

# MINNESOTA NEEDS SAFE WALKING & BICYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

## Minnesotans are walking and bicycling more.

A recent statewide poll found that 70% of Minnesotans, or members of their household, walk daily or at least once a week in their community. An additional 22% of respondents said they or members of their household bicycle at least once a week in their community.<sup>1</sup>

## Minnesota's pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure needs far exceed existing funding.

The time is now to fund transportation in ways that improve safe access for all users. Funding is needed to ensure we build an effective 21st century transportation system across the state, including good, safe and accessible infrastructure for walking and bicycling.

- *Local property tax dollars, already stretched thin by demand for basic road repair, are the primary source of funding for sidewalks, bike lanes and trails, as well as curb ramps required under the Americans with Disabilities Act.*
- *MnDOT estimates it will have only half the revenue needed for pedestrian and bicycle investments in the state's trunk highway corridors.<sup>2</sup>*
- *In the last funding cycle, the Minnesota Safe Routes to School Program could not even fund half of the applications they received.<sup>3</sup>*
- *The state and regionally administered federal program Transportation Alternatives (TAP) also cannot meet demand—during the last round of funding, applicants sought \$21 million to construct pedestrian and bicycle projects while only \$6 million was available.<sup>4</sup>*

**Hundreds of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure projects throughout Minnesota, totaling more than \$1.3 billion dollars, await funding.**



## STATEWIDE SURVEY OF MINNESOTANS

**65% favor more funding for ped/bike infrastructure in transportation funding proposals even though 87% say driving is their primary means of transportation**

October 2014 survey of 1000 randomly selected residents by The Morris Leatherman Company

## PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE NEED IN MINNESOTA

Safe Routes to School	\$16 million
Pedestrian	\$216 million
Local bike/ped plans	\$330 million
Regional Trail	\$374 million
Local Trail	\$426 million
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1.3 billion</b>

This estimate of pedestrian and bicycle needs is drawn from a 2014 scan of government web sites and direct communication with local, regional, and state planners, engineers, and elected officials. Includes only projects advanced to preliminary engineering.

## Safe pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure builds communities.

Across the state, people of every age want to be able to move safely around their community by walking, bicycling, or in wheelchairs. City and county leaders currently have a backlog of \$1.3 billion in projects for sidewalks, curb ramps, safer intersections, and bike routes.<sup>5</sup>

- **Railroad traffic divides some communities.** Staples and Detroit Lakes found solutions that improved conditions for trains and drivers, while increasing safety for seniors, kids, and visitors walking or bicycling in town and to nearby attractions.
- **Safe routes for walking or biking to school help improve the health** and learning ability of students, while saving school districts thousands of dollars on bus transportation.
- **Walking and biking routes have become an economic development engine** and a means of attracting and retaining a strong workforce. Lanesboro, Bemidji and Duluth have seen these benefits. Red Wing, Rochester, Moorhead and other communities are seeking them through new comprehensive transportation plans.
- **Several of Minnesota's internationally known brands have been recognized nationally as Bicycle Friendly Businesses**—such as 3M, General Mills, and Target—along with 55 other businesses, including 22 in Greater Minnesota.

**Across the state, bicycling and walking are recognized by business, health organizations, and insurers as key to an active, healthy lifestyle and reduced health care costs.**

1. Minnesotans for Healthy Kids Coalition, 2014 Active Transportation Poll, [www.heart.org/MNHealthyKidsPoll](http://www.heart.org/MNHealthyKidsPoll).
2. MnDOT Minnesota Go State Highway Investment Plan, pp. 58-61.
3. MnDOT, 2014-2016 Safe Routes to School Grant Award Announcement, <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/saferoutes/2014-grant-recipients.html>
4. MnDOT, in response to query about 2013-14 solicitation.
5. TLC analysis of city and county existing ped and bike transportation requests
6. The League of American Bicyclists, <http://bikeleague.org/bfa/awards>



**In 2013, 11% of traffic fatalities in Minnesota involved people who were walking or bicycling and more than 1,680 pedestrians and bicyclists were injured.**

Crash Facts 2013, Minnesota  
Department of Public Safety

***“I can tell you from experience in Rochester that Minnesotans are walking and biking more and that infrastructure dedicated to assuring their safety makes sense.***

***Businesses, especially retail stores, have become significant beneficiaries of these bicycle and pedestrian routes, which is one of the reasons business and community leaders have championed their development.”***

**—Ardell Brede,  
Mayor of Rochester, MN**

Star-Tribune, January 22, 2015

