

# MiSustainable Holland

## About this series

The MiSustainable Holland column is a collection of community voices sharing updates about local sustainability initiatives.

## This Week's Sustainability Framework Theme:

**Community & Neighborhood:** The places we live and the individuals we interact with support the development of our personalities and perspectives on life. Encouraging vital and effective communities is essential.

## Green Commute saves energy, promotes health, builds community

By Cole Ockerse  
Macatawa Area Coordinating Council

As we gear up for Green Commute Week, coming up Sept. 8-14, our community has a rare opportunity to embrace sustainable transportation that benefits not only the environment but also our connections with the community and people around us.

Transportation is something that touches every aspect of our lives, but it's important to recognize that not everyone has the luxury of choosing how they commute. For many, walking, biking, or taking the bus isn't just an option – it's a necessity driven by economic, environmental, or personal circumstances.

These modes of transportation allow us to slow down and experience our surroundings in a more intimate way. When we walk or bike, we engage directly with the sights, sounds, and even the smells of our environment, fostering a deeper appreciation for our neighborhoods. Taking the bus can mean sharing a moment with someone new, striking up a conversation, or simply feeling a part of a larger community.

Green Commute Week is about making these essential, often-overlooked modes of transport more accessible, enjoyable, and rewarding for everyone. By coming together and embracing these alternatives, we can build a stronger, more connected community.

To kick off Green Commute Week, MAX Transit is offering free fixed route rides on Monday, Sept. 9, providing a no-cost chance to try it out for those who haven't ridden MAX before. MAX will also give away four monthly passes to participants who document their bus trips throughout the week.

We're thrilled to have the support of local businesses like Russ' Restaurant, Knot Spot Pretzel, Urban Air Adventure Park, Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park, and John Ball Zoo, who have generously donated prizes to encourage participation. There also will be more than \$500 in West Coast Cash available as incentives.

All you need to do is visit our website at [the-macc.org/green-commute](http://the-macc.org/green-commute), log your trips each day – whether you're biking, walking, taking public transit, or carpooling – and you'll be entered into the daily raffles for a chance to win prizes.

But Green Commute Week is about more than just winning prizes; it's about making a collective shift towards a more sustainable and connected future.

While the immediate benefits of reducing cars on the road, like decreased air pollution and eased traffic, are clear, the long-term impacts on our community are even more profound.

By choosing green transportation, whether biking to work, walking your kids to school, or taking the bus to a local café, people are not just improving their health and saving on fuel. They are contributing to safer streets, cleaner air, and a local economy that thrives on foot traffic and community engagement.

Together, these choices help build a resilient, vibrant community where everyone can thrive.

This week is a chance to make a difference, not just for the environment, but for yourself and your community. Visit [the-macc.org/green-commute](http://the-macc.org/green-commute) to learn more, log your miles, and join us in this meaningful movement.

- *Cole Ockerse is the transportation intern for the Macatawa Area Coordinating Council.*