



## How Bikeable is Your Community?

(From: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the Pedestrian & Bicycle Information Center & the US Department of Transportation)

**Riding a bike is fun!** It's a great way to get around and to get your daily dose of physical activity. It's also good for the environment and can save you money.

**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 on this check list and then take a ride in your community, perhaps to local shops, to visit a friend or even to work. See if you can get where you want to go by bicycle.

At the end of your ride, answer each question and based on your opinion, give an overall rating for each question. Then add up your score for each question to get your community's total "bikeability" score. How did your ride rate?

Use the following rating scale to answer the questions below:

1	2	3	4	5	6
Awful	Many Problems	Some Problems	Good	Very good	Excellent

\_\_\_\_\_ **1. Did you have a place to bike safely?**

**a. If you used the road...**

Consider...Were the lanes wide enough to accommodate bikes? Was there a shoulder or bike lane to ride in/on? Was the bike lane or shoulder there the whole way? Was there lots of fast moving traffic, trucks or buses? Was there lots of driveways or vehicles turning off/on the road? If you had to travel over a bridge was there room to do so? If you biked at night when it was dark, were the roadways well lighted?

**b. If you used a trail...**

Consider...Was the trail intersected by roads so it was difficult to cross? Was the trail crowded? Did the trail have lots of sharp turns & dangerous down hills? Lots of steep hills? Was the trail was convenient—did it take you where you wanted to go?

\_\_\_\_\_ **2. How was the surface you road on?**

Consider...Potholes? Cracked & broken pavement? Debris on the road? (broken glass, sand, gravel, etc) Road was intersected by lots of bumpy or angled railroad tracks? Road surface was slippery when wet, Had to ride over drain grates



\_\_\_\_\_ **3. How were the intersections you rode through?**

Consider...Wait time to cross the intersection? Your ability to see traffic coming? Traffic signals that gave you plenty of time to cross?

\_\_\_\_\_ **4. Did the drivers behave well?**


Consider...How fast they drove, how close they came to you when passing, did they signal? Did they harass you or cut you off? Did they speed through red lights or go through stop signs?

\_\_\_\_\_ **5. Was it easy to ride your bike?**

Consider...Was there maps, signs or road markings to help you find your way? Was there a secure place to leave your bike once you got to your destination? Were you chased by any dogs?

\_\_\_\_\_ **6. What did you do to make your ride safe?**

I wore a bike helmet, I obeyed traffic signs & signals, I rode with traffic, I wore bright colors so I was visible

<b>How does your neighborhood rate?</b>	
<u><b>A Score of</b></u>	
26-30	Celebrate! You live in a bicycle friendly neighborhood!
21-25	Your community is pretty good, but has room to improve
16-20	Conditions for riding are OK but not great. There's plenty of opportunity for improvement.
11-15	Conditions are poor & you deserve better! Call your Council member or Town supervisor to talk about improving bikeability in your neighborhood!
<10	Oh dear!

***Now that you know...What can you do?***

- **No place to ride safely?**
  - Let Public Works Dept staff know about specific problems. Provide them with a copy of your checklist.
  - Encourage policymakers to adopt a plan to include a network of bike lanes on major roads
  - Ask the Public Works Dept to erect "Share the Road" signs at specific locations
  - Ask the State Dept of Transportation to include wide, paved shoulders on all rural highways
  
- **Surface difficult to ride on?**
  - Report problem areas to Public Works, your City Councilperson or your town supervisor
  - Organize a community effort to clean up the path

- Encourage Public Works when they replace drainage grates to replace them with bicycle friendly designs & to improve railroad crossings so cyclists can cross them at a 90 degree angle.
- Petition your state Dept. of Transportation to adopt a bicycle friendly rumble strip policy.
- **Intersections dangerous? Ask Public Works to...**
  - Look at the timing of specific traffic signals
  - Install loop-detectors that detect cyclists
  - Improve sightlines by cutting back vegetation that blocks cyclist's view of intersections or ask that parking be moved back from corners so it's easier to see.