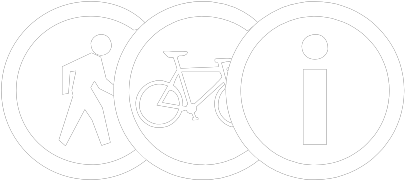
BIKEABILITY CHECKLIST



HOW BIKEABLE IS YOUR COMMUNITY?

Riding a bike is fun!

Bicycling is a great way to get around and to get your daily dose of physical activity. It’s good for the environment, and it can save you money. No wonder many communities are encouraging people to ride their bikes more often!

Can you get to where you want to go by bike?

Some communities are more bikeable than others: how does yours rate? Read over the questions in this checklist and then take a ride in your community, perhaps to the local shops, to visit a friend, or even to work. See if you can get where you want to go by bicycle, even if you are just riding around the neighborhood to get some exercise.

At the end of your ride, answer each question and, based on your opinion, circle an overall rating for each question. You can also note any problems you encountered by checking the appropriate box(es). Be sure to make a careful note of any specific locations that need improvement.

Add up the numbers to see how you rated your ride. Then, turn to the pages that show you how to begin to improve those areas where you gave your community a low score. Before you ride, make sure your bike is in good working order, put on a helmet, and be sure you

can manage the ride.

LOCATION OF BIKE RIDE

1

RATING SCALE:

2 3 4 5 6

awful many problems

some problems

good very good

excellent

1. DID YOU HAVE A PLACE TO BICYCLE SAFELY?

A) On the road, sharing the road with motor vehicles?

Yes Some problems (please note locations): No space for bicyclists to ride

Bicycle lane or paved shoulder disappeared

Bike lane too narrow

Curb travel lane too narrow

Heavy and/or fast-moving traffic

Too many trucks or buses

No space for bicyclists on bridges or in tunnels

Poorly lighted roadways

Something else Location of problems:

B) ON AN OFF-ROAD PATH OR TRAIL, WHERE MOTOR VEHICLES WERE NOT ALLOWED?

Yes Some problems:

Path ended abruptly

Path didn’t provide network connectivity.

Path intersected with roads that were difficult to cross

Inappropriate traffic control at side streets.

Path overlapped with pedestrian usage

Path was unsafe because of sharp turns or dangerous grades

Path was difficult because of too many hills

Path was poorly lighted

Something else

Overall “Safe Place To Ride” Rating: (circle one)

1 2 3 4 5 6

2. HOW WAS THE SURFACE YOU RODE ON?

Good Some problems, the road or path had: Potholes

Rough pavement

Debris (e.g. broken glass, sand, gravel, etc.) Dangerous drain grates, utility covers, or metal plates

Uneven surface or gaps

Slippery surfaces when wet (e.g. bridge decks, construction plates, road markings)

Bumpy or angled railroad tracks

Rumble strips

Something else

3. HOW WERE THE INTERSECTIONS YOU RODE THOUGH?

Good Some problems:

Had to wait too long to cross intersection

Couldn’t see crossing traffic

Right turn hook

Bike lane disappeared at intersection

Weaving across right turn only lane

Signal didn’t give me enough time to cross the road

Signal didn’t change for a bicycle

Unsure where or how to ride through intersection

Something else

Overall “Safe Place To Ride” Rating: (circle one)

1 2 3 4 5 6

4. DID DRIVERS BEHAVE WELL?

Good Some problems, drivers: Drove too fast

Passed me too close Did not signal Harassed me

Tail gated me

Cut me off

Ran red lights or stop sign

Something else

Overall “Safe Place To Ride” Rating: (circle one)

1 2 3 4 5 6

5. WAS IT EASY FOR YOU TO USE YOUR BIKE?

Good Some problems:

No maps, or way finding signs to help me find my way

No safe or secure place to leave my bicycle

No way to take my bicycle with me on the bus or train

Scary dogs

Hard to find a direct route I liked

Route was too hilly

Something else

Overall “Safe Place To Ride” Rating: (circle one)

1 2 3 4 5 6

Overall “Safe Place To Ride” Rating: (circle one)

1 2 3 4 5 6

6. WHAT DID YOU DO TO MAKE YOUR RIDE SAFER?

Your behavior contributes to the bikeability of your community. Check all that apply:

Wore a bicycle helmet

Obeyed traffic signal and signs

Rode in a straight line (didn’t weave) Signaled my turns

Rode with (not against) traffic

Used lights, if riding at night

Wore reﬂective and/or retroreﬂective materials and bright clothing

Was courteous to other travelers (motorist, skaters, pedestrians, etc.)

7. TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT YOURSELF.

In good weather months, about how many days a month do you ride your bike?

Never

Occasionally (one or two) Frequently (5-10)

Most (more than 15) Every day

Which of these phrases best describes you?

An advanced, confident rider who is comfortable riding in most traffic situations

An intermediate rider who is not really comfortable riding

in most traffic situations

A beginner rider who prefers to stick to the bike path or trail

HOW DOES YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD STACK UP? ADD UP YOUR RATING AND DECIDE.

1.

26-30 Celebrate! You live in a bicycle-friendly community.

2.

21-25 Your community is pretty good, but there’s always room for improvment.

3.

16-20 Conditions for riding are okay, but not ideal. Plenty of opportunity for improvments.

4.

11-15 Conditions are poor and you deserve better than this! Call the mayor and the newspaper right away.

5.

5-10 Oh dear. Consider wearing body armor and Christmas tree lights before venturing out again.

TOTAL:

DID YOU FIND SOMETHING THAT NEEDS TO BE CHANGED?

On the next page, you’ll find suggestions for improving the bikeability of your community based on the problems you identified. Take a look at both

the short- and long-term solutions and commit to seeing at least one of each through to the end. If you don’t, then who will?

During your bike ride, how did you feel physically? Could you go as far or as fast as you wanted to? Were you short of breath, tired, or were your muscles sore? The next page also has some suggestions to improve the enjoyment of your ride.

Bicycling, whether for transportation or recreation, is a great way to get 30 minutes of physical activity into your day. Riding, just like any other activity, should be something you enjoy doing. The more you enjoy it, the more likely you’ll stick with it. Choose routes that match your skill level and physical activities. If a route is too long or hilly, find a new one. Start slowly and work up to your potential.

1.DID YOU HAVE A PLACE TO BICYCLE SAFELY?

a) On the road?

No space for bicyclists to ride (e.g. no bike lane or shoulder; narrow lanes)

Bicycle lane or paved shoulder disappeared Heavy

and/or fast-moving traffic

Too many trucks or buses

No space for bicyclists on bridges or in tunnels

Poorly lighted roadways

b) On an off-road path or trail? Path ended abruptly

Path didn’t go where I wanted to go

Path intersected with roads that were difficult to

cross

Path was crowded

Path was unsafe because of sharp turns or dangerous downhills

Path was uncomfortable because of too many hills

Path was poorly lighted

2.HOW WAS THE SURFACE YOU RODE ON?

Potholes

Cracked or broken pavement

Debris (e.g. broken glass, sand, gravel, etc.) Dangerous drain grates, utility covers, or

metal plates

Uneven surface or gaps

Slippery surfaces when wet (e.g. bridge decks, construction plates, road markings)

Bumpy or angled railroad tracks

Rumble strips

WHAT YOU & YOUR CHILD CAN DO IMMEDIATELY

• pick another route for now

• tell local transportation engineers or public works department about specific problems; provide a copy of your checklist

• find a class to boost your confidence about riding in traffic

• slow down and take care when using the path

• find an on-street route

• use the path at less crowded times

• tell the trail manager or agency about specific

problems

• report problems immediately to public works department or appropriate agency

• keep your eye on the road/path

• pick another route until the problem is fixed (and check to see that the problems are fixed)

• organize a community effort to clean up the path

WHAT YOU & YOUR COMMUNITY

CAN DO WITH MORE TIME

• participate in local planning meetings

• encourage your community to adopt a plan to improve conditions, including a network of bike lanes on major roads

• ask your public works department to consider “Share

the Road” signs at specific locations

• ask your state department of transportation to include paved shoulders on all their rural highways

• establish or join a local bicycle advocacy group

• ask the trail manager or agency to improve directional and warning signs

• petition your local transportation agency to improve path/roadway crossings

• ask for more trails in your community

• establish or join a “Friends of the Trail” advocacy group

• participate in local planning meetings

• encourage your community to adopt a plan to improve conditions, including a network of bike lanes on major roads “Share the Road” signs at specific locations

• ask your state department of transportation to include paved shoulders on all their rural highways

• establish or join a local bicycle advocacy group

3. HOW WERE THE INTERSECTIONS YOU RODE THROUGH?

Had to wait too long to cross intersection

Couldn’t see crossing traffic

Signal didn’t give me enough time to cross the road

The signal didn’t change for a bicycle

Unsure where or how to ride through intersection

• pick another route for now

• tell local transportation engineers or public works

department about specific problems

• take a class to improve your riding confidence and

skills

• ask the public works department to look at the timing

of the specific traffic signals

• ask the public works department to install loop- detectors that detect bicyclists

• suggest improvements to sightliness that include

cutting back vegetation; building out the path crossing;

and moving parked cars that obstruct your view

• organize community-wide, on-bike training on how to safely ride through intersections

4. DID DRIVERS BEHAVE WELL?

Drivers:

Drove too fast Passed me too close Did not signal Harassed me

Cut me off

Ran red lights or stop signs

5. WAS IT EASY FOR YOU TO USE YOUR BIKE?

No maps, signs, or road markings to help me

find my way

No safe or secure place to leave my bicycle at my destination

No way to take my bicycle with me on the bus or train

Scary dogs

Hard to find a direct route I liked

Route was too hilly

WHAT YOU & YOUR CHILD CAN DO IMMEDIATELY

• report unsafe drivers to the police

• set an example by riding responsibly; obey traffic

laws; don’t antagonize drivers

• always expect the unexpected

• work with your community to raise awareness to share the road

• plan your route ahead of time

• find somewhere close by to lock your bike; never leave

it unlocked

• report scary dogs to the animal control department

• learn to use all of your gears!

WHAT YOU & YOUR COMMUNITY

CAN DO WITH MORE TIME

• ask the police department to enforce speed limits and safe driving

• encourage your department of motor vehicles to include “Share the Road” messages in driver tests and correspondence with drivers

• ask city planners and traffic engineers for traffic

calming ideas

• encourage your community to use cameras to catch speeders and red light runners

• ask your community to publish a local bike map

• ask your public works department to install bike parking racks at key destinations; work with them to identify locations

• petition your transit agency to install bike racks on all their buses

• plan your local route network to minimize the impact of steep hills

• establish or join a bicycle user group (BUG) at your workplace

6. WHAT DID YOU DO TO MAKE YOUR RIDE SAFER?

Wore a bicycle helmet

Obeyed traffic signals and signs

Rode in a straight line (didn’t weave) Signaled my turns

Rode with (not against) traffic

Used lights, if riding at night

Wore reﬂective materials and bright clothing

Was courteous to other travelers (motorists, skaters, pedestrians, etc.)

• go to your local bike shop and buy a helmet; get lights

and reﬂectors if you are expecting to ride at night

• always follow the rules of the road and set a good example

• take a class to improve your riding skills and know edge

• ask the police to enforce bicycle laws

• encourage your school or youth agencies to teach bicycle safety (on-bike)

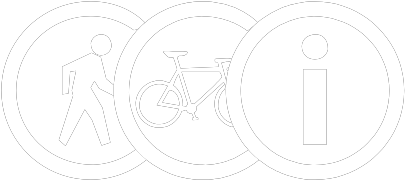
• start or join a local bicycle club

• become a bicycle safety instructor

Need some guidance? These resources might help.

GREAT RESOURCES

BICYCLING INFORMATION Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center (PBIC) UNC Highway Safety Research Center



Chapel Hill, NC

[www.pedbikeinfo.org](http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/) [www.walkinginfo.org](http://www.walkinginfo.org/)

National Center for Safe Routes to School

Chapel Hill, NC

[www.saferoutesinfo.org](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/)

STREET DESIGN & BICYCLE FACILITIES

American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Washington, D.C.

[http://www.aashto.org](http://www.aashto.org/)

Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Washington, D.C.

http:// [www.ite.org](http://www.ite.org/)

Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals

(APBP) Cedarburg, WI

http:// [www.apbp.org](http://www.apbp.org/)

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Bicycle and Pedestrian Program

Office of Natural and Human Environment Washington, DC [www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/index.htm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/index.htm)

ADVOCACY GROUPS Alliance for Biking and Walking http://www.peoplepoweredmovae ment.org

League of American Bicyclists (LAB)

[http://www.bikeleague.org](http://www.bikeleague.org/)

National Center for Bicycling and Walking (NCBW)

[http://www.bikewalk.org](http://www.bikewalk.org/)

EDUCATION & SAFETY

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

(NHTSA)

Bicycle Safety Program, Office of Safety Programs

Washington, DC

[www.nhtsa.gov/Bicycles](http://www.nhtsa.gov/Bicycles)

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Team, Office of Safety Washington, DC <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped_bike/>

SafeKids World-wide Washington, D.C. [http://www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org/)

HEALTH

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity

Atlanta, GA

<http://www.dcd.gov/nccdphp/dnpa>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Childhood Injury Prevention

Atlanta, GA

http:// [www.dcd.gov/ncipc](http://www.dcd.gov/ncipc)

FUNDING SOURCES Transportation Enhancement Activities: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/te/>

Safe Routes to School Program:

<http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/saferoutes/>

Recreational Trails Program:

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails/>

National Scenic Byways Program:

<http://www.bywaysonline.org/>

Federal Lands Highway Program:

<http://ﬂh.fhwa.dot.gov/>