

Secure Bike Parking

Overview

The Need

A growing number of employees are cycling for their daily commute to work. These employees expect quality and reliable options to keep their bike and equipment secure.

The Solution

There are a number of types of secure bike parking that are easy to install. Taking the necessary steps for proper installation and maintenance will ensure high uptake and security.

The Benefit

Workplaces that provide secure bike parking show their employees that they respect all commuting options, as well as the property, health and satisfaction of their employees.



As more people opt to use their bike for the daily commute to work, there are bike parking implications that employers need to consider. It means looking beyond the car and welcoming all commuting options at their workplace.

Given employees will be leaving their bikes unattended all day, secure bike parking is a top priority. This could take the form of an indoor room, a bike cage in a parking lot or parkade, or other secure facilities with restricted access. Installing the proper parking for bikes requires some attention to get it right. There are a large variety of bicycle sizes, shapes and attachments that require different accommodations. Employers will want to consider all options, as taking the “easy way out” may result in dissatisfied employees and low uptake.

Interest in bike parking goes beyond employees commuting to work. Customers and residential tenants also expect to be able to park their bikes easily and securely. This guide can therefore be applied to commercial, retail and residential complexes as well. An external bike rack at the front door to a building provides short-term parking for visitors or clients. Because they are there for only an hour or two, their top priority is convenience over maximized security.

By creating a cycle-to-work standard for all employees, clients and visitors, businesses and workplaces give everyone the opportunity to choose a healthier and cheaper commute.

Almost any organization or business can benefit from secure bike parking, and ensure high use if there is sufficient enthusiasm among staff and management, and a well-executed plan.

Step 1. Short-term vs. long-term bike parking. Short-term, also known as visitor parking, is for someone coming to a meeting, visiting or shopping. It typically takes the form of bike racks located outside the front entrance of a building. (Check with [Bike Winnipeg](#) whether your business might be eligible for support to install public bike racks out front.) The key factor for short-term bike parking is convenience. Long-term bike parking is ideal for bikes that will be parked all day or overnight by employees or tenants. It can be located either indoor or outdoor, but indoor typically offers more security and consists of bike racks mounted inside a locked cage or room. The key factor is security. Knowing which category your needs fall into will help guide your site planning. Many buildings provide both short- and long-term bike parking as they serve different users.

Step 2. Site planning. When considering the site of your secure bike parking, whether indoor or outdoor, think about location, security and quantity.

I. Location

- Visible from and close to the entrance it serves (50' or less), e.g. parkade entrance or building door closest to indoor cage/room.
- Weather protection that allows for year-round use and reduces the number of wet bicycles coming into the building.
- Area lighting for use outside of daylight hours, particularly during fall and spring when the days are shorter.
- Preference given to indoor locations, emphasizing physical security over public visibility.

II. Security

- Long-term parking users, such as employees and tenants, are typically willing to trade a degree of convenience for weather protection and increased security.
- Bikes should be locked to a securely mounted rack (on floor or wall where applicable) inside the locked bike room or cage.
- Areas with high incidence of bicycle theft may require further security measures such as specialty racks, tamper-proof mounting techniques, or active surveillance.
- Parking can be for individual bikes (e.g. lockers) or groups of bikes (e.g. locked bike room or cage).

- Signage for “house rules” and “instructions” should be posted at the bike parking location.
- Typical options for access control include keys, fobs or swipe cards. These options should be regularly managed to prevent overabundance and account for staff turnover.

III. Quantity

- Start based on existing demand and leave room for future expansions. Once secure bike parking is available, more employees or tenants are likely to become interested.
- To gauge existing demand, do a quick survey of employees or tenants.

Step 3. Design. The most important aspect of a bike rack is having at least two points of contact with the bike, both for locking purposes and to support the frame. The highest rated rack is the “Inverted-U” that accommodates two bikes per rack. It provides flexibility in terms of configuring your space and is a good design. Bike rack design has improved substantially over the years, and you may have noticed a variety of styles around Winnipeg. Check out the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP) [Essentials of Bike Parking Guide](#) to see a variety of styles to evaluate what might work best for your workplace. To maximize the number of bikes in a secure area, you might want to include both wall-mounted and floor racks.

Step 4. Installation. Too often racks are positioned too close to a building or wall, so that there’s only enough room to access the rack from one side and no room to maneuver your bike, especially when the rack is full. You want to ensure there is sufficient space for the bike’s length, width of handlebars, and accessories like a basket, and to lock and unlock a bike. Otherwise, it reduces the total number of bikes that can be parked there. According to the APBP’s [Essentials of Bike Parking Guide](#) the footprint of a typical bicycle is approximately 6’ x 2’, and cargo bikes and bikes with trailers can extend to 10’ or longer. We recommend studying the placement section of this guide as well, and giving good thought and consideration to your circumstances before selecting and installing a bike rack at your facility.

Step 5. Administration. Occasionally we hear about an office that has secure bike parking for 20 bikes and all the keys to the cage have been handed out. Meanwhile, there are only 10 people actively using the cage and others on a wait list, because the remainder have moved on but have not returned their key. Situations like this highlight the importance of appointing an administrator to coordinate bike parking at your workplace. Consider also requiring a deposit that is refundable when the key or swipe card is returned, and an annual verification of users.

Bike Theft



Tips from Scatliff+Miller+Murray

- 1) Extend the fencing of the bike cage to the ceiling to prevent bike thieves climbing into the cage.
- 2) Locate near the Parking Attendant in a parkade to improve security.



Fear of theft keeps some people from biking to work. Given bike theft is a reality in all major cities, here are some preventative and action items.

Prevention

Unfortunately, there is no fool-proof way to prevent bike theft. Some bike thieves are technically savvy and have battery operated power tools that can cut through most locks. But these are not the majority of bike thieves. [To help prevent bike theft](#), purchase high quality locks, park your bike in a secure, highly visible area (when outdoor), be sure to lock your bike correctly, take off any easily removable bike accessories, know [bike theft hot-spots](#), and register your bike with the City of Winnipeg [Community Services Bicycle Recovery Section](#).

Locking Your Bike

One of the most secure ways to lock your bike is interlocking two U-locks. The U-lock can be used to lock the frame and one wheel to a solid object. Which wheel you lock will depend on the style of bike, where/what you are locking it to and whether you have quick release wheels. If only one of your wheels has a quick release it makes sense to try and lock that wheel and the frame, however if both wheels have quick releases you should also have a cable to loop through the other wheel and lock to the U-lock.

Reporting thefts

As soon as theft occurs, report your stolen bike to the Winnipeg Police by calling 204-986-6222 or using their [online reporting system](#). Have a copy of the serial number from the bike on hand to prove ownership of the bike. Quickly spread the word through social media and websites like Kijiji (including pictures), while also looking for bikes being sold on similar websites.

Local Lessons Learned: Manitoba Hydro



Interestingly, at 360 Main, there are more secure underground parking spots for bikes than for cars!



Secure, underground bike parking is available for Manitoba Hydro employees in their parkade at the head office at 360 Portage Ave. A recent count found that 110 bicycles are being accommodated through a combination of floor and wall-mounted racks. There are also individual racks outside 360 Portage for short-term bike parking by employees and visitors. At the 820 Taylor location, individual bike racks for short-term parking and an outdoor bike cage for long-term parking are provided. Some other Hydro office locations around the province also provide outdoor individual bike racks for securing bicycles.

Positives

At the Manitoba Hydro head office at 360 Portage, there has been a 30% increase in bicycle commuting since 2012. In an employee survey, a large number of cyclists cited secure bike parking as key to their decision to bike commute.

Challenges

Running out of space is a common issue. Luckily, when that happened, management promptly provided another rack. Wall-mounted bike parking is efficient but not all cyclists can use it. This can lead to a rush for the floor-mounted racks. Security problems at 360 Portage have been essentially non-existent but a couple of bikes were stolen from 820 Taylor bike racks. It should be noted these bikes were not in the bike cage and did not have high quality locks.

Considerations

To enhance the experience of cyclists, in addition to secure bike parking, it is also recommended to provide lockers and showers. Flexible work hours lets many cyclists start work earlier or later, when there is less traffic, for a more comfortable commute.

COST COMPARISON

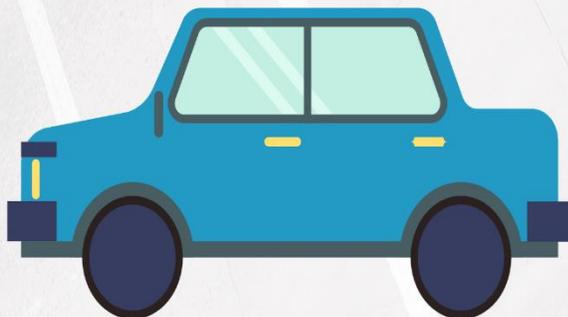
Bikes & Parking.

- Cycling costs \$0.08/Km
- Net benefit to society of \$0.35/Km
- Average parking costs per bicycle range from \$75-\$400 for bike racks and wall mounts, \$300-\$400 for bike cages, \$1,000-\$2,500 for bike lockers, and \$2,400-\$3,900 for underground storage container systems



Vehicles & Parking.

- Owning and operating a vehicle costs between \$8,600-\$13,000/year
- Second-largest household expense
- Driving costs \$0.87/Km
- Net loss to society of \$0.10/Km
- Average costs per parking space include \$15,000 for surface parking, \$35,000 for above ground parking garage, \$50,000 for underground parking garage.



Sources

Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals - [Essentials of Bike Parking, Selecting and installing bicycle parking that works](#)

Canadian Parking Association - [The High Cost of Hospital Parking?](#)

Dekker, K., 2016: The Dollars and Cents of Driving and Cycling: Calculating the Full Cost of Transportation in Calgary, Canada. Master thesis in Sustainable Development at Uppsala University, 16, pp.20, 15 ECTS/HP

Global News Article - [Own a car? You won't believe how much that's costing you every year](#)

Transport Canada - [Bicycle End-of-Trip Facilities: A guide for Canadian municipalities and employers](#)