



Annual Newsletter

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A Message from the State Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator

Tim Mitchell, Mn/DOT

Reflecting back on the year 2010 brings to light so much in the world of biking and walking here in Minnesota. We have seen some truly positive events materialize that highlight the hard work and dedication of this committee as well as that of our partners across the state. Some highlights include:

- Passage of the statewide Complete Streets Law, followed by a number of local Complete Streets policies and ordinances at the community level,
- Minneapolis being named the #1 Bicycling City in the country by Bicycling Magazine,
- Minnesota moving up the ranks to the fourth most bicycle friendly state in the nation,
- Launch of the Nice Ride bicycle share program in Minneapolis, which is the largest in the country,
- A significant increase in effort at all levels of government to provide quality, accessible pedestrian facilities for Minnesotans of all ages and abilities,
- The Department of Health's implementation of the Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP),
- Continued success with the Blue Cross Blue Shield's Active Living communities,
- Strategic planning efforts related to trails, carried out by the Department of Natural Resources, in response to the Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Amendment passage,
- A dramatic increase statewide in the number of League of American Bicyclists League Certified Instructors (LCIs), directly related to the efforts of the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota with support from Minneapolis' Bike/Walk Ambassadors,
- And many, many more

These developments and future initiatives put Minnesota in a great position to be even more successful as a leader in non-motorized transportation. I hope you share great pride in being part of such a successful partnership and collaboration that has elevated Minnesota and so many of its communities to the top of the class. That being said, we still have many challenges ahead and much more to do together. Let's extend our commitment to our common interests, and to each other, and use this momentum to continue moving forward toward fulfilling our collective vision for walking and bicycling in our great state.

And, as always, please stay safe out there.



A Message from the Chair

Susan Koschak, District 1 Citizen Rep and Committee Chair

Back in 1970, Irina Dunn, a distinguished Australian educator, journalist and politician, coined the phrase “A woman needs a man like a fish needs a bicycle.” Being a product of the 70’s, it is a familiar phrase to me. Back then I could find some connection to the phrase both as an advocate for positive change for women and as a person who bicycled and walked as my primary form of transportation.

Arguably, a fish does not need a bicycle and I’ll leave the question of whether a woman needs a man to other venues. What I do know is that both women and men need to get from place to place and a bicycle is one excellent way to do just that. Walking or ‘rolling’ (wheel chairs, strollers, walkers) are others.

When many of us became members of this committee, it was the State Bicycle Advisory Committee. At the time bicycle advocacy and promoting cycling as transportation was our sole focus. We continue to embrace cycling and all forms of non-motorized transportation and will work to include broad representation among our members.

As we’ve expanded to include all forms of non-motorized transportation, a significant effort of the past year has been to include all users in our discussions and recommendations to Mn/DOT. In fact, one of our focus areas is “All Users” and a sub-committee works to achieve the related strategic goals.

At our last few annual planning meetings we’ve made an intentional effort to focus on a few specific areas and set measurable goals to achieve. A key to making this possible was to work closely with and guided by the leadership and staff members of the Mn/DOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Section. Using a carefully structured process, we discussed ideas that would align with the priorities of MNDOT and selected goals and strategies that are both inspiring and realistic.

Our three themes, and their corresponding sub-committees, include:

- Maps and Wayshowing
- All Users
- Safety and Education

Subcommittees meet by conference call and/or in person at least once each month. At our regular full committee meetings we hear updates on progress and celebrate success. Look for details on the Advisory Committee website page. You will also find a list of representatives, including citizen representatives for each MNDOT District. This is also the place to watch for openings on the committee. All regular meetings are open and visitors are welcome.

To supplement and support the work of the committee and to build the knowledge and skills of the members, we frequently include education and training as a part of our meeting agenda. In the past year topics have included roundabouts, wayshowing, walkability audits, accessibility in transportation,

bus driver training, trail use and safety, health impacts, crash data and rumble strips. It is definitely a group that is eager to learn and apply new knowledge to its work.

As we launch into 2011, I am encouraged and inspired by the energy and accomplishments of this committee. It is a privilege to work with each of the representatives as well as the members of the Mm/DOT staff. I hope you agree that our work is bringing us closer to the vision of the committee *to strengthen and support non-motorized transportation throughout the state.*

I often tell the story of learning to ride a bicycle at age 5 in the small Minnesota town I grew up in. My dad called me over, wrench in hand, and removed the training wheels that I always hated. "Let's take those darn things off," is what I remember him saying. With his help, I was soon balancing on my 'two wheeler' and experiencing new found freedom. Looking back, it was his help and encouragement that set me on my way. A girl does sometimes need a man.

I've lived in Minnesota almost my whole life and ridden bicycle and walked in all parts of the state. Today my favorite cycling partner is my husband. Bicycles and men both have a place in my life and I am pleased to be a part of the advocacy community working toward positive and long-lasting change. Ms. Dunn and the fish can speak for themselves.

Member Profile: Tom Engstrom **Susan Kochaak, District 1 Citizen Representative**

Tom Engstrom is the District 7 Citizen Representative on our committee. He is also the president of the Mankato area Bike and Walk Advocates group which works to make both Minnesota and Mankato a healthier and more attractive place to live.

As part of his advocacy efforts, Tom has worked with some hotels in the Mankato area to put together "come bicycling" packages for out of town visitors. With more and more paved trails being linked, Tom says it's time to promote Mankato as a viable and attractive cycling destination.

Tom also works to educate cyclists of all ages to be safe as they use the paths and roads. A more knowledgeable and skilled advocate would be hard to find.

We caught up with Tom to ask him a few questions and here's what we learned:

What is your name?

Tom Engstrom

What do you like to be called when you are transporting yourself without a motor? (You know, the Cool Cyclist name!)



Smooth Operator (Sade's song describes a Smooth Operator. When all is going well and you're cruising down the road, that's what it feels like)

Describe yourself as a Pedestrian and/or a Cyclist.

I am both depending on the circumstance. Both allow you to take in your surroundings while moving which I like.

What are some of the things you most appreciate about Minnesota's transportation facilities and accommodation for pedestrians and cyclists?

That there is a political will in Minnesota to give people a transportation choice.

Tell us a few of your wild ideas that would make Minnesota even better for non-motorized transportation.

1. All engineers and urban planners should be required to take Traffic Skills 101 (a basic cycling skills class provided by the League of American Cyclists) before designing a road or trail.
2. A portion of the Public Safety money should be used for a safe biking and pedestrian campaign. Educate all users of the roads to respect and understand each other.

What makes being a member of the SNTC worth your time and energy?

It helps me to be informed on the transportation issues so I can be a better advocate for cyclists and pedestrians.

When someone asks you "What is the SNTC, anyway?" what is your 30-second reply?

It's the bike and ped division of Mn/DOT.

Is there anything else you want us to know or messages you'd like to convey?

Bike and walk more, drive less. Mn/DOT can design great facilities but people need to use what we have for health and the environment. The recently announced diabetes campaign by Mayo and the U of MN is as much a life-style change as it is finding a drug cure.

**Mark Kinde: Committed to Safe Bicycling & Walking Across Minnesota
Amber Dallman, Minnesota Department of Health Agency Representative**

In the autumn of 1990, Minnesota Department of Health commissioner, Sister Mary Madonna Ashton, asked if Mark Kinde would be willing to serve on the State Bicycle Advisory Committee (SBAC), representing the entire Health Department. Mark was asked to pay specific attention to Health Promotion and Injury Prevention efforts related to bicycling. In the early 90s, one of the themes for the committee was to, "make the right choice the easy choice." By that, the committee sought to have policy and program and environmental supports in place that made it easy to choose bicycling. At its inception, the committee did care about walking, and even at that time acknowledged that, "at the beginning and end of the day, we are all pedestrians," however, this was not the initial focus of the SBAC.

In the twenty years that Mark was the Department of Health's representative, the SBAC realized their actions were making a difference. Engineers started incorporating design modifications; decision-makers are taking pedestrian, disability and cycling issues into account. The changes have not always been

dramatic, but they have and are happening. Mark has observed the perception of bicyclists evolve since the early 90s; a time when bicyclists were seen as fringe tree-huggers rather than a part of a comprehensive transportation system.

According to Mark, one of the greatest strengths of having a combined citizen, state and NGO agency advisory group is the ability to have diverse skills, backgrounds, and perspectives looking to promote safe and convenient active transportation choices. For example, if the committee were only a group of engineers (or epidemiologists, or economists), it would be more difficult to get out-of-the-box thinking that is so important to the work of promoting non-motorized transportation as a whole. Mn/DOT is to be emulated on bringing together a blend of citizens and state/county/local employees because these diverse stakeholders are able to make bike and pedestrian changes happen.

Mark strongly believes in the topic area and mission of the committee – to promote non-motorized transportation in Minnesota – which made it easy to serve as the health representative for twenty years. Mark’s favorite thing about sitting on the committee was listening to and working with the people across the state to promote safe bicycling and walking. Throughout his time of service he has developed tremendous respect and admiration for his fellow state employees and citizens of Minnesota.

What does Health have to do with Non-motorized Transportation?

Amber Dallman, Minnesota Department of Health Agency Representative

We are all aware of the increased prevalence of obesity in Minnesota and the nation, an expensive problem both in terms of human and financial costs. We are also all aware that obesity is, in part, the result of insufficient physical activity. At the root of this is more than a lack of desire or personal motivation, instead it is because in many communities it can be hard for people to be physically active. For example, if a person wants to walk or bike to pick up a gallon of milk near home, the built environment around us—freeways, lack of cross walks and traffic controls, etc.—may make it difficult to impossible, requiring us to drive instead .

Most adult Minnesotans (87 percent) believe the way a community is built has a big effect on how much physical activity people get.¹ Everyone, especially youth, need to be regularly physically active, but that’s hard if:

- there are no sidewalks,
- the streets are unsafe,
- they can’t find a safe crosswalk,
- they can’t bike safely, and/or
- they can’t walk or bike to school.

Fortunately, Minnesota communities are working to make it safer to walk and bike. One place this is occurring is within local public health organizations through Minnesota’s Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP). SHIP, an integral part of Minnesota’s nation-leading 2008 health reform law, strives to help Minnesotans lead longer, healthier lives by preventing the chronic disease risk factors of tobacco

¹ *Physical Activity and Healthy Eating in Minnesota: Addressing Root Causes of Obesity*. St. Paul, MN: Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota, Minnesota Department of Health; May 2010. Accessed on October 15, 2010 at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpcd/chp/cdr/obesity/pdfdocs/ReportBCBSaddressrootcausesobesity.pdf>

use and exposure, poor nutrition and inadequate physical inactivity. The efforts SHIP communities are making to encourage walking and biking are based on well-proven initiatives and are aimed at improving health and reduce the cost of health care in a long-term, sustainable way².

Local communities are identifying where it is easy for residents to be physically active and where improvements can be made. Strategies for making it safer for walking and biking can include³:

- providing safe and convenient pedestrian crossing features such as crosswalk and other street crossing elements,
- adopting policies that considers walkers, bikers and rollers in street projects,
- implementing motorist traffic-calming and speed-reduction measures,
- providing bike racks, lockers or other bike storage facilities, and
- providing sidewalks, walking and bike paths and bike lanes.

Providing safer streets for all users—including, youth, older adults and people with disabilities—encourages physical activity. The benefits of regular physical activity include:

- a lower risk of developing heart disease, higher blood pressure, and diabetes,
- decreased risk of falling and bone fractures,
- helping manage discomfort of arthritis,
- helping develop and maintain strong bones, muscles, and joints,
- improving mood and sense of well-being, and
- helping control weight⁴.

In addition to health, the benefits of encouraging non-motorized transportation are many. For example, In addition to health benefits, safer streets can increase foot traffic and boost sales at local retail businesses. There is also evidence that property values increase in communities where residents are able to walk and bike easily.

There are many concerns that have a stake in encouraging non-motorized transportation, and we will all have much work to do to achieve our common goals. For health, we know that by working together, we can make the healthy choice the easy choice.

For more information about SHIP, visit <http://www.health.state.mn.us/healthreform/ship>.

Mapping Subcommittee Report

Paul Frenz, Bicycle Club Representative, Twin Cities Bicycling Club

During 2010 there was a renewed interest in updating bike maps for Minnesota. In turn, a survey, that the Subcommittee began drafting in 2009, was completed. The goal of the survey is to determine what

² Statewide Health Improvement Program. Minnesota Department of Health. Accessed on October 15, 2010 at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/healthreform/ship/index.html>.

³ Guide to Community Preventive Services. Promoting physical activity: environmental and policy approaches. www.thecommunityguide.org/pa/environmental-policy/index.html. Last updated: 03/30/2010.

⁴ Partnership for Prevention. (2001). *Creating Communities for Active Aging*. Partnership for Prevention. http://www.prevent.org/images/stories/Files/publications/Active_Aging.pdf.

Minnesota bicyclists want in terms of maps for the State. The final version of this survey was prepared by the Mn/DOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Section with the contribution of STNC member Randy Perkins. This survey was finalized in August and available online at www.surveymonkey.com/s/MnDOT-bike-map-survey.

At the SNTC's Planning Meeting in September, the decision was made to make the survey available through December, 2010 and to publicize the existence of the survey to a wider audience. The Mapping Subcommittee will analyze the results of the survey in January, 2011 and make recommendations to the full committee and Mn/DOT on a statewide bicycle map or maps at the February 2011 meeting.

Education and Safety Committee Report

Danny McCullough, Law Enforcement Representative, Three Rivers Park District

In 2010, the SNTC Education and Safety Committee planned and implemented a peer review of the "Share the Road" education program. This review was the first of its kind since the inception of Share the Road in 2005. Results of the assessment produced several changes, including a newly designed logo, new graphics, and a change in outreach strategies. Newly developed educational posters highlight specific bicycle laws. Some of the new target messages include reminders of the 3 foot passing statute and the light requirement at night for cyclist.



Several Public Safety/ Pedestrian related articles were published on the state and national level this year. Three Rivers Park District Police Officer Danny McCullough wrote an article for Minnesota Police Chief Magazine about police involvement on pedestrian trail systems. The article was also published in IPMBA News, a nationwide publication by the International Police Mountain Bike Association. Officer McCullough also appeared on several community access television shows around Minneapolis to talk about trail user and motorist responsibilities at crossings. As the Law Enforcement representative on the SNTC, McCullough plans to continue to work with agencies around the state to increase awareness on the need of pedestrian law enforcement.

In 2011, the committee plans to incorporate education material for crosswalks and trail crossings for pedestrians, bicyclist, and motorist. Minnesota is home to thousands of miles of bicycle and pedestrian trails. Many of those trails cross roadways and even highways at times, so it is important that users understand how to safely navigate crossings and traffic signage. Three Rivers Park District developed a program titled "Share the Trails" It is designed to reach both cyclist and walker/runners that share multi-use trail systems. Some of the messages include giving audible signals when passing and riding in a predictable manner. Education cards and information will be available to any organization across the state who wishes to use it on their local trail systems.

All-Users Subcommittee Report

Anna Kerr, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Representative

The All-Users Subcommittee transformed out of the previous Pedestrian Subcommittee. With changes to the full committee's mission, now a non-motorized, not just bicycle organization, it was time to educate ourselves, other members and the community about what 'non-motorized transportation' means to all of us. The primary goal of this group was to ensure safe and accessible transportation options for all Minnesotans.

The subcommittee members spent time getting acquainted with the Department of Transportation's Road Design Manual's Pedestrian chapter, which led to leading the full committee on a walkability audit of several pedestrian facilities in April.

A resource guide for SNTC members is currently under development. The goal of this guide will be to assist SNTC members in being informed about the issues at the heart of our committee and enabling them to discuss various topics at local meetings and with their local decision makers.

In addition, the group represented SNTC on the planning committee for Bike-Walk Week, participated in various aspects of the Complete Streets legislation and associated outreach, and is gearing up to continue these efforts and more moving into 2011.

Pro-Walk Pro-Bike Conference

Nick Mason, Metro Area Citizen Representative



The 2010 Pro Walk Pro Bike Conference (PWPB) provided participants with outstanding opportunities to learn best practices, innovative programs, and networking opportunities with leaders in the field of bike-ped professionals. This year's PWPB was held in the bicycle friendly community of Chattanooga, TN. Chattanooga boasts a number of enhancements to their non-motorized infrastructure that include on-street bike parking, wi-fi enabled electric shuttles, and a beautiful river trail (pictured left).

The 2010 PWPB welcomed more than 40 Minnesotans! Even more exciting for our state is that seven presenters from Minnesota shared their knowledge with this international crowd. Our own Mitzi Baker, Louis Moore, Antonio Rosell, Dorian Grilley, Laura Baum, Nick Mason, and Steve Sanders presented on topics ranging from Complete Streets to Catapulting Advocacy to Creating Ecosystems for Bikes. Minnesota is clearly emerging as a national and North American leader in bike-ped advocacy, planning, policy, programming, and infrastructure. This is very exciting!

Naturally, PWPB offers many more topics and speakers than any one person can absorb. I did have a few favorite sessions. The City of Portland, Oregon and Florida's state Department of Transportation are two entities leading the way on bicycle education for youth, which and area in which Minnesota can learn a great deal in the coming years. Washington, DC is pioneering U.S. best practices for on-street, protected bikeways (also called cycle tracks). Protected bikeways carry tens of thousands of cyclists a day in Europe and provide both real and perceived safety for all kinds of riders.

The National Association for City Transportation Officials (NACTO) consists of more than a dozen cities from Atlanta to Seattle (including Minneapolis) who want U.S. transportation to be more accommodating to transit, non-motorized transportation, and urban needs in general. NACTO is working on a best practice guidebook that will help make it easier for other cities and the American Association of State and Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) to build and fund projects critical to maintaining the leadership and economic engines of America's larger cities.

The depth and diversity of topics offered at PWPB make it a keystone event for anyone hoping to move bike/ped and non-motorized transportation forward in their communities and states. I highly recommend attending the next PWPB to be held in September, 2012. I am already looking forward to it.

Annual Planning Meeting

Anna Kerr, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Representative

The State Non-motorized Transportation Committee Annual Planning meeting took place September 24 and 25 in Mankato, Minnesota. The agenda focused on educating our members, learning from one another, and setting the framework for 2011. Approximately 20 members were in attendance, and six participated in a Traffic Skills 101 class Friday morning prior to the kick off of the full meeting.

Topics the first day included teambuilding activities and presentations on multi-modal planning and rumble strips and stripes, both hot topics in the non-motorized transit world. We also learned about the partnership that exists in Mankato among local bicycle and pedestrian advocates, elected officials, the University and Mn/DOT. We were joined by the mayor and a city council member. That evening, Tom Engstrom, our District Rep from Mankato, led us on a beautiful bike ride around the trail system and streets of Mankato.

The focus Saturday was mainly on planning for the coming year. As a group, the decision was made to keep the same three subcommittees that we've been working with for the past year and continue the good work they have been doing. Ongoing activities, measures of success, and goals for moving forward were established by each group.

