

Bikeabout

Identify opportunities to improve the safety and accessibility of cycling routes to school

Theme: **Engineering, Evaluation** • Audience: **Broader Community, Municipality, School Board** • School Grade: **1-3, 4-8, 9-12, Kindergarten** • Mode: **Car, Cycle, School Bus, Scooter, Skateboard, Transit, Walk, Wheelchair** • Issues: **Lack of Data, Routes to School, School Site, Traffic Problems**

Purpose:

To identify features of the built environment that could be changed to improve safety and accessibility for students cycling to school.

Description:

A group bike ride along a pre-planned route, beginning at the school site and continuing through the school neighbourhood to experience first-hand the challenges faced by students when they bike to school. In addition to staff and parent representatives from the school, the group should include municipal, police, school board and student transportation officials. When appropriate and feasible, older students can also participate and share their perspectives.

As the group rides, they pause to discuss and take notes and photos of observations, including positive features that support cycling (e.g. bike racks, traffic calming) and areas of concern that are barriers (e.g. rough road surfaces, busy traffic). At the end of the Bikeabout, the group returns to the school and holds a debrief meeting to review findings and identify next steps to take action and develop solutions.

The Bikeabout can be combined with conducting a [Walkabout](#) survey and a [Traffic Observation](#) survey. Information gathered from the Bikeabout can be used for [Routes to School Mapping](#).

What you will need:

- Planned route map for the bike ride, incorporating any locations of concern identified by the school community (e.g. by conducting a [Family Survey](#));
- Supplies for the ride: bikes and properly-fitted helmets for all participants, bike repair kit, copies of the route map, Bikeabout checklist (see Resources), camera (bike-mounted is preferred, if possible); and
- Supplies for the debriefing session: pens, paper, chart paper, markers.

Help:

Teachers, students, parents and caregivers, public health nurse, municipal and school board staff, elected officials.

Resources:

Bikeabout templates and guidance are available in the “[Canadian School Travel Planning Toolkit – Phase 2](#)” by Green Communities Canada:

- [Bikeabout Instructions and Checklist](#)