

# SCHOOL MOBILITY PLAN

Collaboration between the municipality and the school in Kalmar, Sweden





Gathering good examples

in sustainable mobility and

safe transport to and from schools



ENERGIKONTOR SYD







# **School Mobility Plan**

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#### About this example

A school mobility plan is a way of working with both safety and promoting sustainable modes of transport to and from schools. It is a process that helps to assess real needs by understanding the current mobility mix, traffic safety analysis, and, if needed working with specific barriers to sustainable modes of transport. This example shows how the process is structured in the municipality of Kalmar in Sweden.

#### **Context and Challenge**

After the success of the work with the school mobility challenge "På egna ben" (On your own legs), the municipality felt the need to have a more targeted and clearer focus for leveraging the mobility work in schools.

After background work on how other municipalities work with the issue, Kalmar municipality adapted and created its own mobility planning process.

In the case of Rocknebyskolan, the context was an increase in the school capacity. That led to increased traffic volume, including commuting staff, food deliveries, school buses and parents driving; which led to mobility challenges.



## **General Process**

In the municipality of Kalmar, the School Mobility Planning Tool is a process that is part of a larger sustainability package that is funded internally by the Environmental and Water Department. The tool has been created as a protocol and procedure to support schools that contact the municipality with safety and parking concerns. The procedure provides a way to design solutions that include sustainability and health issues, and it starts when a school contacts the municipality.

The management of Rocknebyskolan initially contacted the mobility unit at Kalmar Municipality for help with the traffic situation. In September 2021, a meeting was held with representatives from both the school and the mobility unit, where it was decided to develop a School Mobility Plan.

The working group (mobility committee) was formed in the autumn of 2021 and had its first meeting in November. The working group consists of the school management, teachers, parents/guardians, students, and representatives from the Urban Planning Department. It is important that all affected groups were represented in the working group and that both the school management and the municipality stand behind the work in order to achieve a long-term result.

The first step was to understand the current reality and set a baseline. For that purpose, a survey was sent to students and parents about commuting choices, including transport choices, commuting distances, duration etc, .

In addition, the general transport environment was also assessed. Infrastructure features such as cycle and walk paths, bike parking, and bus stops, crossings were evaluated. Measurements of car speed, volume and flow around the school were also recorded.

The next step was to develop the potential interventions and make a plan. In this case, the municipal workers in the urban planning department (samhällsbygganden) designed the solutions. These solutions were discussed, refined, and validated within the school mobility committee.

The implementation is organic; as the process is internally funded and the municipal department has a mandate to work with mobility issues and related infrastructure. Thus, the changes are based on resource management.

A follow-up was carried out after one year, and the aim was for the school to take ownership of the process so that they could adjust their communication strategies as needed.

## **Results and Benefits**



Photo: Signage by Jan Rusek

#### Identified key challenges

Parents' negative perceptions of safety conditions prevented active mobility. Due to the large number of cars; over speeding areas, and chaotic drop-offs because of the school expansion. Some intersections were dangerous. The lack of assigned parking for staff and flow also contributed to the convoluted rush hours.

#### Better and safer drop off

Road design improvements such as dedicated drop-off zones, speed limit signs, and infrastructural changes, as well as active, clear and ongoing communication, improved traffic flow, safety, and reduced stress during drop-off times.



Photo: Street marking by Jan Rusek

### Increased sustainable modes of transportation

Increase in sustainable modes of transport (indicated by subsequent choice of transport).

Impact of the mobility challenge (whole Kalmar, including Rocknebyskolan). 150 classes and 3355 students involved; 20 tonnes of co2 saved.

# Lessons Learned

Ownership from School is a key for success and continuity	The drive from schools is essential. For example, schools carry out ongoing communication with the new students and parents that makes the process successful and the results long lasting.
The interest in active mobility from the kids is already there	The baseline report showed that there was a mismatch between the students' current mode of transport (car) and their desired mode of mobility (cycling with friends) by pupils. This helped to engage parents and create the right conditions for change.
Go one layer deeper evaluating safety perception	There may be a discrepancy between the perception of safety and the accuracy of the attributed causes; the key work is to find what is causing this perception rather than arguing that the cause doesn't match.
Mandate and budget for discretionary use of funds	The municipal department has a mandate and a general discretionary budget to do improvements/maintenance. This makes it easier to decide and implement changes as their work with any given school.
Leverage change on student involvement	When students feels involved in the work and has a sense of shared responsibility, there is a greater chance that the proposed measures will be implemented.

# Key Steps (Check list)

- Define the process and select supporting materials (material for baseline analysis, etc)
- □ Invite and build buy-in from the school leadership
- □ Create a School Mobility Committee
- □ Create a current reality report:
  - Map current modes of mobility
  - Clarify challenges related to commuting to and from school
  - o Identify obstacles to increasing the sustainable travel choices

Link the school to community development through working groups at both ends (where possible)

- □ Create a School Mobility Plan
- Examples of potential physical and behavioral change solutions:
  - Appropriate signage and pathways
  - Increase safety at key road crossings
  - o Awareness raising campaigns; development of information materials
  - o Competitions and challenges (from one week to a several months)

□ Implement the School Mobility Plan

□ Monitor the implementation and update as needed