

Joy Rides — Celebrating Our Statewide Reach!



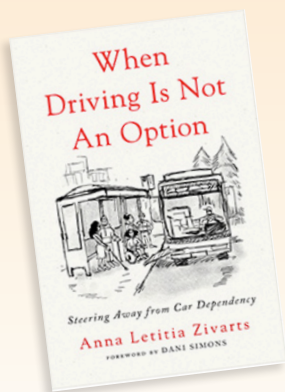
INSIDE

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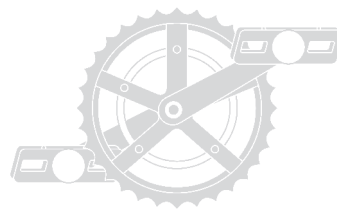
ON THE COVER

Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota Executive Director Michael Wojcik and San Francisco-based car-free advocate Anna Letitia Zivarts at the Vibrant Streets Duluth kickoff party in January 2025. (Photo by Michael K. Anderson Photography)

Author of “When Driving Is Not an Option: Steering Away from Car Dependency” (Island Press, 2024), Zivarts came to Minnesota for four BikeMN events in January: a talk and book-signing in Rochester; an appearance at the E-Bike Policy Summit at the University of Minnesota (co-sponsored with the university’s Center for Transportation Studies), followed by a talk and book-signing in downtown Minneapolis; and the launch event in downtown Duluth for Vibrant Streets Duluth, a new chapter of BikeMN.



Roll Out! For Your Pedaling Pleasure



The weather’s turned warm. The sun is shining (most days), and it’s time to gather family and friends and plan your seasonal bicycle outings around the state.

Enjoy these BikeMN-sponsored pedal tours for spring, summer and fall 2025. More information is available on our events page.



Lake Alice 100

SATURDAY, MAY 10 • FERGUS FALLS

87 laps = 100 miles

Free! Join in 9 a.m.–4 p.m.



Med City Meander

SATURDAY, MAY 24 • ROCHESTER

15- & 27-mile routes

Kid-friendly obstacle course at the start.



Tour of Saints

SUNDAY, JULY 20 • ST. JOSEPH | ST. CLOUD

18-, 35- & 50-mile routes

After-party at Bad Habit Brewing.



Rock and Roll the Lakes

SATURDAY, AUGUST 16 • ALBERT LEA

10-, 30- & 50-mile routes

Free “glow ride” on Friday evening.



Bicycling Around Minnesota

THURSDAY-SUNDAY, AUGUST 21-24

PEQUOT LAKES | PINE RIVER | EMILY | AITKIN

55–65 miles per day

Fully supported ride. Register soon!



Twin Cities Bike Tour

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14 • MINNEAPOLIS | HOPKINS | ST. LOUIS PARK

20-, 34- and 41-mile routes

Free family-friendly Loons Loop the day before.



Rosewood Gramble

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20 • THIEF RIVER FALLS

16- & 30-mile paved routes | 25- & 64-mile gravel routes

Kid-friendly 1.25-mile beginner course.



Kato Bike Fall Fest

SATURDAY-SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27-28 • MANKATO

Routes from 11–39 miles

Inaugural weekend-long celebration

Learn more at bikemn.org/events.

Pro Tips for Spring

GET YOUR BIKE READY FOR WARM-WEATHER RIDING.

By Helena Howard



Her colleagues say Helena Howard (left) is the best bike mechanic on the team.

Whether you pedaled through the snow this winter, or haven't touched your bike since last fall, it's smart to give your bicycle a little love this spring. You can do all these things at home with just a few tools: a bike pump, chain lube, rag and an adjustable wrench or 15-millimeter box wrench.

If it's your first time, ask a friend for help (and to borrow tools) and/or watch a video tutorial from Park Tool, a Minnesota tool manufacturer with a super helpful YouTube channel (youtube.com/parktool).

Follow these five simple steps to ensure safe, enjoyable rides:

- 1. Pump up your tires:** Riding with low tire pressure is the No. 1 cause of getting a flat, so make sure you inflate them to the pressure range recommended on the side of the tire.
- 2. Make sure your brake pads aren't worn out:**
 - There is usually a way to release rim brakes to get a better look at them. The brake pads should still have visible notches or include a "wear line." Make sure the rubber hasn't hardened with age — you should be able to indent it with your fingernail or feel a little grippiness on the surface.
 - Disc brake pads are trickier to check. Try looking down the slit of your brake caliper, but the surest way is to take the pads out (you may need more tools) and measure the thickness of the pad; look up the manufacturer recommendation for when to replace the pads. Watch a video specific to your disc brake model before starting.
- 3. Lube your chain:** Drip chain lube on the top of your chain while turning the pedals backward and then use a rag to wipe off the excess. A rusty chain is OK, so long as the pivots are still moving.

- 4. Secure your wheels:** If you have quick-release wheels, check that the levers are curved inward, not bumping into your bike's frame, and that they require some effort to open and shut. The lever should leave an imprint in your hand after you close it. If you have bolt-on wheels, check the axle-nuts' tightness with an adjustable wrench or (usually) a 15-millimeter box wrench.
- 5. Check your brakes before riding:** Lift and spin each wheel and squeeze the corresponding brake to make sure both brakes are functioning and aren't rubbing on the rim. Remember: Your right brake usually controls the rear wheel, and your left brake controls the front. Then, ride around the block! Test your brakes, shift through your gears and listen for any unusual clicks, squeaks or rubbing noises.

Have a professional check out your bike every year. A mechanic will thoroughly inspect the bearing systems, tire wear, chain wear, bolt tightness and wheel true (meaning how straight the wheel spins). The mechanic may recommend a full tune-up to get everything working safely and efficiently.

Helena Howard is the adult education manager at BikeMN.

LEARN MORE AT GREASE RAG



Grease Rag Ride & Wrench offers skill-sharing for bicycle maintenance and repair for FTW (femme, trans, women) bicyclists and nonbinary or two-spirit people. Check it out: greaserag.org.



How E-Bikes Change Lives

A CUSTOM-FITTED
E-TRICYCLE ENABLES
A RETIRED DOCTOR WITH
MS TO RIDE AGAIN.

By Amy Gage

Dr. Mary E. Jones and her service dog, Misty.

Back in 1983, when she was still in medical school, Dr. Mary E. Jones was diagnosed with what doctors told her was “probably MS” — multiple sclerosis — a chronic disease that affects the central nervous system, including the brain and spinal cord. Her first major flareup occurred in 1994, and it was severe enough that Mary had to walk with a cane and eventually use a scooter.

Today, the resident of Rochester Township is limited to short walks and only with the aid of forearm crutches. Thanks to the power of e-bikes, however, she can ride!

“I never got back to my full balance and strength,” says Mary, 67. Her physical limitations forced her to retire in 2000 from Mayo Clinic

in Rochester, where she was a pulmonary physician with a then rare specialty in sleep medicine.

An outdoorswoman, Mary came to miss the bicycling she had once enjoyed. “Biking and being outdoors, I used to do that,” she recalls, “but I didn’t think I’d ever do it again.”

An e-bike — the three-wheeled variety — changed all that. Her husband, Dr. Paul Claus, who’s now retired, had become active in a program with We Bike Rochester, a Bicycle Alliance chapter. The group fixes donated bicycles and gets them in the hands of folks who need them “for transportation, work or education,” he explains.

Someone donated an adult-sized tricycle in 2020. An adept mechanic (“it’s just like medicine: practice, not perfect”), Paul fitted the three-

wheeler with pedal assist and an electric motor, and Mary began to ride again.

“It was life-changing,” she says. Mary recounts the joy of greeting people out on trails, the peace of being in the woods, the convenience of biking

throughout Rochester. “I got to know the links, how to get around on trails,” she says. “It was five miles from my house to the bike shop.”

Paul and Mary rode 1,000 miles together in both 2021 and 2022; their mileage dropped a bit to “only”

“I didn’t think
biking and being
outdoors was
something I’d
ever do again.”

750 miles after COVID vaccines expanded their options for other activities. The couple has enjoyed organized rides in Mankato and the Twin Cities — including the inaugural Twin Cities Bike Tour last September with their son, Aaron, 37 — and often join a Sunday afternoon group ride in Rochester when the weather isn't stiflingly hot. "I can't handle heat," Mary explains.

COUPLES THERAPY

Multiple sclerosis "affects not just the person who's disabled but the person who's their partner, too," Paul says. Cycling has enabled them to pursue a recreational sport that takes them to trails and state parks throughout Minnesota.

"It's just been tremendous," he says. "I never expected that she'd be able to have the endurance and go places. Our riding is pretty much three seasons, and we're out for hours at a time. It's so much more fun to bicycle with a partner and share the experience than just be out there clocking the miles."



Paul and Mary enjoy the outdoors.

The original e-trike has long since been donated, replaced by a Raleigh TriStar with 20-inch rear wheels and a 24-inch front wheel. "That helps her sit closer to the ground and more upright," explains Paul. A do-it-yourself project that he completed for under \$1,000, the e-trike is faster and lighter than the first model, enabling Mary to ride



Dr. Mary Jones and her husband, Dr. Paul Claus, on a group bike ride.

at a reasonable pace "with as much assistance as she needs," he says.

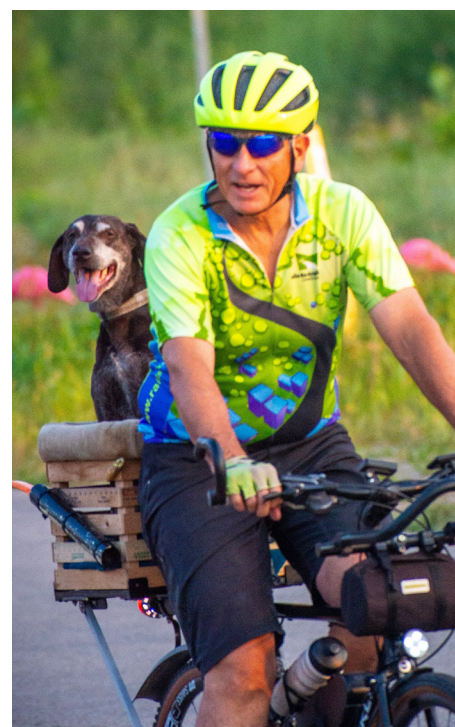
Her service dog, Misty, a black standard poodle, often rides along in a homemade wooden box that sits between the back wheels. Mary loves seeing Misty bring smiles to other cyclists' faces. "They may look serious, like they're thinking hard. Then they see me, with the dog," she says with a laugh.

Even before the e-trike, and despite the MS, Mary has never ceased to be active in her community. She argued for redistricting before the Rochester City Council on behalf of the League of Women Voters. Having grown up on a farm in Fillmore County, near Harmony, Minnesota, she learned quilting from her mother and is part of a women's group that donates quilts for graduations, fundraisers and personal use.

But bicycling — and ensuring that Rochester has the infrastructure to support it — is a primary passion for them both. Mary prides herself on being a voice for people with some measure of physical immobility who need trails that are accessible and safe ("and part of a connected system," Paul adds).

"Until you experience this disease, or something like it, you don't understand," Mary says. "So [decision-makers] need to talk to the people who are out biking and enjoying it, to find out what kind of difference it makes in their lives. Just to get out in nature."

Amy Gage is managing editor of Streets.mn.



Paul rides with Loki, the family dog.

A Lifetime of Bike-Friendly Work

2024 LIFETIME SERVICE AWARD WINNER LEAVES A LEGACY FOR OTHERS TO ENJOY.

By Jo Anne Judge-Dietz



Developing bike fleets for elementary schools has been an essential part of Jo Anne Judge-Dietz's work (second from left).

Let's be clear: I'm not an athlete. I didn't learn to bike until I was almost a teenager. But once I started riding, biking provided me with a non-competitive sport that I enjoyed and offered fitness as well as transportation to my summer babysitting jobs.

Now, at age 65, biking gets me out on the trails and into nature for a completely different perspective of the Rochester community, just south of my home in rural Pine Island. For me, biking is about fitness, recreation and a way to be active with friends. I have met so many acquaintances of different ages, shapes and sizes, ethnicities and abilities who bike for different reasons — and every one of them inspires me!

For the last 20 years of my career, I had a job that was too much fun to be called work, reaching out to schools to introduce bike education, host bike rodeos and promote walking and biking to school. During my tenure with Olmsted County Public Health, I saw multiple towns develop "complete streets" plans, bike-ped plans, the first bike lanes on streets, the first county-wide Walk and Bike to School event and the first bike fleets in our schools. Fast forward, after years of strong effort by many: Rochester is now a Bicycle Friendly Community, as designated by the League of American Bicyclists.

"Not to give her credit as an educator for every happy child on a bike in Minnesota, but she's darn close."

— Erik Noonan, BikeMN communications manager

Our resources in the Rochester area include:

- Multiple bike fleets, including pedal-free balance bikes for early riders.
- A fleet of bikes, in various sizes, for elementary schools.
- A middle school fat tire fleet for bike education in physical education (PE) classes.
- Fleets for adaptive PE and for the adult adaptive recreation program.
- A volunteer-run bike garage and bike refurbishing program.
- In addition to a great trail system throughout Rochester, Broadway Avenue — a main north-south thoroughfare — has added signage, trail connections and beautiful protected bike lanes.

As a cyclist and a true believer in active living, I was fortunate to be part of the process for many of these first-time initiatives.

We Bike Rochester became the first chapter of the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota in 2016, and BikeMN led us through every project with support, education

and guidance. I recall a debriefing meeting after our failed attempt to





Jo Anne (center, head down) staffs a refreshments table for Rochester's Bike to Work Day in 2022.

install the first bike lane, having been blindsided by the opposition. Nick Mason, a BikeMN staff member at the time, explained that people who have no experience on a bike won't understand the importance of bike infrastructure. "That's why it is so important to double down on educating the next generation if we truly want to transform our communities," he said.

His advice to "be in it for the long game" reshaped my vision and mission. My mindset changed from introducing biking as a fun way to keep kids active, to providing all kids — especially those who have no access to bikes — with the opportunity to learn to bike for pleasure, fitness and eventually transportation. BikeMN's fleets and instructors helped create our own local programming that provided bikes for summer programs and PE classes.

COLLABORATION IS KEY

When I began this journey, I felt like one voice in the wilderness trying to introduce a new concept to already overworked school staff. Finding passionate bike advocates through We Bike Rochester propelled the efforts forward. The City of Rochester's bike-ability efforts

really began to soar when the school district received a grant to fund a Safe Routes to School coordinator and the city funded an active transportation coordinator, which worked in tandem with my role at Olmsted County Public Health.

It is impossible to do this work alone. And it is immeasurably more fun and life-giving to work surrounded by the passion and energy of others who have the same goal. Just as

the right number of bikes to own is "N plus one" (you always need one more), similarly in bike advocacy, the number of bike projects is infinite!

I am so proud of the progress that our cities, school districts, volunteers and sustainability-focused nonprofits like We Bike Rochester have made in our communities and across the state, and I feel fortunate to have been a partner in that progress. The Lifetime Service Award from BikeMN was the icing on the cake of a meaningful career, and I hope this acknowledgment will inspire others to persevere, despite opposition and barriers.

Jo Anne Judge-Dietz has a bachelor's degree in nursing and a master's degree in human and health services administration. She spent the last two decades of her career at Olmsted County Public Health promoting healthy lifestyles and active living for school-aged children as part of the Statewide Health Improvement Partnership, administered through the Minnesota Department of Health.

Moving Forward

Now that I've been honored for a lifetime of bike advocacy, where do I see this work going in the future?



I AM:

CONFIDENT that the strong biking network we created will continue bike advocacy work into the future.

PROUD that schools received the necessary training, procured bike fleets and have programs embedded into their curriculum.

HOPEFUL that sharing stories through statewide networks will motivate others to get involved in advocacy.

JOYFUL remembering the smiles of students accomplishing a skill at a bike rodeo, taking their first adaptive bike ride or exploring their community for the first time on a trail ride. These are priceless memories!

COMMITTED to passing it on. After purchasing an e-bike with a child seat, I am now biking the trails of Duluth with my 3-year-old granddaughter to share the joy of biking with the next generation.

— Jo Anne Judge-Dietz



▲ Catherine Windyk, Move Minneapolis, and the late Greg Williams, Ramsey County Parks & Recreation Commission, who died April 1.



◀ BikeMN Deputy and Education Director angela olson and Board Chair Reyna Lopez



Risa Hustad, Versus Racing, and Mike Pavlik, Twin Cities stolen bike recovery network



“We believe that our loved ones who walk, bike, roll or use transit – whether by choice or necessity – deserve to be safe.”

— Michael Wojcik, executive director, BikeMN



Sandra Balcazar; Emilio Cruz, car-free volunteer, Latinos en Bici Minnesota; Marco Mejia, BikeMN volunteer; BikeMN Board Chair Reyna Lopez, LatinoLEAD; Enrique Ruiz and Edca Martinez

“I want our elected leaders to understand how investing in safe, accessible bikeways can empower people of all ages.”

— Zack Mensinger, chair, Saint Paul Bicycle Coalition



Cindy Winters, board member, BikeMN and Greater Mankato Bike and Walk Advocates; Gary Winters, GMBWA supporter; and Andy Lambert, Cyclehoop and past BikeMN board chair



BikeMN members Lisa Olson and Karyn Wilson

▼ Laura Groenjes Mitchell, Our Streets board president, and BikeMN member Rick Beckel



Joshua Houdek, Sierra Club North Star Chapter



▲ Kerri Kolstad, Twin Cities Bike Tour ride planning and logistics, and BikeMN Communications Manager Erik Noonan



Zack Mensinger, Saint Paul Bicycle Coalition; Brian Martinson, Transportation Advisory Board, non-motorized member, Metropolitan Council; and Ian R Buck, host, Streets.mn podcast

Expanding our Scope

GOVERNMENT AND FOUNDATION SUPPORT ENSURES PEOPLE-POWERED TRANSPORTATION.

By Dan Nemes

BikeMN members like you power our mission: to engage, provide education, and advocate for walking, rolling and biking. You volunteer at BikeMN rides, help at fix-it clinics, show up at city planning meetings and give generously as a monthly supporter. Thank you!

When you share time and financial resources, it demonstrates to corporations, foundations and government agencies that our shared vision — a Minnesota where every person, everywhere, can easily walk, bike and roll as ways to move in daily life — is viable.

Here are a few of the funds and programs your support helps us access.



Dan Nemes,
development
coordinator, BikeMN

BICYCLE/PED COUNTER

The Shavlik Foundation, which focuses on how nonprofits “use new devices and technology to realize their missions,” granted BikeMN funds to purchase a bicycle/ped counter that expands our capacity to conduct active transportation audits.

The bike/ped counter uses a pneumatic tube and a magnetic device to count people who pass by on foot or bicycle. BikeMN will use the information gathered to engage local decision-makers on issues of active transportation infrastructure, including complete streets and paths.



E-BIKE COMMUTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

BikeMN is working with the Minnesota Department of Transportation’s Mobility Management Unit and business partners in Duluth and the Red Lake Nation to pilot our E-Bike Commuter Assistance Program.

Funding comes from MnDOT’s Greater Minnesota Shared Mobility Program, which focuses on “the dynamics and needs of rural, tribal and small urban areas with less than 200,000 people.”



We’re collaborating with seven community partners to make commuting by e-bike safe and accessible in places such as Duluth and on the Red Lake Nation.

GREEN ZONE INITIATIVE

BikeMN received a grant from the City of Minneapolis Department of Health’s Green Zone Initiative, which focuses on neighborhoods where pollution affects people who are racially, politically and economically marginalized.



**Building Healthier
Communities**

Funding supports Adult Learn to Ride classes, which have introduced bicycling and bike commuting to hundreds of people living in Minneapolis and St. Paul, along with suburbs such as Brooklyn Park, Hopkins, Maplewood and Richfield. We’re also partnering with community organizations that serve immigrants so that everyone can enjoy the health, social and environmental benefits of riding a bike.

WE HOST GREAT RIDES. • WE EMPOWER AND EDUCATE PEOPLE.

CLIMATE ACTION

As a partner in the McKnight Foundation's Midwest Climate & Energy Program, BikeMN demonstrates how active transportation reduces emissions from Minnesota's transportation sector — the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in our state.



SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

Through the Safe Routes to School Program, we help empower teachers and students to explore safe and fun transportation choices together. Children and teens learn to make choices about how they move through the world, transforming a rushed morning car ride into a walk or bike trip full of fresh air and the seasons' natural rhythms.



YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS

One of my goals for 2025 is to make it easier for BikeMN members to give from a stock portfolio, a Donor-Advised Fund or a retirement account through a Qualified Charitable Distribution.

No matter how you contribute, thank you for being a part of BikeMN. Together we're proving that active transportation isn't incidental. Enjoying a walk, bicycling to the store or using a wheelchair to ride the bus fundamentally shape who we are as individuals and members of a community.

We're grateful to do this work with you!

Dan Nemes lives with his family in Rochester, where he is a stay-at-home parent and cargo bike enthusiast.

To learn how you can support BikeMN, visit bikemn.org/get-involved/donate/ or click on the QR code.



Board of Directors 2025



Reyna Lopez,
2025 board chair



Andy Lambert,
2024 board chair

BOARD OFFICERS

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Kim Struk (she/her), secretary, Roseville
Marcie Lowry, treasurer, St. Louis Park

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Khaleel Qandeel, Minneapolis
Tom Steen, Rochester
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Martha Wavrin (she/her), Belle Plaine
Cindy Winters (she/her), Mankato

"Minnesota is our home, and everyone deserves to feel welcomed, valued and represented in the spaces we share."

— Reyna Lopez, board chair, 2025

Here, There and Everywhere

BikeMN co-hosted or participated in significant events in 2024 — expanding our influence and exposing ourselves to learnings and insights that we can share with our members.

City Nerd: In partnership with Our Streets Minnesota, the Cultural Wellness Center and Streets.mn, BikeMN hosted YouTube sensation Ray Delahanty (a/k/a City Nerd) in April 2024 for a take-over-the-streets bike tour of Minneapolis and gathering of local urbanists at Venture Bikes on the Midtown Greenway.

In the most diverse neighborhood of the most diverse city in Minnesota, “We can’t do victory laps at 5% mode share,” says Anthony Taylor, a renowned bike educator and leader in the Black cycling community. We must lean into the strength of our diverse communities and create more welcoming spaces for people to opt out of driving.

Black Bike Week: BikeMN worked with educator, outdoorsman and accomplished cyclist Anthony Taylor on the 10th annual Black

Bike Week in August 2024, a celebration of Black-led contributions to bicycling culture in Minnesota. Highlights included Bike Church; visits with Black bike pioneers Nelson Vails and Shaums March; a bike ride co-hosted by Slow Roll MSP; and a Ladies’ Night ride led by Searra Hetherington of Biking With Baddies “to celebrate how cycling is growing in communities of women.”

BikeMN hopes to grow this celebration across the state in 2025.

Safe Routes to School

Conference: BikeMN Deputy and Education Director angela olson and Education Manager CJ Lindor attended the conference in Fort Collins, Colorado, from October 22–24, 2024. angela presented as part of two sessions: “Let’s Roll With it: A Gathering of and for Bike Educators” with bike/ped educators and advocates across the country,

and “Pedaling the Policy: Local, State and National Bike Education” with Alison Dewey, education director at the League of American Bicyclists.

Warren and Warroad Bikeable Communities

Workshop: BikeMN spent two days in northwestern Minnesota in summer 2024, conducting on-bike assessments of the transportation infrastructure in Warren and Warroad. Natalie Gille, our Bicycle Friendly Assessment expert at BikeMN, produced reports for each community, summarizing strengths and areas of opportunity.

Conversations have continued, fostering relationships and contributing to the increasing bicycle-friendliness in Greater Minnesota. So far in 2025, BikeMN GreenCorps member Madeline Lange has been analyzing how this program will evolve.

BIKEMN EVENT: Henry Grabar

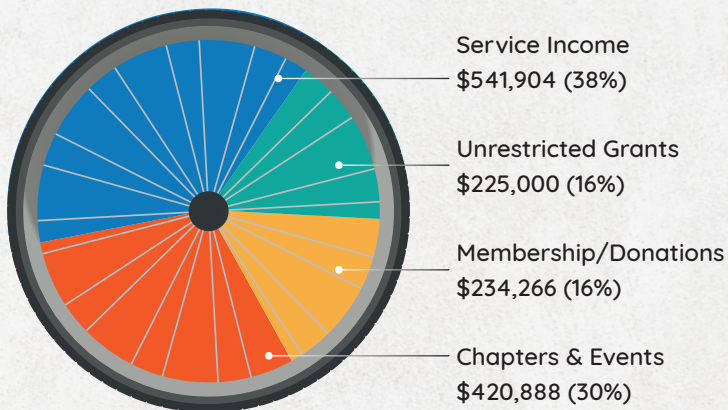
The author of “Paved Paradise: How Parking Explains the World” (2024, Penguin Press) — a book the New York Times called “wry and revelatory” — Henry Grabar spoke twice in Minnesota in April 2024 at the invitation of BikeMN. His Rochester and St. Paul appearances each drew more than 100 people, despite cold, rainy weather.

Grabar, who writes about housing, transportation and urban policy at Slate, calls parking ramps “one of Americans’ least favorite places” and says parking enforcement “is a subset of revenue-driven policing.” Before leaving Minnesota, he testified at a State Senate hearing in favor of the People Over Parking Act, which would have prohibited minimum parking standards statewide.

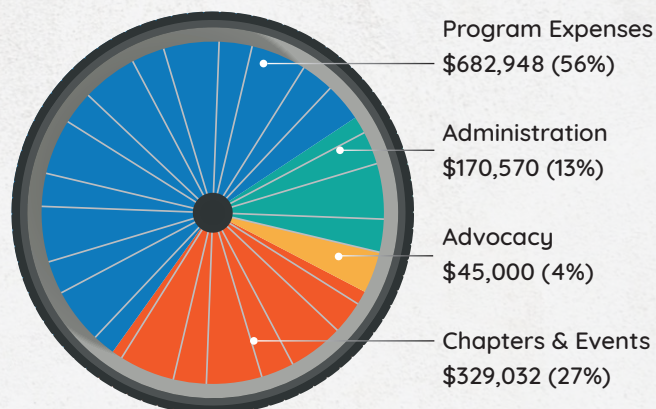


BikeMN's Financial Picture 2024

WHERE OUR MONEY COMES FROM



WHERE OUR MONEY GOES



OUR COMMITMENT TO OUR MISSION

Amid an ongoing national conversation about diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility, the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota is proud to reaffirm our commitment to pursuing transportation equity in communities of every size and type — a cause that has been our core mission since day one.

Our organization and membership are stronger when we welcome diverse perspectives and lived understandings of the ways Minnesota can make it easier and more convenient for people to move under their own power. BikeMN will continue to be inclusive and welcoming in our programs and spaces and to support the values of diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility through our partnerships, events, hiring practices and approach to education.

The path forward is together. As the late Senator Paul Wellstone (D-Minn.) famously said: “We all do better when we all do better.”

Our Statewide Reach

The Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota now has 13 chapters across the state. Our members can opt to share their annual dues with the chapter(s) of their choice.

Our 12 geographically based chapters are in: Albert Lea, Cannon Falls, Duluth, Fargo-Moorhead, Fergus Falls, Grand Marais, Hopkins, Mankato, Rochester, St. Paul, Thief River Falls and Willmar. Bicycling Around Minnesota (BAM), another chapter, sponsors an annual bike ride and supports bicycle safety initiatives.



A Zen Master of Gentle Persistence

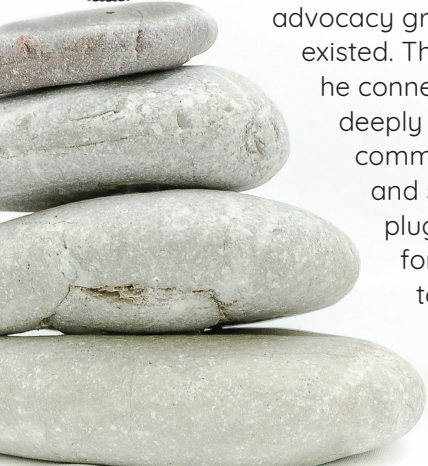
HONORING THE MAN WHO
PUT MINNESOTA BICYCLING
ON THE MAP.

By Nick Mason

The bike community lost one of our fiercest friends this February when Hōkan — known and beloved by one name — died at age 68. Hōkan's numerous contributions to bicycle advocacy in Minneapolis and across Minnesota leave a legacy of tenacity, kindness and quiet, powerful impact.



Like many local advocates of the time, Hōkan found his early home on Minneapolis Bike Love, the online space that brought together scrappy doers before official bike advocacy groups existed. There, he connected deeply with the community — and stayed plugged in for decades to come.



Hōkan (in box bike), the smiling man surrounded by cycling friends.

As he often said, simply:
“I like bikes.”

In 2006, he joined the Minneapolis Bicycle Advisory Committee, where he championed safer street design and more equitable infrastructure and helped guide numerous policies. A founding member of both the Minneapolis Bicycle Coalition (now Our Streets) and the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota (BikeMN), Hōkan also served for years as a Midtown Greenway Trail Watch volunteer in Minneapolis — always riding, always watching, always waving.

But Hōkan's greatest and most enduring contributions came through bicycle education.

In 2008, he became one of Minnesota's first League Cycling Instructors (LCI), thanks to funding from the Federal Non-Motorized Transportation Pilot Project. He joined BikeMN's first-ever Education Committee: teaching class after class, adapting his approach, welcoming feedback and meeting students exactly where they were.

“No class was too small,” recalls BikeMN Education Manager CJ Lindor. “He was that quirky oddball

we all know and love — passionate about safety and equity, but without an ounce of judgment. He made everyone feel welcome.”

When national coach Steve Clark needed help with a training, Hōkan and I stepped up immediately. Our team of three would go on to build an extraordinary foundation for bicycle education.

- From 2009 to 2013, our trio trained every new LCI in Minnesota.
- In 2013, both Hōkan and I became national-level LCI Coaches — two of only about 15 in the country at the time.
- Our work gave Minnesota more coaches per capita than anywhere in the U.S. and helped establish a robust training program that drew participants from other states.

Recognizing that representation matters, Hōkan and I consciously recruited women to co-lead and participate in every LCI seminar we led. One of those early recruits, Jan Matheus, went on to become an LCI Coach herself. Together, Hōkan, Jan and I organized the nation's first

FTW (Femme, Trans, Women) LCI seminar — and later, with support from Minnesota-trained Coach Neil Walker, one of the first BIPOC-focused seminars as well.

Hökan's commitment to equity was steady and intentional, woven into the way he taught, recruited and created space for others to lead. Many of the hundreds of instructors our team certified now teach students of all ages through Walk!

Bike! Fun!, the most successful bicycle and pedestrian safety education program in the country.

He was a policy sleuth, too. "He read and understood all the related state statutes well enough to identify inconsistencies," says former BikeMN Executive Director Dorian Grilley. Hökan was the first

to spot a loophole in Minnesota's 3-foot passing law — one that left riders unprotected if they were hit while biking on the shoulder. The Legislature later fixed that gap.

"I'm here because I'm selfish. . . If more people bike, and bike in a safe manner, I will have a better time when I'm bicycling."

Under his guidance, the Hennepin County Bicycle Advisory Committee became the Active Transportation Committee, reflecting a broader focus on people walking, rolling and biking. "He helped rewrite the mission and principles to be more inclusive," says Hennepin County's Jordan Kocak.

"He was a Zen master on two wheels," says Clark, the national coach. "Gentle, calm, never pushy — but oh, was he persistent."

So, do one thing for Hökan, even if you never knew him: Ride your bike

to the grocery store. Commute to work. Take a slow roll with friends for beer and pizza. And take a moment to savor and celebrate all he gave us.

Nick Mason is a founding board member and previous deputy director of BikeMN. He lives in Malmö, Sweden, and is principal of Evolution Cycle Consulting.

IN SERVICE

- Founding member, BikeMN and Minneapolis Bicycle Coalition
- Minneapolis Bicycle Advisory Committee
- BikeMN Education and Advocacy committees
- Hennepin County Active Transportation Committee
- Midtown Greenway Coalition Trail Watch

Blooming Good Fun!

Biking is healthy, environmentally friendly – and joyful!
And we're here to inspire you to do more of it.

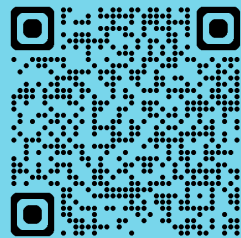
Spring out of your vehicle and replace one car trip a week:

- * Ride on two wheels to a community meeting or friend's house.
- * Try cycling on your errands.
- * Make plans to try a bike commute to work!

The **iBikeMN Challenge** will roll throughout spring and summer and into fall.

Check out **ibikemn.org** to download the app and learn more.

Metro-area riders: Follow us on Bluesky, Instagram and Facebook for challenges and prizes!



ibikemn.org





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MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55406

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PERMIT NO. 7078

Vibrant Communities

We envision a state where every person from Moorhead to La Crescent, Luverne to Two Harbors can easily walk, bike or roll in daily life. Thanks to BikeMN's work, Minnesota ranks among the safest states in the nation when it comes to road safety, but we fall far behind many of our global peers.

Minnesota is spending more money on roads and bridges than ever before. So, why aren't roadway fatalities decreasing? Last year 470 Minnesotans didn't come home: parents, children, loved ones and friends. That is 17% above the average we saw in the preceding seven years.

To BikeMN the only acceptable number of roadway deaths is zero, a goal achieved in communities in the United States and abroad.

A truly safe system requires many approaches:

- We need infrastructure that prioritizes the safety of all users, particularly those outside of cars and trucks.
- We need our state to lead on policy and technological implementation like auto enforcement and speed limiters for dangerous drivers.
- We need people-scale neighborhoods statewide where community members can realistically meet their needs without depending on a car.

With partners like you, we continue to advance all these solutions. Everyone deserves to move about freely and come home safely.



— Michael Wojcik, executive director