

Six Simple Steps

easy ways to curb your car

- **Explore your neighborhood** on foot or by bike—you might be surprised by what you find.
- **Be adventurous—try it once.** Riding a bike or taking the bus might be easier than you think.
- **Travel efficiently**—combine errands for fewer trips, and shop locally for less travel time.
- **Mentally curb your car**—make driving the last choice, instead of the first choice.
- **Set simple, fun, and easy goals**—enjoy your first car curbing experiences.
- **Talk with others** who are trying to curb their car usage—How? Attend a CYCC event, of course!

Calculate your annual car costs

Use the steps at right to calculate your annual car ownership costs.

Fixed costs must be paid whether your car is driven a lot, a little, or not at all. Variable costs depend on how much you actually drive. Notice that the cost to use your car is quite small compared to the cost of owning it. That's how driving can seem cheap, even though the numbers show that it's really quite expensive. As long as the price per trip seems low, we have little incentive to drive less. Also, when adjusted for inflation, gas prices have been getting cheaper over time, making the main variable cost of driving a smaller force indecision-making. Current increases in gas prices are changing this, but even at \$3 a gallon, gas is not much more expensive than it was in the gas crunch of the '70s.

In 2004, the Automobile Association of America estimated the cost per year of owning and operating a modest, relatively new sedan, driving 15,000 miles per year, at \$8431 (\$703 a month, or \$23 a day!).

An annual TCAT pass costs only \$495, less than 10% of that. Could a TCAT pass replace your second car? If you added some biking, walking, and carpooling, could you save the expense of owning any car at all?

Do you spend \$23 a day on your car?

On average, AAA says we do.

Fixed Costs

- Ownership (monthly payment x 12 or purchase price/years owned)
- Depreciation (10% of purchase price each year)
- Maintenance, repair, & emissions testing
- Insurance
- Registration

Variable costs

- Fuel cost (start with the number of gallons of gas you use per year (miles driven per year/average miles per gallon), then multiply by the average price of gas)
- Parking (home + work + meters)
- Oil changes (usually every 3,000 miles)

From these, you can figure your total annual costs. (Remember to multiply monthly costs by 12 for the annual cost.)

Also try calculating

- cost per mile
- cost per day
- variable cost as a % of the total



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Shovel your walk and share the road!



Ithaca Mayor Carolyn Peterson and David Kay, City Bike/Ped Advisory Council chair, cross Seneca St. on the Curb Your Car Coalition's Sept. 24, 2005, Car-Free and Car-Lite Walking Tour.



CONTEXT

Join the Curb Your Car Community

Despite the need for much more to be done, Ithaca has a strong history of support for sustainable transportation. The vibrant and successful Ithaca Commons has been in place in the core of the city for thirty years. The Cayuga Waterfront Trail has begun to take shape along the Cayuga Lake waterfront. TCAT bus service is remarkable for a city our size and you can take your bike on any bus. Our city neighborhoods boast a network of walkable streets. City design guidelines require "smart growth" attributes in much new development. Recycle Ithaca's Bicycles (RIBs) volunteers continue fixing bikes to get them back in safe use.

The Curb Your Car Coalition is a loose network of interested community members and professionals in transportation-related areas, many of whom have been instrumental

in the above initiatives. CYCCers continue to work for improvement to our sustainable transportation options, as we recognize that all of these changes mean transportation with a more positive net effect on the local and regional community and the global environment. As a group, CYCC has become a presence in the Ithaca Festival Parade, and has promoted a springtime Curb Your Car

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week that gathers events from various groups into a weeklong "Community Conversation on Transportation." CYCC supports the work of others, including the City's Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Council, the Finger Lakes Cycling Club, TCAT, the Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council (a governmental agency), Sustainable Tompkins, municipalities, and other individuals and groups who have made a variety of contributions to sustainable transportation.

One of CYCC's focuses is encouraging collaboration and synergy among these efforts with a sustained presence in the community supporting appropriate transportation options. Please consider joining us in whatever capacity you can.

Curb Your Car Coalition

*works toward
sensible and appropriate
transportation options
to reduce car use*

We seek

environmental, health and safety, social and economic benefits for Tompkins County through education, planning, policy and implementation.

Our common interests are

- Helping overcome obstacles to using alternative transportation modes
- Promoting walkable and bikable communities
- Moving people out of their automobiles for health and environmental benefits
- Promoting community and connectedness
- Providing education & experience
- Addressing safety issues

An Expensive Love Affair

*High gas prices are only part of the picture
Using your car probably costs more than you think*

Did you know that the average family spends 15% to 20% of its income on automobile ownership and operation? That's close to two months of work each year. You can determine how much you spend on car ownership by using the chart on p. 4 of this newsletter. The true costs of driving are far greater than the price paid by individual drivers. Understanding these costs can help you make more informed consumer choices.

Individual costs include: car ownership and depreciation, repair, insurance, parking, and travel time.

Government costs include: road expenditures, highway patrol, traffic court, emergency services, and other costs that are not fully covered by the gasoline taxes we pay at the pump.

Social costs include: air, noise and water pollution, climate change, dependence on foreign oil supplies, car crashes, productivity losses due to congestion, and other costs that are borne by society as a whole.

Cars have a rightful place in our transportation system, but elevating the auto

*Cars have a place in a
diverse mix of
transportation options.*

above all other transportation modes harms our environment and our communities. We need to work together-not for or against cars-but for a diverse mix of transportation options. Then we won't have to drive as much, and many of us will be able to give up our cars altogether, saving money and protecting our environment.

Article reprinted from the Bicycle Transportation Alliance website <www.bta4bikes.org>.

See **Calculate Your Annual Car Costs** on p. 4.

NEWS BRIEFS on p. 2

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS
on p. 3

Curb Your Car Events and Resources

Updates and additions at www.tompkins-co.org/itctc/cyc/

Transportation Teas

WHAT'S A TRANSPORTATION TEA?

Transportation Teas are low-key opportunities to connect with others and discuss transportation and "car-curbing" dilemmas, or just to chat. More information on the CYCC website .

Car-free Shopping

Mon. Nov. 21, 5-7 pm, Autumn Leaves Used Books

November and December are big months for moving bulky items around. Come share equipment and strategy ideas for bringing home Thanksgiving dinner ingredients and holiday gifts.

Strolling in the Snow & Brrrrr Biking

Tues. Dec. 13, 5-7 pm, Felicia's Atomic Lounge

It gets cold and snowy here in Ithaca. Is it really possible to keep walking and biking around? Connect with others who are trying (or already know how!) to stay warm and mobile in our wintry weather.

Safe Routes to Schools

Thurs. Jan. 12, 5-7 pm, GIAC

Getting the kids and yourself where you need to be can be a big issue. Share ideas with other kids and parents for less car-intensive ways to get around. Maybe even plan a walking school bus or classroom-against-classroom walk/bike to school contest!

NEWS BRIEFS

- Sidewalk shoveling—it's the law, within 24 hours
- TCAT ridership up 34% as of September
- Town of Ithaca, Cornell study transportation impacts of future development
- Waterfront Trail, Gateway Trail awarded funding
- Biodiesel and carsharing local groups both going ahead

MORE ON OUR WEBSITE www.tompkins-co.org/itctc/cyc/

Recent Curb Your Car events

WORLD CAR-FREE DAY—Sep. 23-24 Car-Free and Car-Lite Tour

Curb Your Car Coalition members and others joined Ithaca Mayor Carolyn Peterson for a downtown Ithaca tour of car-free and car-lite sites, highlighting both exemplary and problematic sites, related to various travel modes.

You're Either With Us or You're a Bicyclist

Dr. Paul Simpson, Centre Region (PA) Bike Coalition

Dr. Simpson addressed how President Bush's "War on Terror" has impacted bicyclists in some areas and the importance of safeguarding rights locally.

Bike Valet Parking at the Ithaca Farmers Market

with the Cayuga Waterfront Trail Initiative

The CYCC and CWTI provided secure, convenient "coat-check" bike parking at the future Cayuga Waterfront Trail trailhead.

Regular local events

Curb Your Car Coalition planning meetings

Upcoming dates: Tues. Nov. 15,

Thurs. Dec. 15, Tues. Jan. 10

Curb Your Car Coalition regular planning and networking meeting. Usually at 3:30 pm in the conference room at the Old Jail on Tioga St. near Court St. Check CYCC's website to confirm meeting dates and agendas <www.tompkins-co.org/itctc/cyc/>, and consider joining our listserv for ongoing planning and networking.

Critical Mass a strongly anarchic bike ride

last Fridays (Nov. 25, Dec. 30, Jan. 27)

meet at 5 pm, ride at 5:30 pm

A monthly celebration of bicycling and other non-motorized transportation that occurs in over 400 cities on 6 continents. Usually meets in Ithaca at the Cayuga St. end of the Commons.

City Bike/Ped Advisory Council meetings

Second Thursdays (Nov. 10, Dec. 8, Jan. 12) 7 pm

BPAC advises Ithaca city government on projects and initiatives that affect bicycle and pedestrian travel. Usually meetings are held in the third floor conference room in City Hall (across from the library). For more information, contact chair David Kay 255-2123, <dlk2@cornell.edu>

Groups and resources

Finger Lakes Cycling Club

www.flcycling.org

FLCC and members coordinate a variety of regular rides and seasonal events. The FLCC listserv is also a good resource for connecting with other local cyclists.

RIBs (Recycle Ithaca's Bicycles)

309 S. Corn St., 256-5355

Hours: Wed. 3-9 pm, Sat. 11 am-5 pm

RIBs recycles bikes into community use while educating youth and others about bicycles and their maintenance to stimulate self-reliance.



Curb Your Car Coalition's Bike Valet Parking at the 2005 Ithaca Festival at Stewart Park.

Safe Routes to Schools

A simple concept can protect our children from serious health risks

Our children consume more fattening food and exercise less than ever before. Our reliance on cars for virtually all transportation makes bicycling and walking to school difficult and unsafe—too often impossible—leading to increasingly overweight, unhealthy, and less self-reliant kids.

Did you know?

The number of overweight children is growing alarmingly, putting them at risk for lifelong health problems.

- Children account for half of newly diagnosed cases of Type 2 diabetes nationwide.

- 15% of 6–12-year-olds and 10% of 2–5-year-olds are seriously overweight.

- To maintain basic health, scientists recommend at least one hour of physical activity a day. Half our kids don't even get that.

- Thirty years ago, 70% of children traveled by their own power to school. Today, over 90% of students arrive at school by car or bus.

Source: Sarah Levin Martin, PhD., CDC Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity.

What is a Safe Routes To Schools Program?

A movement is building across the United States to help our kids by creating *Safe Routes To Schools*. This federal program encourages kids to bike or walk to school, and entire communities to support them, and could be the catalyst for a fundamental shift. Local zoning boards, traffic engineers, elected officials, food manufacturers, protective parents and our society's insatiable reliance on the automobile to get around are all involved in the problem and must also be part of the solution.

A successful *Safe Routes to Schools* program integrates health, fitness, traffic relief, environmental awareness, and safety under one umbrella, creating a healthier lifestyle for children and a safer, cleaner environment for everyone.

Some ideas used by parents, teachers, and students across the

country include

- "bike trains" led by one or two parents
- "walking school buses" chaperoned by a parent or two
- bicycle safety education included in a gym class
- speed humps on streets near schools
- better speed enforcement in school zones
- "complete streets" for bicycling and walking

It takes an entire community to make these happen, so the Curb Your Car Coalition has set *Safe Routes to Schools* as a high priority. A lot can be done starting at home.

A healthy lifestyle is within everyone's reach. By encouraging more outside play time, parents can set the stage for walking or bicycling to school for daily exercise. Parent-organized "bike trains" and "walking school buses" can make walking and biking to school safer and more accessible.

The joys of walking and biking can replace the frustrations of driving in heavy traffic at school rush times. Reconnect with your neighborhood. Help make your streets quieter, cleaner, and safer.

What can you do to for local Safe Routes to Schools?

The Curb Your Car Coalition is working with the Healthy Generations group, local teachers and government officials to create and strengthen *Safe Routes to Schools* programs for kids' health and safety.

If you're interested in working on Safe Routes to Schools, join us on January 12 for the Transportation Tea on this, and check the Curb Your Car website <www.tompkins-co.org/itctc/cyc/> for more information and a list of local teachers and others working on this.

Or take a look at these web resources (www.saferoutestoschools.org, www.walkingschoolbus.org, www.walktoschool.org, or www.iwalktoschool.org).

Article adapted from Prescott (AZ) Alternative Transportation's Progress newsletter.

Join the Curb Your Car Coalition community!

There are more and more ways to be a part of the Curb Your Car Coalition community. Look for more issues of this newsletter, "Transportation Conversations," and a resource library at the Peace and Justice Center on the Commons.

Contact me about volunteering. I want to help

- ___ **at events** (like Bike Valet Parking, a Transportation Tea, bike classes, or other community events)
- ___ **behind the scenes** (website, setting up events, other ways)
- ___ **connecting with other organizations in some other way**

- ___ \$20 *I want to help financially support CYCC activities like events and this newsletter. My check (payable to Cornell Cooperative Extension) is enclosed.*
- ___ \$50
- ___ other

Please keep me updated on Curb Your Car events.

Name _____

Mailing address _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Community connections (for CYCC partnerships)

___ Please mail future Context newsletter issues

___ Please put me on the CYCC e-mail list