

# THE TRAILHEAD

Promoting sustainable commuting among employees is especially challenging for employers that operate retail businesses or restaurants - which make up the majority of businesses in the heart of downtown Missoula where parking is especially tight. Staff typically work part-time with variable schedules that often include evening shifts. This makes it hard to coordinate carpools, ride the bus, or even feel confident biking home. When employees face these sorts of barriers without any incentive to choose a sustainable trip, most default to driving alone without thinking twice, or even considering the other options available to them.

However, when retail stores are able to encourage sustainable commuting in a meaningful way, it can have significant impacts. One such business is the Trail Head which offers an enticing incentive of \$1 per day awarded to employees who arrive to work by bike, bus or foot. They make sure to have ample and convenient bike parking for staff and customers alike. For 15 years now, the Trail Head has been recognizing and encouraging employee commute efforts in this way. They note that it's not always the easiest option for their employees, many of whom are also studying at UM and don't have a lot of extra time between classes and shifts at the store. But the efforts have paid off: employees at the Trail Head regularly participate in the annual Commuter Challenge where they are consistently one of the few retail establishments involved in the program.

Commuter incentives like this help create a culture that is supportive of sustainable commuting at a workplace. Even though staff may need to rely on vehicles at times, they are at the very least encouraged to consider ALL of the options available to them before hopping behind the wheel.