

# **Advisory Committee on Non-Motorized Transportation: Fiscal Year Report**

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June 2017

Prepared by

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# Legislative Request

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

## 174.37 Advisory Committee on Non-Motorized 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 2015-2016

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The Advisory Committee on Non-Motorized Transportation vision statement is:

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

During the 2016 fiscal year, while the authorizing statute was under review and there were staff capacity limitations within the Transit Office, the Advisory Committee on Non-Motorized Transportation did not meet. In March 2016, invitations were sent to partner organizations and citizen representatives to appoint individuals to the State Non-Motorized Transportation Advisory Committee.

The first State Non-Motorized Transportation Advisory Committee meeting was held in May 2016.

- May 5, 2016 – MnDOT Central Office

Past committee meetings featured speakers discussing timely, non-motorized projects including presentations from the Bicycle Law Advisory Task Force and on the Pedestrian System Plan. Additionally, there were updates from the following stakeholder groups:

- 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

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

## Minnesota Walks

Minnesota Walks was developed in collaboration with the Minnesota Department of Health. It is a document that guides the planning, decision-making and collaboration of agencies across the state. This document will provide insight into the needs and challenges of pedestrian access and how to better address those needs.

A project advisory committee that consisted of 25 stakeholder members representing groups and interests throughout the state provided input and guidance for pedestrian improvements. In addition, from July to December 2015, MnDOT and MDH undertook an extensive community engagement process to gather input on walking in communities across the state. Over the course of six months, the project team and its partners engaged with more than 6,000 people across Minnesota. The document went out for review during the summer of 2016.

The next steps include reviewing the feedback on the Minnesota Walks plan and implementing short-term strategies identified in the document. A state specific plan is also in development.

## MnDOT Statewide Bicycle System Plan

In the fall of 2015, the Statewide Bicycle System Plan draft was released for public comment. A summary of the public comments can be found within the [Bicycle System Plan](#). Public comments and Project Advisory Committee feedback supported revisions to the draft plan. The comments and revisions were completed during the summer of 2016 and finalized in August 2016.

## U.S. Bicycle Route 41

During the development of the Statewide Bicycle System Plan, MnDOT learned there was a desire to create key bicycle routes across Minnesota. One of those routes connects the Twin Cities to Duluth and Lake Superior and was identified as US Bicycle Route 41. In 2016, MnDOT gathered public input to plan the route. Open houses and online opportunities were held so the public could identify and rank route-selection criteria, comment on the draft and propose a route name. More on U.S. Bicycle Route 41, also known as the North Star Route, can be found at the [U.S. Bicycle Route 41 website](#).

## Safe Routes to School

Over the fiscal year, the Safe Routes to School program was successful in reaching out to organizations to improve walking and bicycling within schools and communities for children. Here are a list of accomplishments for the past year:

- Planned and executed the Walk to School Day and Bike to School Day Events and held the first BTSD poster contest.

- Held planning solicitations and funding workshops for more than 80 schools in Minnesota.
- Advanced the Walk!Bike!Fun! pedestrian and bicycle safety curriculum, Train the Trainer in 10 communities, with 153 participants, reaching out to an estimated 14,831 students.
- Awarded bike fleets and trailers in four communities: Northwest RDC, St. Paul Public Schools, Wilmar Community Education and Recreation and St. Cloud Public Schools.
- Funded 12 SRTS infrastructure projects (\$2.9 million) via Transportation Alternatives Program and MnDOT funds.
- Launched the SRTS Academy, a customized training available to Minnesota communities seeking to build capacity to advance SRTS.
- Pushed out the monthly SRTS enews that replaces the printed newsletter which increased readership by 32 percent (from 1,151 to 1,525 subscribers).
- Advanced equity in SRTS through the retooling of application points and by funding the Minneapolis Public School's strategic plan revamp.
- Evaluated the barriers of funded SRTS plans throughout the state, providing a framework for further supporting communities in planning and implementation efforts.
- Collaborated with state level partners and supported efforts of the SRTS state network to educate and inform attendees on various aspects of SRTS planning, funding, policy and implementation.
- Coordinated efforts of the State SRTS Steering committee to organize around the stated goals of the [SRTS Strategic plan](#) to develop working groups for each strategy to ensure advancement of the plan.

## Minnesota Bicycle and Pedestrian Counting Initiative

The Minnesota Bicycle and Pedestrian Counting Initiative is a program managed by MnDOT and supported by several state and local partners. In 2016, counters were installed at 10 new sites bringing the statewide number of permanent sites to 20 on varying facility types. Several more will be installed in 2017. Using the continuous counts these provide, MnDOT is beginning to identify metrics, factors and trends that will be used to expand shorter duration counts collected with the portable equipment. This non-motorized data will be in a format similar to motor vehicle traffic data for easier integration with MnDOT's vehicle count database program in late 2017 or early 2018.

In addition to the permanent counting sites, MnDOT also has 16 portable counters (two in each MnDOT district) that partners and stakeholders can borrow and use to count and collect their own data. Portable counters were distributed during the 2016 summer.

The final research will be completed in 2017 and will document the methodologies and outcomes of the research. The updated manual detailing the best ways to collect bicycle and pedestrian data can be found on [MnDOT's website](#).

# Economic Impact and Health Benefits of Bicycling in Minnesota

## Study objectives

The 20-year Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan described bicycling as an integral part of Minnesota's transportation system. The Minnesota Department of Transportation contracted with a research team from the University of Minnesota to complete a study designed to better understand the economic impact and health benefits of bicycling in the state. The project started in August 2014 and continued into 2016.

## Additional Ongoing Initiatives

- Finalizing the 2017 Statewide Bicycle Maps
- Updating the Bicycle Design Manual
- Improving the tracking of bicycle investments
- Making recommendations

The committee asks MnDOT to provide consistent statewide policies to increase walking and bicycling opportunities within the state, provide funding of facilities and offer safety guidance and solutions to reduce pedestrian and bicycling fatalities and injuries.

# Appendix A: Members

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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. The committee is staffed by MnDOT.

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

## Members:

|                                 |                  |
|---------------------------------|------------------|
| MnDOT District 1                | Vacant           |
| MnDOT District 2                | Daniel Hannig    |
| MnDOT District 3                | Vacant           |
| MnDOT District 4                | Jason Artley     |
| MnDOT District 6                | Pete Connor      |
| MnDOT District 7                | Vacant           |
| MnDOT District 8                | Steve Brisendine |
| MnDOT Metro District            | Ann Rexine       |
| MnDOT Metro District            | Tony Drollinger  |
| MnDOT Metro District            | Clark Biegler    |
| MnDOT Metro District            | Kelley Yemen     |
| Law Enforcement                 | Cameron Hintzen  |
| Bicycling Club                  | Alexis Pennie    |
| Higher Education                | Ingrid Schneider |
| 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       | Brian Fanelli    |
| Metropolitan Council            | Steve Elmer      |
| Department of Health            | Ellen Pillsbury  |
| Department of Education         | Julie Belisle    |
| Department of Public Safety     | Terri Pieper     |
| Department of Transportation    | Mark Vizecky     |
| Federal Highway Administration  | Tim Anderson     |