



2014-2015 Report from the

Advisory Committee on Non-Motorized Transportation

April 2016



Prepared by

Minnesota Department of Transportation
395 John Ireland Boulevard
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155-1899

Phone: 651-296-3000
Toll-Free: 1-800-657-3774
TTY, Voice or ASCII: 1-800-627-3529

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Legislative Request

This report is issued to comply with [Minn. Stat. Sec. 174.37, subd. 4](#).

174.37 Advisory Committee on Nonmotorized Transportation.

Subdivision 1. Purpose. (a) The commissioner of transportation shall establish an advisory committee on nonmotorized transportation. The committee shall make recommendations to the commissioner on items related to nonmotorized transportation, including safety, education, and development programs. The committee shall review and analyze issues and needs relating to operating nonmotorized transportation on public rights-of-way, and identify solutions and goals for addressing identified issues and needs.

(b) For purposes of this section, "nonmotorized transportation" includes bicycling, pedestrian activities, and other forms of nonmotorized transportation.

Subd. 2. Members. The advisory committee must consist of the following members:

(a) The commissioner of transportation shall appoint up to 18 public members, as follows: one member from each of the department's seven greater Minnesota districts; four members from the department's metropolitan district; and no more than seven members at large. Each of the members at large must represent nonmotorized interests or organizations.

(b) The commissioners of each of the following state agencies shall appoint an employee of the agency to serve as a member: administration, education, health, natural resources, public safety, transportation, and pollution control. The chair of the Metropolitan Council shall appoint an employee of the council to serve as a member. The director of Explore Minnesota Tourism shall appoint an employee of the agency to serve as a member. The division administrator of the Federal Highway Administration may appoint an employee of the agency to serve as a member.

(c) Members of the committee shall serve four-year terms.

Subd. 3. Meetings. The commissioner of transportation's designee shall convene the first meeting by January 15, 2009. The committee shall elect a chair from its membership, and shall establish a meeting schedule and meet at least annually.

Subd. 4. Reports. The committee shall issue an annual report to the commissioner of transportation.

Subd. 5. Expenses. Members of the advisory committee serve without compensation, but members who are not employees of government agencies must be reimbursed for expenses in the same manner and amount as authorized by the commissioner's plan adopted under section [43A.18, subdivision 2](#). The commissioner of transportation shall provide department staff support to the committee.

Subd. 6. Expiration. The committee expires June 30, 2018.

The cost of preparing this report is under \$5,000.

Activities of the Committee in 2014-2015

Committee Vision

Individually and collectively we will strengthen and encourage community support for non-motorized transportation throughout the state. We will do so through continuous and active participation with government agencies, and allied organizations through education, public affairs campaigns and political initiatives.

Meetings

As set forth in the bylaws, four meetings occurred between July 2014 and June 2015.

- Oct. 9, 2014 – MnDOT Central Office, St. Paul
- Nov. 13, 2014 – MnDOT Central Office, St. Paul
- Jan. 8, 2015 – MnDOT Central Office, St. Paul
- April 9, 2015 – MnDOT Central Office, St. Paul

The Advisory Committee on Non-Motorized Transportation shifted leadership responsibilities in October 2014 because Danny McCullough stepped down as chair. The vice-chair, Jason Artley, was nominated and approved to become chair. The executive committee now includes two additional members – Tom Engstrom and Paul Frenz. Danny McCullough is serving as ex-officio.

The regular committee meetings featured presentations by invited speakers on timely, non-motorized projects, including Bicycle Law Advisory Task Force and Pedestrian System Plan. Additionally, the following stakeholder groups provided updates:

- Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota
- Pedal Minnesota
- Minnesota Bicycle System Plan
- Safe Routes to School
- League of American Bicyclists, Bicycle Friendly Communities
- Minnesota State Parks and Trails System Plan
- Winter Fat Biking Pilot Project

Accomplishments

The committee worked with many state agencies and organizations during the past year to increase the incorporation of non-motorized transportation modes into the transportation network throughout Minnesota.

Minnesota Statewide Pedestrian System Plan

In 2014, MnDOT, in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Health, announced and initiated the development of the first statewide Pedestrian System Plan. This background document, [*Minnesota Walks: Current & Future Steps Towards a Walkable Minnesota*](#), served as the launch pad for development of the Statewide Pedestrian System Plan. The *Minnesota Walks* document has a full assessment of pedestrian needs and context sensitive solutions for communities and was completed in April 2015. *Minnesota Walks* addresses:

1. Importance of walking
2. Why walking should be easier
3. How walking is harder for some people than others
4. How Minnesota is on track to improve walking

The pedestrian plan is unique because it addresses the transportation and health components of a successful pedestrian environment and examines opportunities for promoting walking through collaborations and partnerships throughout the state.

From July 2014 – June 2015, the MnDOT and MDH partnership for the pedestrian plan accomplished a number of successful projects and initiatives, including:

- Gathered information about walking needs and challenges from partners internal to MnDOT and MDH that affect pedestrian-related projects, programs or policies Completed *Minnesota Walks: Current & Future Steps Towards a Walkable Minnesota*
- Contracted with a community engagement consultant to develop plan outreach

Partner Engagement

MnDOT and MDH gathered input from partners about walking to better understand the needs, opportunities and challenges around walking. The MnDOT and MDH team had conversations with regional development commission planners, the metropolitan planning organization planners, local public health practitioners, and MnDOT's project management group. *Minnesota Walks* provided the foundation for external partners to shape what community engagement looked like and where efforts should be focused. For example, *Minnesota Walks* identified priority populations that are more likely to have challenges with walking, and external partners identified relationships or opportunities for the project team to engage and learn more from priority populations.

Minnesota Walks: Current & Future Steps Towards a Walkable Minnesota

In April 2015, *Minnesota Walks: Current & Future Steps Towards a Walkable Minnesota* was completed and provided an assessment of Minnesota's current walking environment. The following themes emerged:

- **Walking is Important.** Walking is essential for transportation, good for health and good for business.
- **Walking Should be Easier.** Numerous factors within the physical, social and cultural environments affect how easy or challenging walking is.
- **It is Harder for some People to Walk.** Not everyone has equal access to safe places to walk. The priority populations identified include American Indian, children and youth, low-income urban populations, older adults, persons with disabilities and small rural communities.
- **Minnesota is on Track to Improve Walking.** Currently, there are efforts to improve walking, including the Minnesota GO vision, Complete Streets, Safe Routes to Schools, and partnerships that better leverage resources, such as MnDOT working with MDH more closely.

Community Engagement for the Pedestrian Plan

In spring 2015 MnDOT and MDH hired a consultant to assist with community engagement efforts to develop the Statewide Pedestrian System Plan. An external project advisory committee, or PAC, was formed with a diverse set of partners to help guide engagement efforts. The PAC and consultant created a community engagement plan using a range of strategies – from partners attending community gatherings, key informant interviews, focus groups, online surveys, and walkable community workshops with practitioners. The engagement plan was implemented in late-summer 2015.

The next steps for the pedestrian plan include finalizing the community engagement results in winter 2016 and then developing the Statewide Pedestrian System Plan. The plan will contain recommendations for policies, projects, programs and processes at the state, regional and local levels, while also clarifying partner roles and responsibilities.

Minnesota Bicycle and Pedestrian Counting Initiative

The Minnesota Bicycle and Pedestrian Counting Initiative continues to develop consistent methods for monitoring non-motorized traffic across the state. Researchers developed guidelines for conducting automated counts with both portable and permanent equipment using state and national examples, which will be similar to traffic volume data for easier integration with MnDOT's vehicle count database program.

To get more complete data, MnDOT purchased 22 permanent automated bicycling and/or pedestrian counters for trails, roads or sidewalks. Five were installed in 2014 and four more in 2015 with the rest to be installed in 2016. The plan is for each MnDOT district to have two permanent counters serving as index count sites throughout the state. In addition, MnDOT has 20 portable units to use in the district offices throughout the state and to share with partners and stakeholders. In 2015, MnDOT wrote a manual and provided training for stakeholders to learn the best ways to

collect bicycle and pedestrian data. In 2016, it is expected that partner agreements will be in place to effectively and efficiently implement use of the portable equipment.

MnDOT Statewide Bicycle System Plan

The MnDOT Statewide Bicycle System Plan builds off the findings and momentum within the Minnesota Statewide Bicycle Planning Study, completed in spring 2013. The MnDOT Statewide Bicycle System Plan will:

- Develop district-specific bicycle system plans
- Provide over-arching policy guidance and implementation tools to MnDOT districts
- Provide guidance on how and where to prioritize investments on the state highway network
- Develop district and state maps of existing bicycle conditions, network gaps and barriers

There was a second round of community outreach in winter 2014 to share initial findings and recommendations. After this outreach, the plan was refined in the spring and summer 2015. The draft Statewide Bicycle System Plan went out for public comment in the fall 2015 and will be final in the spring 2016.

Pedal Minnesota Conference: Building the Bike Friendly State

In May 2015, the Pedal Minnesota partnership held its third statewide conference to recognize bicycling. Minnesota offers many options for every kind of cyclist with more than 4,000 miles of paved trails, many biking routes, several opportunities for mountain biking and one of the nation's largest bike-share programs. Hosted in Minneapolis, currently the third most bike-friendly city in the country, the PedalMN Bike Conference offered firsthand experience on how Minnesota communities create partnerships, connect trails and start business ventures. Participants at the PedalMN Bike Conference learned how community leaders, business owners and advocates are getting more people on bikes more often in Minnesota.

The planning partners for this conference included the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota, Explore Minnesota Tourism, Minnesota Department of Health, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Minnesota Department of Transportation, Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota, and the National Park Service. The conference was planned in cooperation with the University of Minnesota and city of Minneapolis.

Walk! Bike! Fun! Curriculum Training

Walk! Bike! Fun! Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Curriculum is a two-part curriculum designed specifically for Minnesota's schools. It is structured to meet Minnesota education standards and is an important part of the [Safe Routes to School Program in Minnesota](#). Walk! Bike! Fun! helps children ages 5 to 13 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.

The Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota designed the *Walk! Bike! Fun!* curriculum to teach safe pedestrian and bicycle behavior through classroom activities and hands-on practice. Throughout 2014–2015 11 trainings were held with over 150 educators participating in the curriculum training. Additionally, over 4,000 youth were reached through *Walk! Bike! Fun!* community activities and technical assistance. It is expected that more than 15,000 students were taught *Walk! Bike! Fun!* as a result of the trainings and technical assistance that occurred in 2015.

Additional Ongoing Initiatives

- Update the Minnesota State Bicycle Map
- Work to move forward Bicycle Statutes Review Task Force Recommendations
- Complete the Bicycle Friendly State application
- Finish the Economic Impact Study of Bicycling
- Update the Bicycle Design Manual

Recommendations

The committee asks MnDOT to provide consistent statewide policies to increase walking and bicycling opportunities within the state, provide funding for facilities, and offer safety guidance and solutions to reduce pedestrian and bicycling fatalities and injuries. The committee has enjoyed a good working relationship with MnDOT and looks forward to furthering Minnesota's transportation goals and objectives.

Appendix A: Members

The committee is comprised of citizen representatives from across the state, representatives from state and regional governmental agencies, and representatives from user and advocacy groups. MnDOT staffs the committee.

The members bring a diverse set of skills and personal knowledge to the committee. They offer new perspectives to the agency, whether through knowledge of the private sector, efficiencies, regional differences in mobility needs or innovative technologies. Above all, the members inject an element of reason and practicality into decision making.

Members:

| | |
|---------------------------------|------------------|
| MnDOT District 1 | Larry Killien |
| MnDOT District 2 | Andy Mueller |
| MnDOT District 3 | Jenny Smith |
| MnDOT District 4 | Jason Artley |
| MnDOT District 6 | Pete Connor |
| MnDOT District 7 | Tom Engstrom |
| MnDOT District 8 | Steve Brisendine |
| MnDOT Metro District | Dan Breva |
| MnDOT Metro District | Benita Warns |
| MnDOT Metro District | Vacant |
| MnDOT Metro District | Emma Pachuta |
| Law Enforcement | Danny McCullough |
| Bicycling Club | Paul Frenz |
| Higher Education | Steve Sanders |
| Metropolitan Planning | Muhammad Khan |
| State Advocacy Organization | CJ Lindor |
| Industry | Vacant |
| Department of Administration | Anne Johnson |
| Pollution Control Agency | Vacant |
| Department of Natural Resources | Andrew Korsberg |
| Explore Minnesota Tourism | Cathy Carlson |
| Metropolitan Council | Steve Elmer |
| Department of Health | Amber Dallman |
| Department of Education | Julie Belisle |
| Department of Public Safety | Terri Pieper |
| Department of Transportation | Mark Vizecky |
| Federal Highway Administration | Tim Anderson |