.linkedin.com), indicating a significant shift toward biking.

This rise is visible on the streets. On any given weekday, you'll spot people of all ages pedaling to work – from downtown professionals on sleek road bikes to baristas cruising on BIXI bike-share bicycles. **Montreal's cycling mode share** (the proportion of commuters traveling by bike) was around 3–4% *in recent years* [uci.org](https://www.uci.org), but the city has *ambitious targets* to push that much higher. In fact, Montreal aims to achieve **15% of all trips by bicycle in the coming years** [uci.org](https://www.uci.org). The growing ranks of bike commuters, along with record-breaking usage of the city's bike-share system, suggest that this target may be within reach.

Building a Bike-Friendly Montreal: Infrastructure and Policy

Montreal's bike-to-work boom hasn't happened by accident – it's the result of **decades of pro-cycling infrastructure and policy**. The city was an early pioneer in North America for cyclist-friendly design. As far back as the 1980s, Montreal became the first major city on the continent to develop an extensive network of **physically separated bike lanes** on city streets [drgnews.com](https://www.drgnews.com). This gave cyclists safe spaces apart from traffic and laid the groundwork for today's bike network.

In the past few years, Montreal has dramatically **expanded its cycling network**, making biking safer and more convenient in all corners of the city. In the five years before 2020 alone, the network grew by 34%, exceeding **1,000 km of bikeways** crisscrossing the island [drgnews.com](https://www.drgnews.com). Nearly one-third of these are off-street paths (through parks or along boulevards), and much of the rest are protected on-road lanes – identifiable by concrete curbs or bollards separating bikes from car traffic [drgnews.com](https://www.drgnews.com).

A centerpiece of Montreal's infrastructure push is the **Réseau Express Vélo (REV)**, an "express bike network" of fully protected bike highways. Announced in 2019 by Mayor Valérie Plante, the REV plan calls for **185 km of broad, barrier-protected bike lanes** connecting major parts of the city [eco-counter.com](https://www.eco-counter.com). These routes are designed for direct, long-distance travel by bike, with standardized

2.5m-wide lanes that even allow cyclists to **overtake** one another safely eco-counter.com. **17 strategic corridors** were identified for the REV, and construction has been swift – one signature route on Saint-Denis Street was completed in a matter of months, replacing car lanes with curb-protected bikeways and expanded sidewalks eco-counter.com eco-counter.com. The goal of all this effort is to make cycling a viable, efficient option for everyday transportation, ultimately reaching that 15% mode share target by 2027 eco-counter.com.

City leadership has firmly supported these changes. Mayor Plante, who won re-election in 2021 on a platform of green mobility, has treated bike infrastructure as a **top priority** drgnews.com. Each year brings new bike lanes and upgrades. In 2024, for example, the city announced **29 new cycling projects adding 33 km to the network** cultmtl.com – including new REV segments on Henri-Bourassa, Viger/St-Antoine, and Jean-Talon cultmtl.com. “By developing the cycling network, we ensure we better share the road for the safety, comfort and mobility of everyone,” Mayor Plante explains cultmtl.com. This commitment is backed by serious investment (over \$30 million budgeted in 2024 for bike infrastructure) and policies that integrate cycling into urban planning. Montreal’s approach also aligns with its Vision Zero road safety strategy and climate goals, since shifting more commuters onto bikes can reduce traffic accidents and emissions healthydebate.ca.

BIXI and Beyond: Bike-Sharing and Year-Round Cycling

One of the standout factors in Montreal’s bike renaissance is the success of **BIXI**, the city’s public bike-share system. Launched in 2009 (Montreal was the first city in North America to introduce a large-scale bike-share program drgnews.com), BIXI has become a household name and a ubiquitous presence on Montreal streets. Today, **BIXI Montreal operates nearly 934 docking stations city-wide with close to 11,000 bikes available** uci.org, including over 2,600 electric-assist models to help riders tackle longer distances or hilly terrain uci.org. The convenience of grabbing a bike from a station and dropping it off near one’s destination has converted many occasional riders into regular bike commuters. According to BIXI spokesperson Pierre-Luc Marier, “more than just a means of transport, BIXI is now a fabulous shortcut enabling people to move around the city wherever and whenever they want” – a freedom that has had a *major impact* on cycling rates uci.org. Since BIXI’s introduction, the **number of bicycles in use in Montreal has increased by 50%** uci.org, reflecting how bike-share lowered barriers and got new riders on the road.

BIXI's popularity continues to **shatter records**. In 2022 the system saw nearly 9 million trips, and by 2023 it had already surpassed that figure [newswire.ca](https://www.newswire.ca). This past year, 2024, BIXI hit an all-time high: **13 million rides were taken in Montreal** on BIXI bikes cultmtl.com. Both July and September 2024 broke the **2 million trips per month** mark, an unprecedented level of usage cultmtl.com. A single-day ridership record was set with **79,868 trips in one day** cultmtl.com. BIXI also reported a 15% jump in the number of users in 2024, alongside a 91% customer satisfaction rate cultmtl.com. These figures underline how ingrained bike-sharing has become in daily life – many Montrealers now integrate BIXI into their commute, whether for the full trip or just the “last mile” from a transit stop to the office.

Another bold step Montreal has taken is embracing **year-round cycling**, even in its snowy winters. In winter 2023–24, the city ran a pilot project keeping part of the BIXI network open through the cold season. For the first time, **150 BIXI stations remained in operation all winter** (in a central 100 km² area), with bikes specially **equipped with studded tires and non-slip pedals** for traction on ice uci.org. The experiment was a resounding success: over **50,000 riders used BIXI during the winter months** cultmtl.com, the majority of whom were trying winter cycling for the first time. Buoyed by this response, Montreal has decided to make BIXI a **year-round service** permanently cultmtl.com. This winter there are 2,000 bikes available at 200 stations across the city, providing an active mobility option even in January snowstorms cultmtl.com.

Montreal's experience shows that, with the right support, **“snow and cold are no deterrent”** to urban cycling uci.org. The city already maintains a core network of bike paths in winter, **plowing many cycle tracks at the same time as the roads** to keep them clear of snow uci.org. “Year-round cycling has proven feasible and enjoyable thanks to winter maintenance and infrastructure designed with winter in mind,” says Jean-François Rheault, CEO of Vélo Québec, the province's cycling advocacy organization uci.org. Some Montrealers outfit their personal bikes with studded tires and warm gear, while others rely on the adapted BIXIs. As BIXI spokesperson Pierre-Luc Marier puts it, *getting around by bike is possible in winter with suitably adapted equipment* uci.org. Montreal's hardy winter cyclists are living proof – they pedal through sub-zero mornings that would have been unthinkable for commuters a decade ago. The normalization of winter biking further cements cycling as a year-round commuting solution, not just a summer fling.

Pedaling toward Better Health and a Greener City

The shift to biking isn't just changing commutes – it's delivering real **health and environmental benefits** for Montreal. Cycling to work provides built-in daily exercise, which improves cardiovascular fitness, strengthens muscles, and reduces stress [nutritionsource.hsph.harvard.edu reddit.com](https://nutritionsource.hsph.harvard.edu/reddit.com). In fact, research shows that people who regularly commute by bike have dramatically better health outcomes than those who drive. One large study found that **cycling commuters cut their risk of heart disease or cancer by nearly 50%**, and their overall risk of premature death is 41% lower compared to car commuters healthydebate.ca. In public health terms, that's a profound impact – more biking means fewer chronic illnesses and longer lives for the population. Cities with active commuters can expect lower healthcare costs and a healthier, more productive workforce over time.

Environmental gains are another big upside. Every person who switches from a car to a bicycle for their commute is helping to **reduce traffic congestion, air pollution, and carbon emissions**. Montreal's aggressive promotion of cycling is partly driven by its climate commitments – transportation is a major source of greenhouse gases, so getting more people on bikes helps shrink the city's carbon footprint healthydebate.ca. Fewer cars on the road also mean **less noise and cleaner air** in neighborhoods, improving quality of life for everyone, not just those on bikes healthydebate.ca. The federal government has taken note of these benefits and is funding initiatives to promote cycling in Quebec as a way to fight pollution. In 2023, Ottawa announced over \$3 million for active transportation projects in the province, explicitly aiming to **"reduce air pollution and make it easier for people to get around...without relying on cars."** cyclingmagazine.ca. From a sustainability perspective, Montreal's bike-to-work movement is a win-win: healthier citizens and a healthier planet.

Safety is also improving as more cyclists hit the streets. Montreal follows the **"safety in numbers"** principle – as the number of bikes on the road rises, drivers become more aware and cautious, and collision rates tend to fall. The city's Vision Zero plan (which seeks to eliminate traffic fatalities) dovetails with cycling promotion, since **bike lanes and traffic-calmed streets protect vulnerable road users** and prevent accidents healthydebate.ca. The ultimately safer, cleaner, and more active urban environment created by this cycling boom benefits all Montrealers, whether they bike or not.

Community on Wheels: Culture and Initiatives Driving the Shift

Beyond infrastructure and statistics, Montreal's cycling surge is powered by a passionate **community and cycling culture**. Biking to work has quickly become part of the city's identity and daily rhythm, supported by organizations and residents who champion two-wheeled transportation.

At the forefront is **Vélo Québec**, a nonprofit that has advocated for cyclists for decades. Vélo Québec works hand-in-hand with the city on improving bike infrastructure and also leads programs to get more people riding. For example, they are running a project called "*Toutes à vélo / Everyone Towards Active Mobility*," which offers bike-lending libraries, workshops, and training sessions across several municipalities to encourage more women to cycle cyclingmagazine.ca. Initiatives like these address gaps in who cycles (such as gender or age imbalances) and help newcomers build confidence on the road. Vélo Québec also certifies bike-friendly businesses through a **VÉLOSYMPATHIQUE** program, which encourages employers to install bike parking, showers, or offer incentives for cycling to work cyclingmagazine.ca. Many Montreal companies have embraced this, subsidizing BIXI memberships or organizing "bike-to-work" challenge days for their staff. The message is clear: in Montreal's evolving corporate culture, arriving by bike is something to be proud of and supported.

The city's **cycling culture** is perhaps best exemplified by its popular annual events that turn the streets into a festival on wheels. Each spring, thousands participate in the **Go Vélo Montréal Festival**, which includes the famous *Tour de l'Île* and *Tour la Nuit* group rides. During the **Tour de l'Île de Montréal**, enormous parts of the city are closed to car traffic as **cyclists of all ages take over the streets** for a day-long ride celebrating urban cycling. In 2024, an estimated **18,000 people joined the 39th Tour de l'Île**, making it the largest cycling event of the year in Montreal montreal.citynews.ca montreal.citynews.ca. "By cycling through the different neighbourhoods, we can really experience the city in a different way," noted Vélo Québec's Jean-François Rheault at the event montreal.citynews.ca. It's a joyful spectacle to see families, seniors, and young commuters alike riding together, ringing bike bells in unison. These events are more than just recreational fun – they **build community and showcase the viability of biking as urban transport**. As Rheault explains, "Tour de l'Île is a tool to celebrate cycling culture...when we organize a big party like [this], we bring it to another level" montreal.citynews.ca. The enthusiasm generated spills over into the everyday: after riding 50 km of car-free streets on the weekend, biking a few kilometers to work on Monday feels not only doable, but exhilarating.

Numerous local groups and volunteers further support the cycling ecosystem. Community bike workshops (like flat-tire repair clinics and safe cycling courses) are offered in various neighborhoods, often led by seasoned cyclists eager to share tips. There are also social ride clubs and online forums (such as r/MontrealCycling on Reddit) where riders swap route advice and advocate for improvements. When new bike lanes are proposed, residents mobilize at borough meetings to voice support – or sometimes to debate, as change can be controversial on certain streets. Overall, however, a **grassroots consensus** has emerged that biking is integral to Montreal's future. Even international observers have taken note: the Union Cycliste Internationale recently designated Montreal as an official "Bike City" for its commitment to cycling, and the city is set to host the **2026 UCI Road World Championships** – a world-class cycling event – with plans to leave a lasting pro-cycling legacy in the community uci.org.

Conclusion: A Movement Gaining Speed

What began as a niche activity for the hardy or environmentally minded has grown into a broad movement reshaping daily life in Montreal. The morning rush hour now includes throngs of cyclists gliding along an ever-expanding web of bike lanes. They are backed by a city administration that sees bicycles as key to a safer, greener, and more livable Montreal, and by communities that celebrate and support the cycling lifestyle. From infrastructure megaprojects like the REV network to the simple camaraderie of a group ride, Montreal is proving how a dense urban city can make room for bikes – and be better for it.

As more Montrealers discover the joys of commuting on two wheels, the benefits will continue to multiply. Each new rider is one less car in traffic, one more friendly face saying bonjour at the bike rack, and one more advocate for improving the urban environment. The movement shows no signs of slowing. **"A city that makes room for cycling is a city where life is good,"** Mayor Plante observed, celebrating the record BIXI ridership cultmtl.com. Indeed, Montreal's bike-to-work boom is helping to create a healthier, happier city for everyone. So the next time you see a pack of cyclists cruising down Blvd. de Maisonneuve at 8 AM, know that it's more than a commute – it's Montreal pedaling confidently into the future, one revolution at a time.

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Tags: montreals, bike, work, boom, city

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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