

Biking & Walking Priorities for 2023

(prepared by The Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota)



FUNDING ISSUE 1: STATE SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL (SRTS) AND ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMS

Requests for SRTS funding in MN have greatly exceeded available state and federal dollars for many years. A study of schools across the country found that schools that had infrastructure improvements had 18% more kids biking and walking to school, ones that provided education saw a 25% increase, ones that did both saw a 31% increase. In 5 years about 1,000 educators have been trained to use the Minnesota Walk! Bike! Fun! elementary school safety curriculum. Those teachers are reaching more than 100,000 kids per year throughout the state. The return on both program and infrastructure investment for Safe Routes to School is high.

Federal Transportation Alternatives funding falls short each funding cycle; MnDOT's most recent solicitation has \$3.5 million for active transportation but they are expecting ten times (>\$30 million) the amount of funds available. In 2017-18 about \$125 million was requested but for Transportation Alternatives but only \$32.6 million was available statewide including the Metro. The MnDOT Active Transportation Grant Program was created in 2017 to partially address this gap but it has only been appropriated \$5 million once in 2021.

HF 677 and SF 912 include \$25 million for active transportation and \$10 million for safe routes to school per year as part of MnDOT's base budget. This would allow MnDOT a lot of flexibility regarding funding program in addition to infrastructure and to even use some for the local match to the ongoing federal funding.

FUNDING AND BUDGET ASK: Will you support including \$25 million for active transportation and \$10 million for Safe Routes to School infrastructure grants per year as part of MnDOT's base budget in (HF 677 and SF 912) in the budget bill?

POLICY ISSUE 1: POLICY LANGUAGE CHANGES

- BikeMN recommends the following policy changes that are found in HF 677 and SF 912. The school related active transportation provisions are also found in stand alone bills, HF 678 and SF 911. Many of these policy changes were recommended as best practices by the National Conference of State Legislatures, the League of American Bicyclists, and People for Bikes.
- The School-Related Related Active Transportation provision requires bike/walk education be taught in schools. Currently, schools MUST provide bus safety training and MAY also provide student bicycle and pedestrian safety education for students enrolled in kindergarten through fifth grade. BikeMN supports changing this MAY to MUST. About half of the school districts in Minnesota are already doing this in elementary schools.
- The first Active Transportation Policy change simply requires MnDOT to continue to coordinate with other agencies and local governments and to lead by providing active transportation design guidelines, active transportation planning assistance, and technical assistance to local governments.
- The next section formally establishes the Mississippi River Trail and the Jim Oberstar (now known as the North Star Route) as State Bikeways.
- The next section is about passing a bicycle. It resolves the differences between 169.18 Subdivisions 3 and 5 regarding passing a bicycle by inserting what is already written in Subd. 5 in Subd. 3.
- The poorly understood as far to the right as practicable language is changed in the next section to as far to the right as the bicycle operator determines is safe. This complies with national best practices.
- Following that the law makes it legal for bicyclists to proceed straight through an intersection from a right-hand turn lane without turning right. Also a best practise that is law in several states.
- Section 7 is the stop as yield for bicycles (also referred to as the Idaho Stop). This is current law in 12 states.
- Section 8 reauthorizes the MNDOT Active Transportation Advisory Committee
- Section 9 requires the first \$500,000 appropriated for active transportation to be spent to develop, maintain, and implement active an transportation safety curriculum for youth.

Contact: Dorian Grilley, Executive Director, BikeMN
dorian@bikemn.org, 651.387.2445

Building a Minnesota where every person everywhere can easily walk, bike, and roll as ways to move in daily life.

www.bikemn.org • info@bikemn.org • [f/bikemn](https://www.facebook.com/bikemn) • [@bicyclealliancemn](https://www.instagram.com/bicyclealliancemn)

Biking & Walking Priorities for 2023

(prepared by The Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota)

POLICY ISSUE 1: ELECTRIC ASSISTED BICYCLE REBATE PROGRAM (To be introduced the week of February 13th by Representative Lucy Rehm (DFL Chanhassen) and Senator Omar Fateh (DFL Minneapolis))

- The amount of the credit ranges from 50-75 percent of the amount paid for the e-bike, up to \$1,500. The percentage scales based on the taxpayer's adjusted gross income in the prior tax year, dropping down as income increases. The ebike purchaser must apply for the credit and then transfer the credit to the shop that they purchase the bike from. The bike must be purchased from a Minnesota based retailer.

POLICY ASK: Will you support the implementation of an e-bike rebate program as introduced by Representative Rehm and/org Senator Fateh this session (no bill numbers yet)?

BIKEMN ALSO SUPPORTS OTHER BILLS RELATED TO:

- A sales tax in the Metro Area and an ongoing appropriation for Greater Minnesota for transit, biking, and walking;
- Increased funding for ongoing trail maintenance and repair;
- Specific bonding bills for trail projects including ones for the Gitche Gami State Trail and the Minnesota River State Trail from Mankato to St. Peter.
- Authorizing the use of photo enforcement cameras to enforce traffic regulations

Please watch for updates with specific bill numbers for these and other bills that are of interest on our 2023 Legislative Agenda website page.