Remote Bikeable Community Workshop
Planning Guide 2021

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Why host a Remote Bikeable Community Workshop?

Minnesota’s Bikeable Community Workshop program has been refined and effectively used since 2012. As we all know, the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way we live, work, and play. This includes how we support communities and offer our Bikeable Community Workshops statewide. Our team is excited to adapt the program while following Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines. While our team cannot predict pandemic status for 2021, we are planning to pilot remote workshops with community stakeholders using a variety of tools. We will work with each community interested in holding a workshop to plan remote discussions and action planning that best fits community needs. In future years, we look forward to returning to in person workshops.

Why 2021 is a time for action:

The past year has changed how communities view and value transportation. In safety adaptation, biking and walking replaced many vehicle trips for both commuting and leisure. As we rebuild systems, capturing this momentum will be crucial in re-establishing healthy and resilient communities. Capturing the bike boom to instigate biking improvements is a lucrative opportunity to build safe and healthy communities abating the future risks of pandemics and climate change.

Biking boomed across the state and country throughout 2020

- Traffic analytics firm INRIX reports nationwide vehicle traffic dropped as much as 30% in March 2020. In the same timeframe, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy found trail usage increased nearly 200% from the same week in 2019.
- Biking and walking numbers are up in Minnesota through 2020. The Star Tribune reports, “Statewide, those activities are up 72% since mid-March, based on information collected from MnDOT.”

Investment in biking builds individual and community resiliency to shocks like COVID-19

- Each kilometer cycled avoids 250 grams of CO₂ emissions. Individuals in areas with higher levels of air pollution experience a 15% increased risk of fatality from COVID-19 according to the World Resources Institute.
- Cycling improves cardiorespiratory health, prevents obesity and reduces the incidence of diabetes as represented by Dutch Cycling Vision. All of which are leading causes of severe COVID-19 cases.
- A Trek survey found that 85% of Americans perceive cycling as a safer mode of transportation while social distancing. If Americans must travel within 5 miles during COVID-19, 90% included biking in their top 3 modes of transportation.

The bike industry is growing quickly with continued room for financial gain

- Bike industry sales in April 2020 reached $1 billion for the first time, up 75% since last year according to The NPD Group
- A Trek survey 21% of Americans have been riding their bike more since the pandemic. This trend is likely to continue and accelerate with half of Americans planning to ride their bike more when the pandemic is over.

What this year could look like:

- Workshops will be held through two remote sessions held on back to back days, lasting two hours each
  - Day one will include conversation on the 6Es followed by action planning in day two
  - Attendees will participate in half an hour of bike basics and an separate bike audit
- We don’t expect each workshop to be the same. Potential topics include but are not limited to:
  - Bike parking
  - Bike Audits
  - Advisory or advocacy group
  - Engaging with public officials
  - Community bike education
  - Equity in biking and walking
- We will meet communities where they are, adapting to address current needs and restraints
- We intend to work with new and existing BCWs to improve their communities during, through and past the pandemic

Bikeable Community Workshop Planning Guide
Why host a Bikeable Community Workshop?
Simple steps to make bicycling convenient and safe can pay huge dividends in civic, community, and economic development—as well as overall quality of life. Given the opportunity to ride, residents enjoy dramatic health benefits, reduced congestion, increased property values, and more money in their pockets to spend in the local economy. When your community welcomes bicycling, tourism booms, local businesses attract the best and the brightest, governments realize savings, and the environment thrives.

Adapted from the Bicycle Friendly Community Resource Guide, Created by the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota

Biking=Community Health Benefits

Minnesota communities are in search of effective strategies to increase physical activity for their residents, workers, and visitors.

The Guide to Community Preventive Services ([www.thecommunityguide.org](http://www.thecommunityguide.org)) provides a list of effective population-based strategies to improve physical activity. Three of the strategies are categorized under the area of environmental and policy approaches, including:

- Creation of, or enhanced access to, places for physical activity combined with informational outreach activities.
- Street scale urban design and land use policies and practices
- Community-scale design and land use policies and practices

People want more places to bike!

Half of all trips are 3 miles or less—a reasonable bicycling distance

Minnesota adults support projects that encourage active transportation:

- 87% feel the way a community is built has a big effect on how much physical activity people get
- 72% feel there ought to be laws that require communities to build sidewalks and bike paths
- 80% or more of young adults would like to live in a place where they don’t need to depend on a car to get around

Community Economic Benefits

Working towards a more bicycle friendly community can create economic benefits in addition to improving health and transportation options.

According to the 2016 MnDOT study on the Economic Impact and Health Effects of Bicycling in Minnesota, in Minnesota alone...

- In 2015, bicycle event visitors supported $14.3 million of economic activity, including $4.6 million in labor income and 150 jobs
- The average bicycle event visitor spent $121.20 per day.
- Bicycle event visitors spent an estimated $8.5 million while attending events.

Increasing bicycling can also help to reduce costs associated with preventable diseases.

- Bicycle commuting prevents 12 to 61 deaths per year, saving $100 million to $500 million.

Assessing the Economic Impact and Health Benefits of Bicycling in Minnesota (2016). Minnesota Department of Transportation and University of Minnesota.
Workshop Key Players

Bikeable Community Workshop (BCW) Team: 
This is the team of professionals that will facilitate, present at, and assist with leading the community bike audit at the workshop held in your community.

Bikeable Community Workshop Coordinator
- Coordinates all workshops across the state.
- Main contact for the Bikeable Community Workshop Team
- Works closely with the Community Coordinator to plan a successful workshop

Biking Expert
- Staff member at the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota

Health Expert
- Staff member at the Minnesota Department of Health

Transportation Expert
- Staff member at the Minnesota Department of Transportation

Community Team:

Community Coordinator
- Main contact for the community and leader of the Community Planning Team
- Works closely with the BCW Coordinator to plan workshops logistics
- Responsible for workshop local logistics, organizing participant recruitment

Community Planning Team: Works to organize and plan the workshop and provides insights regarding your community to the BCW team.
- Typically 3-5 team members, including a local public health expert and a public planning expert
- Community experts will facilitate conversation and provide community context
- Assist Community Coordinator with workshop organization and logistics

Workshop Participants
- Community stakeholders who are present for the workshop

Participant Invitation List

Recommendations and regulations for attendance:
- The workshop team recommends a maximum of 16 participants at this time.
- We suggest inviting up to 20 guests, knowing there will be drop off in attendance.
- This number may be adjusted as we determine formatting and current MDH best practices.

Consider the following when determining who to invite to your Bikeable Community Workshop:
- Who is likely to be interested and invested in making the community more bikeable?
- Who can help identify equitable solutions?
- Who is needed to bring about any recommended changes in engineering, education, enforcement, encouragement, and/or the environment?
- Are participants representative of the local community?

Community members and stakeholders to consider:
- Community organizations and leaders
- City/Township/County staff
- School staff and groups
- Business organizations and leaders
- Elected and appointed officials
- Other workshop specific stakeholders
Workshop Planning Timeline & Checklist

Application Stage: Rolling Application open in January
- Complete workshop application questions and submit online: https://goo.gl/forms/kr5pt2g35Fk8Q0ns2
- Read through entire Bikeable Community Workshop Planning Guide and contact BCW Coordinator with any questions
- Gauge initial community support: Contact other key community leaders and stakeholders.
- Determine staffing capacity for a Community Planning Team. This team typically includes one public health community expert and one public planning community expert.

Initial Planning Stage: January – March
- Secure staff support for planning the workshop. Decide on Community Coordinator and Community Planning Team.
- Secure support from elected official. Request that they provide a welcome on the day of the workshop, and that they support the long-term goal of creating a more bicycle friendly community.
- Work with BCW Coordinator to determine a workshop date and activity format. Review Participant Invitation List on page 10 and create a list of community members to invite to the workshop.

Final Planning Stage: March – April
- Revise participant invitation letter and invite participants to workshop.
- Work with the Community Planning Team to review workshop agenda and slide presentation.
- Review RSVP list and contact community members who haven’t responded.

2 Weeks Before Workshop
- Confirm equipment and technology needs, and final inspection of biking destinations.
- Finalize slide presentation with BCW Coordinator.
- Participate in a conference call with BCW Coordinator, BikeMN, MDH, and MnDOT presenters, and community planning team.

Post-Workshop Actions

After the workshop, we want the momentum around creating a more bicycle friendly community to continue to grow. At each workshop, we will assist with the creation of an action plan, and work with you to come up with ideas for next steps that your community can take to begin working on your priority goals. Below is a summary of these steps:

Step 1: Summarize the Action Plan developed at the workshop.
- Set up a meeting for the group to discuss which items from the larger Action Plan will be prioritized over the next six months and twelve months.

Step 2: From the larger list of Action Plan items created at the workshop, decide which actions will be prioritized over the next six months and twelve.
- Determine who plans to take the lead on each item, and the steps that the group will take to towards these.
- Create a more detailed outline for each action item.

Sample outline:
- Project Idea
- List public partners: City, County, Schools
- List private partners: Non-profits and businesses
- Resources: materials, funds, etc.
- Specific short and long-term goals

Step 3: Determine steps to continue progress towards your goals
- Set up a regular meeting schedule with participants.
- Present the Action Plan to elected officials, key decision makers, and other community groups that have a stake in the community’s bike friendliness.
- Schedule meetings with staff in public agencies that have a role identified in the Action Plan. This may include city planning, public works, parks and recreation, and school transportation.
- Contact local media to cover follow-up stories
- Form a community bicycle advocacy group.
- Form a city bicycle advisory group.
- Set up regular meetings between city employees who are working on goals identified in the Action Plan.
- Integrate Action Plan recommendations into the community’s Comprehensive Plan
- Pursue funding to implement Action Plan recommendations.
- Form groups to conduct bike or walk audits
- Become a Bicycle Friendly Community
- Offer bicycle education courses to community members
- Organize encouragement activities in the community
Frequently Asked Questions

Will Bikeable Community Workshops enact COVID-19 safety measures?
We expect most workshops to be held completely virtually in groups or with independent online education. This will allow participants to participate in the safety of their own workspace. Potential in-person events will be evaluated and adapted following the current MDH and CDC Guidelines.

How will Remote Bikeable Community Workshops be different than workshops held in the past?
In order to allow for social distancing, we will not be able to organize in person activities. These aspects include the regular bike audit and group ride portions of the workshop. Remote workshops will be customized to meet communities where they are, adapting to address current needs and restraints. With this in mind, Remote Workshops will focus on specified actions as opposed to a broader workshop.

My community has hosted a Bikeable Community Workshop in the past. Can we apply again?
Yes! For the first time, we are encouraging former Bikeable Community Workshop participants to host a Step Two workshop.

My community has applied to host a workshop before and was not selected. Can we apply again?
Yes! Communities are eligible to continue applying.

Can I apply to have one workshop cover multiple communities in a region?
We typically hold workshops at the level of a specific city, town, township, or reservation. If you represent or work with multiple communities that you would like to host a workshop, please submit separate applications for each one. We no longer hold county-wide workshops.

What is the time commitment for the Community Coordinator?
The Community Coordinator should expect to spend a few hours each month between January and April recruiting participants, collecting background information, and collaborating with the BikeMN, MDH, and MnDOT team. We expect that the community coordinator and members of the planning team are available on the day before the workshop to assist with set up and have a meeting with the MDH, MnDOT, and BikeMN team to discuss community specifics. The Community Coordinator should be present for the entire workshop.

I have questions about the application or workshop. Who should I contact?
Contact Karl Hedlund, the Bikeable Community Workshop Coordinator: karl@bikemn.org or (612) 719 -1252
**Additional Materials**

**Nacto COVID-19 Response Toolkit** | COVID-19 response guidance and tools for emergency policies and projects | [https://nacto.org/program/covid19/](https://nacto.org/program/covid19/)

**Active Living Research—Community Audit Tools** | A variety of research-based tools for community audits | [http://activelivingresearch.org/research/toolsandmeasures](http://activelivingresearch.org/research/toolsandmeasures)

**Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota** | Provides resources for community education, from offering a traffic skills 101 course to hosting a bicycle rodeo, as well as bicycle safety information and upcoming bicycle related events. | [www.bikemn.org/education](http://www.bikemn.org/education)

**Bicycle Friendly Communities** | League of American Bicyclists | Learn how to become a Bicycle Friendly Community | [www.bikeleague.org/programs/bicyclefriendlyamerica](http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/bicyclefriendlyamerica)

**Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Resources** | Minnesota Department of Transportation | Bicycle Safety and Education | [https://www.dot.state.mn.us/sharetheroad/](https://www.dot.state.mn.us/sharetheroad/)

**Bike Parking Guide** | Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals | Provides guidance and recommendations for safe and adequate bicycle parking | [https://www.apbp.org/page/Publications](https://www.apbp.org/page/Publications)

**Center for Prevention** | Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota | Resources for learning how community design can impact residents’ physical activity | [https://www.centerforpreventionmn.com/what-we-do/our-focus-areas/physical-activity](https://www.centerforpreventionmn.com/what-we-do/our-focus-areas/physical-activity)


**Health Impact Assessments** | Design for Health | Health Impact Assessments identify and evaluate the effects of policies, plans, programs, and designs on health. | [http://designforhealth.net/hia/](http://designforhealth.net/hia/)

**Minnesota Green Step Cities** | Minnesota Pollution Control Agency | An action-oriented voluntary program offering a cost-effective, simple pathway to implementing sustainable best practices that focus on greenhouse gas reduction. | https://greenstep.pca.state.mn.us/

**National Association of City Transportation Officials** | An organization committed to raising the state of the practice for street design and transportation. | http://nacto.org


**The National Complete Streets Coalition** | An organization invested in making streets and roads safe for all users. | http://smartgrowthamerica.org/program/national-complete-streets-coalition/


**Safe Routes to School** | Minnesota Department of Transportation | Help build safe routes for kids to walk and bike to school…and get the exercise they need. | http://www.dot.state.mn.us/saferoutes/

**Trail Planning, Design, and Development Guidelines** | Minnesota Department of Natural Resources | Provides guidelines and common language for developing motorized and non-motorized trails at the local, county, regional, and state level. | https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/publications/trails_waterways/index.html

**Walk! Bike! Fun! Curriculum** | Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota | Walk! Bike! Fun! helps children ages five to thirteen learn traffic rules and regulations, the potential hazards to traveling, and handling skills needed to bike and walk effectively, appropriately and safely through their community. | http://www.bikemn.org/education/walk-bike-fun

**Working with Elected Officials to Promote Healthy Land Use Planning & Community Design** | National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), 1100 17th Street NW, Washington, DC, www.naccho.org (Fact Sheet)