



Annual Newsletter

March 2012

A Message from the State Bicycle and Pedestrian Section Director Tim Mitchell - Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT)

In thinking about what to write for this piece, I was struck by how my mind began to immediately shift to how exciting 2012 will be. There are many amazing initiatives that have begun or are just upon us. But then it occurs to me...2011 was pretty fantastic too. We had the opportunity to celebrate the 1st Annual Minnesota Bike Summit which was organized by the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota. We held our position as the 4th most bicycle friendly state in the nation, but earned the Silver designation because of the tremendous work of this committee, our advocates and partners. We held the 2nd annual Bicycle Tourism Summit in Mankato. We have moved forward towards completion and designation of the state's first bikeway, the Mississippi River Trail, which has the potential to become the model for the rest of the United States Bicycle Route System. We saw a dramatic decrease in fatal crashes for bicyclists and pedestrians across the state and significant increases in participation. There are so many other stories to be told from the past year, but the final one that I want to share is the partnership that was formed to begin the development of a statewide marketing campaign entitled "Pedal Minnesota" to highlight Minnesota as "The Bicycle Friendly State".

There is a consistent theme to all of these successes...partnerships.

"We are in the midst of a great transition from narrow nationalism to international partnership"

– President Lyndon B. Johnson

This quote comes from the State of the Union address that President Johnson delivered in 1967 in which he spelled out four objectives for the Country to undertake. The second objective he highlighted was creating and strengthening partnership. I am not going to suggest that what we are working towards is of the magnitude of what the former President was referring to at that point in our history, but I think the sentiment rings true at any level or time and captures where we are going.

I think that I will reflect back to 2011 as the year that these partnerships truly strengthened and began to coalesce around common goals towards creating a safe, efficient and attractive place to walk and bike. These partnerships will be the foundation for what we work towards in 2012 and beyond.

I for one cannot wait to get started.

From all of us in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Section at MnDOT, it has been and will continue to be a pleasure serving all of you. And, as always, please stay safe out there.

Message from the Chair - Anna Kerr, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

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.

The past year in non-motorized transportation in Minnesota has truly reflected this, the vision of our committee. From new members joining the committee to working toward improving Minnesota's rank on the Bicycle Friendly State list, we're continually increasing our presence within the Department of Transportation and leading the way nationally on many bicycle and pedestrian issues. As a veteran member of the committee, it is exciting for me to see the growth and evolution of the State Nonmotorized Transportation Advisory Committee (SNTC). The group is more involved and more active than I've ever experienced. I attribute that to both the dedicated members and the overwhelming support and leadership of MnDOT staff. We are experiencing an exciting shift toward one of more public awareness and support of non-motorized transit in Minnesota.

The many dedicated members of this committee are what really keep us strong and help facilitate change. Some of the great accomplishments of the past year include: helping update and roll out new Share the Road educational materials and initiating a campaign for kids bicycle safety; providing comments on federal language that may impact shared use trails; completion of a bicycle mapping survey and securing funding to take Cyclopath statewide; securing a permanent seat on the committee for an advocacy group (currently represented by the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota); and participating in many events, including Bike Walk Week, bicycle rodeos, various rides, and expos to share information about the SNTC.

It has been an honor to serve as chair of this committee for the past year, and I look forward to the places the SNTC will head in the future. I encourage all our members to keep the momentum going and keep do great things.

Annual Planning Meeting - Michelle Musser, MnDOT

The annual SNTC planning meeting took place September 23rd and 24th in Moorhead, Minnesota. Members were warmly welcomed to the Moorhead Public Library by Chris Potter, District Four Representative. Following introductions, participants received updates on the Statewide Multimodal Plan and the Bicycle Policy Plan. Amber Dallman, Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), spoke about Smart Cycling for Professionals and Nick Mason with the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota informed the group of Alliance activities and provided legislative updates.

The afternoon also included informative and inspiring presentations from members of the community. Chris Potter, Rory Biel (Dakota Medical Foundation), Gina Nolte (Clay County Public Health) and Katie White (Fargo - Moorhead Council of Governments) spoke about collaborative initiatives such as Streets Alive, Join the Movement and the network of metropolitan area bikeways.

That evening the group enjoyed a bicycle ride and stopped at the historic Great Northern Railroad Depot prior to dinner at the Usher House.

The following morning, members immersed themselves in an intense planning session identifying project priorities for the upcoming year. Participants expressed a clear interest in education and outreach and recognized Share the Road Expansion, SNTC Structure and the Bicycle Friendly State Application as tasks of significance. The group also expressed interest in Bike Walk Month, bicycle education curriculum, bikeable communities and law enforcement awareness.

Member Profile - Emma Pachuta (Michelle Musser, MnDOT)

Representing the Metro District, Emma Pachuta has big ideas and a passion for travel. Upon first meeting her, you realize that she is creative, unique and eager. I had no idea how talented she was until I stumbled upon her website.

Growing up with an English mum, Emma was lucky to have begun traveling internationally at a very young age. Traveling instilled a commitment to create positive changes within her community that reflected great ideas already happening elsewhere. Having lived and studied in three cities that focus on increasing health and livability (Copenhagen, Eugene and Minneapolis) she has become an avid supporter of offering better transportation options.

What kind of bike do you own?

A pretty sky blue women's Giant and a 1969 maroon Raleigh (winter bike)

What are your interests?

Traveling and backpacking nationally or internationally, bicycling (of course), painting, cooking and our awesome local music scene.

Where are you employed?

St. Paul Smart Trips, a nonprofit that works to improve transportation mobility for residents in St. Paul. We advocate, educate and work towards increasing sustainable transportation in St. Paul.

What is the biggest misconception about bicyclists and pedestrians?

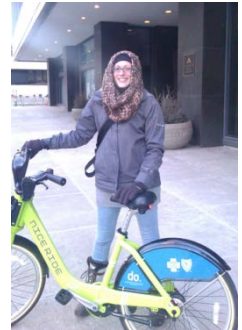
The biggest misconception, I feel, is that pedestrians and bicyclists don't have as much of a right to be on the road as cars do. For the last few decades, our streets have been designed in a way that moves car traffic through cities and regions as quickly as possible with a disregard for other modes of access and transit. It's awesome to see that we, as a country are beginning to highlight the importance of multi-modal streets, which in turn, increases access, safety and health, and decreases car congestion and pollution.

Why did you apply to be a representative of the SNTC?

I first applied to the SNTC because I am really interested in Minnesota transportation policy and I wanted to hear about what the state has been doing to enhance bicycle and pedestrian access. The more you know, the easier it is to become an advocate at a local level. I work at the neighborhood level in St. Paul and would like to make sure regional projects get input locally as well as regionally. It is important for communities to have a voice in projects happening within their neighborhood. I'm hoping that the more I know about upcoming regional projects, the better I will be at working with communities at a local level.

How can the SNTC better meet the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians?

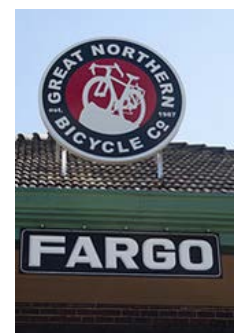
Since the Committee is a wealth of knowledge around bicycle and pedestrian issues, it is extremely important to be able to be a voice for the bicycle and pedestrian realm on projects that are not necessarily thought to affect bicyclists or pedestrians. We are beginning to realize the importance that biking and walking have on our population and projects.



Emma Pachuta



Bicycle Along
Mississippi River



Great Northern
Bicycle Depot

2011 National Bike Summit - Paul Frenz, Twin Cities Bicycling Club

Between March 8th and 10th, I attended my third consecutive National Bike Summit sponsored by the League of American Bicyclists (LAB) in Washington D.C. The Summit kicked off with a dinner Tuesday night (March 8th). Ray LaHood, U. S. Department of Transportation Secretary, was the keynote speaker and reiterated his and the Department's continued support for bicycles as a mode of transportation.

On Wednesday morning the Summit began in earnest with an opening session welcome by Congressman Earl Blumenauer of Oregon. Congressman Blumenauer, the leading bicycle proponent on Capitol Hill, observed that Congress had changed since the 2010 elections and that our message should be "Don't cut what you have not seen."

Janette Sadik-Kahn, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Transportation, spoke about New York City becoming more bike friendly by adding bike lanes, bike boxes and signage to facilitate the movement of bicyclists. Ms. Sadik-Kahn, who is also the President of the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO), announced that NACTO had recently produced and published an Urban Bikeway Design Guide with state of the art practice solutions for on-street bicycle facilities. This Guide was produced because many of NATCTO's members found existing design manuals to be inadequate and out of date.

The third speaker at the opening session was Ken Salazar, the Secretary of the U. S. Department of Interior. Secretary Salazar emphasized that the outdoor industry, which includes the bike industry, creates jobs and that bike trails on federal lands gets people on bikes which contributes to the better health of these bicyclists. Through the American Great Outdoors program Secretary Salazar hopes to create more bike trails in both urban and rural federal parks.

Because of the change in the make-up of the current Congress, LAB advised the attendees at the Summit that the message to Congress, through the state delegations, should be "do not cut" bike related programs that have dedicated funding such as Transportation Enhancements, Safe Routes to School, and Recreational Trails. The remainder of Wednesday consisted of breakout sessions stressing the various areas of the Summit's policy agenda to be presented to Congress.

On Thursday, with other members of the Minnesota delegation, I met with the legislative assistants for Representatives Betty McCollum and Michele Bachmann and Senator Al Franken. We also met with Representative Keith Ellison and his legislative assistant and with Senator Amy Klobuchar and her legislative assistant. From these meetings it was clear that McCollum, Ellison, Klobuchar and Franken would support the LAB's policy agenda.



2011 National Bike Summit

2011 Minnesota Bike Summit - Nick Mason, State Advocacy Organization

More than 175 people from around the state participated in the first Minnesota Bike Summit on Capitol Hill on February 28, 2011. Bicycle Industry, advocates, transportation, health and school professionals came to Saint Paul to unite the voice of bicycling in Minnesota. The Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota (BikeMN) organized a program that showcased bicycling's economic impact and benefits to the health of the environment, communities and individuals. The morning program brought a diverse group of speakers including Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak, State Senator Julie Rosen (R-Fairmont), State Representative Leon Lillie (DFL-North Saint Paul), Barb Thoman of Transit for Livable Communities and Nick Mason of the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota. Patience Caso from the Minnesota Environmental Partnership briefed citizens who were scheduled to meet with their legislators on effective advocacy. The Honorable James Oberstar was greeted with a standing ovation for his unmatched service to bicycling in Congress. Oberstar discussed the evolution of non-motorized transportation at the Federal policy level and thanked advocates for their dedication and work to show the return on investment bicycling infrastructure has brought to Minnesota communities.

Citizen participants began meeting with their state legislators before the afternoon program commenced in the Capitol Rotunda. Bike Industry representatives lined the rotunda while Steve Flagg, President of Quality Bicycle Products, underscored the value of bicycle industry, led by small, local businesses and tourism, contribute to the Minnesota work force, economy, and quality of life. Deputy Commissioner of Transportation Bernard J. Arseneau, State Senator Tony Lourey (DFL - District 8) and State Senator Mike Jungbauer (R - District 48) praised the ongoing work that Complete Streets policy brings to Minnesota. Closing the afternoon program, Blue Cross Blue Shield VP and Complete Streets coalition member, Marc Manley presented an award to Mayor Ardele Brede and representatives from Rochester for their leadership in Complete Streets.

The inaugural Bike Summit on Capitol Hill presented citizens and Minnesota leaders with a unified and strong voice for bicycling and its many important roles in the vitality of the state. BikeMN will present the 2012 Bike Summit on Capitol Hill on March 5th.

2011 SNTC Members

Susan Koschak	Andy Muller	Jenny Smith	Chris Potter
Tom Engstrom	Mark Weber	Dan Breva	Benita Warns
Emma Pachuta	Randy Oppelt	Paul Frenz	Danny McCullough
Steve Sanders	Nick Mason	Randy Perkins	Anne Johnson
Anna Kerr	Grant Scholen	James Andrew	Amber Dallman
Kelly Wosika	Gordy Pehrson	Mark Vizecky	Tim Anderson



Capitol Rotunda



Bicycle Racks



MN Bike Summit Participants



Mankato River Ramble

Share the Road and Drive Your Bike - Lisa Austin, MnDOT

The Share the Road bicycle safety campaign was launched in 2005. The original purpose of the campaign was to educate adult motorists and bicyclists on how to share the road more safely. The campaign has proven very effective as awareness of the messages increased significantly during that time.

MnDOT relies on partners, stakeholders and the general public to help deliver the Share the Road message. Anyone can request the materials for free on the Share the Road website. For the first several years approximately one third of the materials were requested for use with school age children. Since the Share the Road campaign was designed for adults with an understanding of how to drive a motor vehicle, it was not the most effective tool for educating kids on bicycle safety.

During the 2010 SNTC planning retreat, one of the priorities identified was the development of a Share the Road campaign targeting school aged children. As a result, the Drive Your Bike campaign was created to empower middle school kids to start learning about driving and rules of the road. MnDOT staff developed artwork showing a middle school child riding and obeying traffic laws. The graphics and message compliment the Share the Road campaign and ensure brand recognition between the two campaigns. MnDOT staff and the SNTC members worked with youth, youth workers and educators to develop recognizable language for middle school children. Teachers were asked what format would be most useful for information distribution. Suggested formats included spoke cards, bike stickers, brochures and more. The overwhelming response was to design a bookmark with the Drive Your Bike message.

In spring of 2011 the Drive Your Bike bookmark was made public at the Active Living Bike Expo. Used in combination with the NHTSA Bike Safe Bike Smart video, the Drive Your Bike bookmarks are an easy way to introduce bicycle safety to middle school children. The bookmarks also compliment lessons taught in riding skills classes or at bike rodeos. Feedback on the bookmarks has been very positive. People may order the video and bookmarks at www.sharetheroadmn.org.



DRIVE YOUR BIKE



FOLLOW THE LAW

Bicycles are vehicles - like cars.
Obey stop signs and traffic signals.



BE PREDICTABLE

Ride on the right and in a straight line.
Signal your turns - point your arm in the direction you are going.



BE AWARE

Watch for cars in front, behind and beside you.
Watch for pedestrians and road hazards.



BE VISIBLE

Wear bright clothing and use lights and reflectors.
Ride where drivers can see you.



SAVE YOUR BRAIN

Wear your helmet

www.sharetheroadmn.org

