

scarborough CYCLES

Building bike culture beyond downtown

Summary Report
April 2017



About

Scarborough Cycles is a collaborative project led by the Toronto Centre for Active Transportation (TCAT), a project of the registered charity Clean Air Partnership, in partnership with CultureLink Settlement and Community Services, the Toronto Cycling Think & Do Tank (at the University of Toronto), and Cycle Toronto.

In 2016, we opened community bike hubs at AccessPoint on Danforth (3079 Danforth Ave.) and Birchmount Bluffs Neighbourhood Centre (93 Birchmount Rd.).

Our Bike Hubs offer access to bicycles, tools, do-it-yourself repair clinics, workshops, group rides, a bike mentorship program for newcomers, and civic engagement opportunities for residents.



Goals

Create and disseminate new knowledge about cycling in Scarborough

Build capacity among local agencies and individuals to support cycling

Address barriers to cycling

Engage with residents and stakeholders about the benefits of improved cycling infrastructure



Cycling in Scarborough

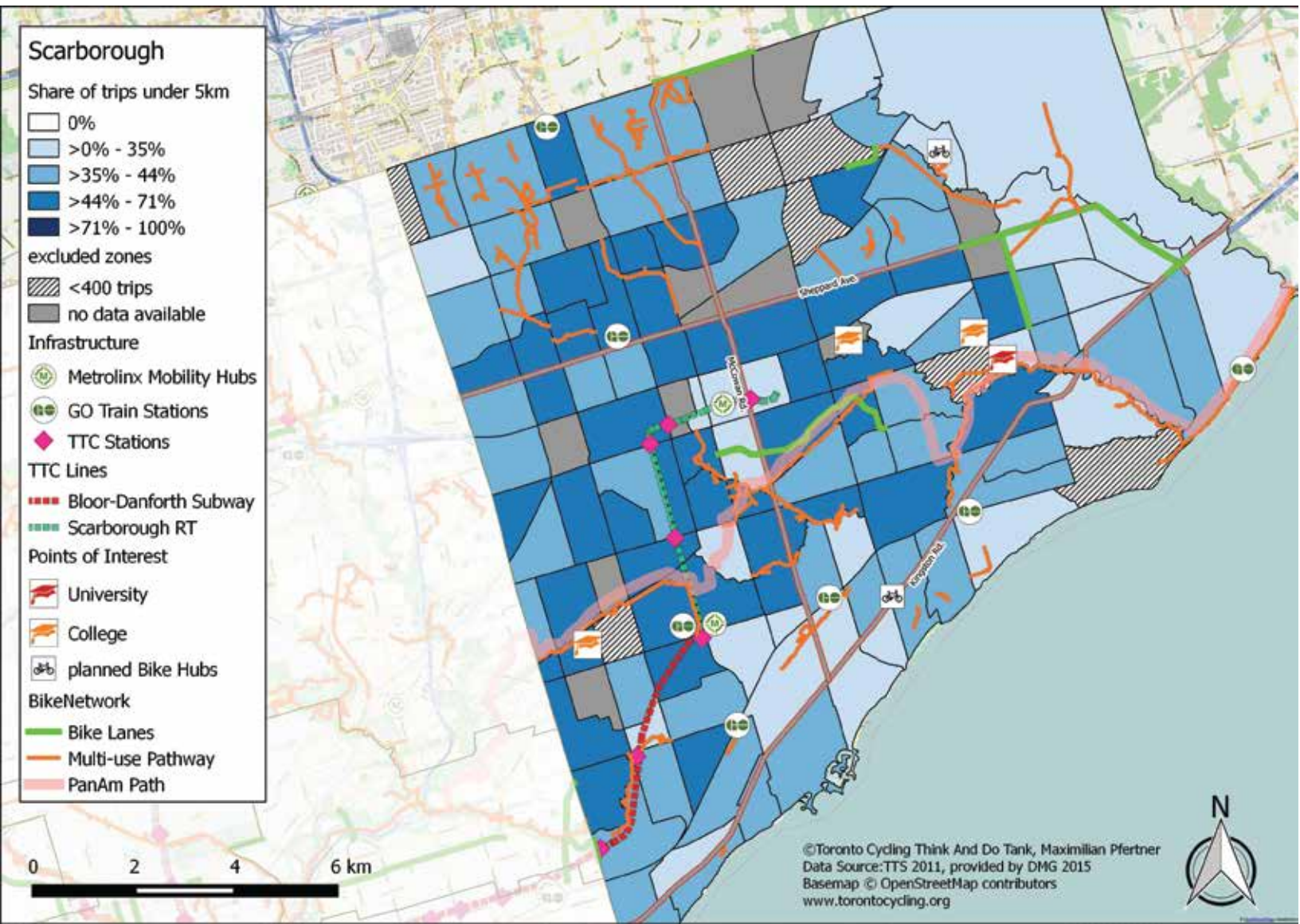
In Scarborough, about half a million trips taken each day are less than 5 km in length, a distance easily cycled in 20 minutes. Converting some of these trips from car to bike would have an immediate impact on both local congestion and air quality.

Commuting by bike can improve your health, is economical, and can save you time when making several local stops. Lessons learned in Scarborough would herald change in other parts of the City and could be applied to other suburban areas in Toronto and beyond.

Hub Partner and Site Selection

In 2015 we completed a comprehensive mapping project, which helped visualize several key cycling metrics in Scarborough in order to identify neighbourhoods most suited to cycling and thus the most advantageous locations for offering bike programming.

Factors that were mapped include: cycling modal share, cycle trip density, car ownership levels, cycling infrastructure, share of trips under 5 km, and density of trips under 5 km. The research also helped visualize some of the physical barriers that are faced by cyclists, which ultimately helped inform our search for potential hub partners.



Indicators of Success

Knowledge Creation and Dissemination

Conducted a travel survey collecting 226 responses from Scarborough residents.

Convened 4 focus groups with 33 total participants to gain insight into the barriers and challenges faced by residents that prevent them riding their bikes.

Project members published 6 blog posts on *Spacing* and close to 50 on TCAT's website.

Our project was featured in 30+ newsletters, including those from partners, other NGOs, and elected officials.

Project members participated in 11 media interviews for popular media.

TCAT's overall media reach for 2016 was 997,255 (Facebook reach, Twitter impressions, website sessions, newsletter subscribers).

Capacity Building

Several orientation events and group rides were offered to the public, staff, and volunteers.

Helped support the launch of two new bike clubs at West Hill Collegiate Institute and the Scarborough Academy of Technological Environmental and Computer Education (SATEC) @ W. A. Porter Collegiate Institute.

Addressing Barriers

Bike Host mentorship program in Scarborough included 55 participants and 22 mentors. At the end of the program, bicycle mode share among participants changed from 6% to 24%.

Delivered 7 hands-on bike maintenance workshops attended by 40+ participants.

Free bike tune-ups at 6 community events.

Civic Engagement

Collaborated with 28+ organizations and community groups.

Delivered 'Birchmount and Pharmacy Ride - what happened?' attended by 80-100 participants.

Delivered 6 Street Smarts Workshops attended by 114+ participants.

Earn Your Bike program launched.



Impacts and Highlights

550+ Visits

DIY Drop-In Bike Repair

29 Group Rides

430+ Participants

378+ Hours

Dedicated by Volunteers



Group ride participants said...

85% rated their experience as good or excellent

73% can more confidently participate in a group ride

61% can more confidently ride a bicycle safely on a street

Workshop participants said...

97% can more confidently understand and follow the rules of the road

95% would refer a friend or family member to the Bike Hub

89% rated their experience as good or excellent

Next Steps: Accelerating Scarborough Cycles

As bike hub agency partners, AccessPoint on Danforth and Birchmount Bluffs Neighbourhood Centre will further integrate their own programs, initiatives, and activities in order to support and attract cyclists in Scarborough.

Continue delivery of workshops, mentorship programs, and group rides.

Refine volunteer recruitment strategies and develop training program.

Host public engagement meetings for residents and community stakeholders to raise awareness and support for planned infrastructure for Scarborough.

Fine-tune program evaluation/analysis, and publish research and disseminate new knowledge about cycling in the suburbs via workshops, popular media, and academic journals.

Implement transition and sustainability plans for both hubs.



Project Partners



Launched in 2006, TCAT, a priority project of Clean Air Partnership (CAP), a charitable environmental organization, has a demonstrated history of building effective and strategic partnerships and working collaboratively with multiple stakeholders to advance active transportation both within and beyond Toronto.



CultureLink is dedicated to facilitating the independence and full participation of newcomers in Toronto's diverse community. CultureLink assists newcomers to find employment, to access education, to meet established residents, and to develop their social and professional networks while getting to know Toronto.



The Toronto Cycling Think & Do Tank (at the University of Toronto) is a multidisciplinary, multi-sector research group that specializes in identifying and reducing the barriers to cycling as well as identifying and increasing facilitators of cycling.



Cycle Toronto is a member-supported not-for-profit organization that advocates for a healthy, safe, and vibrant cycling city for all. They run campaigns for protected bike lanes on Bloor, Danforth, and Yonge St., and encouragement programs like Bike Month across the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area.

Bike Hub Partners



AccessPoint on Danforth is a multi-service Community Hub that was conceived from the United Way Toronto's neighbourhood development strategy. Their interdisciplinary team offers services in an inclusive environment where everyone is welcomed without prejudice.



Birchmount Bluffs Neighbourhood Centre is a charitable, multi-service neighbourhood centre that offers a broad range of recreational, social and capacity-building programs to the southwest Scarborough community. Their inclusive approach involves the full participation of community members to build a more equitable, caring neighbourhood.



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Birchmount Bluffs Neighbourhood Centre
93 Birchmount Rd.
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METCALF FOUNDATION

The goal of the Metcalf Foundation Cycle City program is to help build a constituency and a culture that support cycling in Toronto. Cycle City funding supports community outreach efforts, network building and convening, research and public policy analysis, and broadening access to and convenience of cycling opportunities across the city.

Scarborough Cycles acknowledges the generous support of the Metcalf Foundation, as well as all the hard work and dedication of our volunteers, community partners, and members of the Steering, Research, and Partner Committees.

Report and photographs by Marvin Macaraig, Scarborough Cycles Project Coordinator.