

Practitioners' Books to Encourage Active Transportation

Below is a list of informative and engaging books/resources about active transportation that are suitable for practitioners. Download or print the list and find them at your local library, bookstore or online!

A Philosophy of Walking

Frederic Gros

In this book, Frederic Gros discusses the many ways that humans get from A to B – the pilgrimage, protest march, nature walks, and what these say about us. Gros also explores the mindset of other thinkers who viewed walking as essential to their practice. This book is a great read for individuals who have an interest in philosophy.

A Walk in the Wood: Meditations on Mindfulness with a Bear Named Pooh

Joseph Parent and Nancy Parent

This book offers short stories and easy-to-follow exercises to provide readers with the tools needed to incorporate mindfulness in their lives. It acknowledges the mental and physical benefits of experiencing nature and provides the reader with the tools necessary to pursue a quieter and calmer way of living. This book is a timeless classic and brings in a hint of nostalgia with the bear named Pooh.

A Walk in the Woods: Rediscovering America on the Appalachian Trail

Bill Bryson

In this book, Bill Bryson discusses his trip along America's Appalachian Trail. He talks about the history and ecology of the trail, and about the many people and animals he meets along the way.

Active Transportation and Real Estate: The Next Frontier

Edward McMahon, Matthew Norris, and Rachel MacCleery

This report discusses the connections between active transportation (e.g. walking, biking) and real estate. It explores the question: Does active transportation create real estate value?

Active Transportation in Canada

Transport Canada (Environmental Initiatives Group)

This resource and planning guide can be used by transportation planners to improve the viability of active transportation in their city or region. Included in the guide is a detailed history of active transportation in Canada as well as a planning framework and other resources.

Bicycle Diaries Paperback

David Byrne

This book follows David Byrne on his journey around the world via bicycle. As he pedals through cities around the world, from Buenos Aires to Berlin, he shares about the people he meets, and his thoughts on art, fashion, and globalization. He observes the many ways that various cities are becoming more bike-friendly.

Bikenomics: How Bicycling Can Save the Economy

Elly Blue

In this book, Elly Blue argues for the adaptation of bicycling as a primary mode of transportation. She critiques the current society's reliance on car culture, and share stories of the people, businesses, organizations, and cities that are working to create more bike-friendly infrastructure.

Building the Cycling City: The Dutch Blueprint for Urban Vitality

Melissa Bruntlett and Chris Bruntlett

In this book, Melissa and Chris Bruntlett share their observations of the Netherlands, the world's top cycling nation where there are more bikes than people. They share their insight into how the Netherlands became so successful in its bike culture, and how North American cities can implement lessons learned from the Netherlands.

Children's Active Transportation

Richard Larouche

This book analyzes current travel behaviours of children and youth and the key factors that influence these behaviours. Children's habits are unique because their decisions are often influenced by parental restrictions, school location, and their inability to drive a vehicle. This is a great resource to encourage children to develop active transportation habits from a young age.

City of Thunder Bay's Active Transportation Plan

The City of Thunder Bay

This transportation plan was approved in 2019 by the City of Thunder Bay's City Council. It aimed to create a city plan that encourages and supports modes of active transportation through to 2038 and beyond. You can also search up the active transportation plans of other Canadian cities that you are interested in learning more about.

Curbing Traffic: The Human Case for Fewer Cars in our Lives

Melissa Bruntlett and Chris Bruntlett

Melissa and Chris Bruntlett left Vancouver, B.C. to travel to the Netherlands to explore their bicycle culture. In this book, they share their personal story, research, and interviews with locals in Delft, Netherlands to share what living in a city designed for people, not for cars is like. This book is great for public officials, planners, and citizen activists to better understand the negative consequences of car-centric city planning.

The Death and Life of Great American Cities

Jane Jacobs

This book is fundamental to urban planning. Author Jane Jacobs – one of America's biggest and most influential urban activists – discusses many topics including what makes streets safe, what creates a 'neighbourhood', and how some neighbourhoods stay impoverished while other regenerate themselves. This book is perfect for aspiring urban activists, planners, and more.

Do Androids Dream of Electric Cars? Public Transit in the Age of Google, Uber, and Elon Musk

James Wilt

In this book, James Wilt explores what public transportation should look like in order to be sustainable and equitable. He considers a wide range of topics including climate change, inequality, urban density, safety, and unions, and explores these topics by interviewing more than forty experts.

Feminist City: A Field Guide

Leslie Kern

Leslie Kern discusses how our cities are sites of ongoing gendered struggles but more importantly sites of hope; hope for re-shaping social relations based on care and justice. She takes on many different topics including motherhood, friendship, activism, and lays out how to make our cities more equitable by using an intersectional feminist approach

Fostering Sustainable Behavior: An Introduction to Community-Based Social Marketing

Doug McKenzie-Mohr

Doug McKenzie-Mohr explores how we can use community-based social marketing tactics to turn people's good intentions into action. This can encourage individuals to work towards any beneficial actions, such as encouraging the use of reusable containers and choosing to pursue active forms of transportation (e.g. walking and biking) instead of the car.

From Rails to Trails: The Making of America's Active Transportation Network

Peter Harnik

The rail-trail, part transportation, part park corridor has created high-quality pathways for bicyclists, walkers, runners and more. This book follows the fascinating movement towards rail-trails and considers what further rail-trail developments will mean for the future of Americans' health.

Happy City: Transforming Our Lives Through Urban Design

Charles Montgomery

This book explores how city planning shapes our thoughts and behaviours. Charles Montgomery draws on stories around the world – an activist in Paris who turned their freeways into beaches, and an architect in New York who transformed the city into what we see today. This book explores how we can plan for happier cities while also tackling our generation's most pressing challenges.

How To Walk

Thich Nhat Hanh

This book explores the topic of mindful walking, a technique of walking that helps to reduce anxiety and depression, and to recapture wonder and gratitude.

In Praise of Paths: Walking Through Time and Nature

Torbjørn Ekelund; translation by Becky L. Crook

Torbjørn Ekelund decided to walk everywhere after an epilepsy diagnosis affected his ability to drive. As Ekelund walks, he rediscovers his love of walking, recounting the many sights, smells, and sounds on his journeys. Ekelund begins to wonder: What can society gain from choosing to walk once again?

In Praise of Walking: A New Scientific Exploration

Shane O'Mara

In this book, Shane O'Mara, a neuroscientist, discusses the many benefits that walking has on our brains and bodies. O'Mara discusses the evolutionary origins of walking, and how our brains and nervous systems allow us to balance, run our 'inner GPS' and how it encourages our imagination.

The Old Ways: A Journey on Foot

Robert Macfarlane

This book, one of the most popular books about walking, brings together natural history, cartography, geology, and literature. Robert Macfarlane explores the voices and stories of old paths and our tracks. Macfarlane journeys through different landscapes, and discusses the philosophies behind feeling, thinking, and knowing.

On Bicycles: A 200-Year History of Cycling in New York City

Evan Friss

In this book, Evan Friss discusses the history of cycling in New York City. He discusses the bicycle's place in the city over time, and how it often reflected the city's social, economic, and cultural politics of that time. This book shows that the people and politics of New York has been in constant favour of and opposition of the bicycle since its fruition.

Right of Way

Angie Schmitt

In this book, Angie Schmitt discusses the increase in pedestrian deaths in American cities, many of whom are often poor, immigrants, and people of colour. Schmitt discusses how these pedestrian deaths are easily avoidable and calls for action to improve infrastructure and policies on the road.

Streetfight: Handbook for an Urban Revolution

Janette Sadik-Khan

Janette Sadik-Khan was largely responsible for transforming New York City's streets to make room for pedestrians, cyclists, buses, and green spaces. In her book she shares insights about the battles she fought to create these transformations in New York in hopes of providing practical advice for other cities to make their streets safer and more vibrant.

Taking on Traffic Laws: A How-To Guide for Decriminalizing Mobility

BikeWalkKC

This guide follows BikeWalkKC's process of repealing and modifying three laws in Kansas City, Missouri that failed to meet their intended safety goals for people walking and bicycling. This guide shares their successful campaigns tactics, and acts as an incredibly useful tool for advocates looking to push similar legislations in their communities.

Walkable City: How Downtown Can Save America, One Step at a Time

Jeff Speck

Jeff Speck discusses that the ability for a city to thrive depends on one key factor: walkability. He states that a walkable city is essential to creating a healthy and vibrant city.

Walkable City Rules: 101 Steps to Making Better Places

Jeff Speck

In this essential guide to making changes in your city, Jeff Speck provides 101 rules for practical arguments that people can use to advocate for greater walkability in their communities. This is the most comprehensive and effective tool available to bring city-planning practices into your city.

Wanderers: A History of Women Walking

Kerri Andrews

This book follows the journey of ten women who have viewed walking as essential to their sense of self as individuals and as writers. This book traces the lives of people spanning hundreds of years apart - from Elizabeth Carter, to Cheryl Strayed, who both viewed walking as important to their own unique endeavors.

Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail

Cheryl Strayed

This book follows Cheryl Strayed on her 1,100-mile hike along the Pacific Crest Trail in 1995 as she ventured on a journey of self-discovery.