



Walkable, bikable, swimmable!

What's working

Minneapolis has an amazing infrastructure.

- Our parks and beaches are real assets.
- Minneapolis has a physical infrastructure for biking and walking as well as staff members who are assigned to promote biking and walking. The bike/walk program in Public Works is unique.

We're working to retain open space and address stormwater issues.

- Minnehaha Creek is being restored to a more natural state.
- Critters are returning to parts of the city.
- We are putting resources toward keeping our water clean. The public health monitoring program works well.
- Cooperation among organizations to treat and manage stormwater has resulted in better water quality.
- Social norms have developed about picking up pet waste.
- Neighborhoods have gotten on board about water quality and runoff from yards.

Our culture helps us accomplish our goals.

- We have an engaged public. People come to meetings with research done and ideas to help.
- Minneapolis has a culture of innovation and risk-taking.
- We're willing to put resources toward walking, biking and water quality.
- A bicycle culture has developed. As a result, the City doesn't have to sponsor every bike event — other entities are organizing events.
- The relationships among City and Park and Recreation Board staff who serve on the Bicycle Advisory Committee have made it easier to raise issues and be frank with one another.

Minneapolis has national visibility.

- The \$200,000 planning grant for the river corridor is due to the fact that the infrastructure pilot program is here.

What isn't working

Winter limits our activities.

- Winter weather prohibits biking and swimming.
- Sidewalks can be slippery, and they aren't always shoveled. Pathways to transit stops are also a problem.

Signage and information is inadequate.

- Nonresidents and new users can have a hard time finding or using our bike resources.
- There are Minneapolis residents who don't know the greenway exists.
- Maps, safety materials and other information could be more centralized; outreach could be more intentional.

We haven't reached our biking and walking potential.

- In other cities, people consider a seven- or eight-block walk routine for errands and short trips. In Minneapolis, it's only three or four blocks.
- Other cities have Web sites with walking tours; we don't do that.
- Connections from Minneapolis to surrounding communities could be improved.
- Both bikers and drivers lack personal responsibility and commitment to obeying traffic laws. When it comes to how people drive and bike, "Minnesota nice" isn't so nice anymore.

Funding is inadequate.

- When a pilot project ends, the funding dries up.
- Eventually, all Minneapolis lakes could be designated as "impaired waters." When that happens, costly measures will be required.
- We build good infrastructure but fall short on programming.

- There's not enough money for maintenance and reconstruction so we can't deliver on public expectations.

We miss opportunities and haven't addressed inequities.

- North Minneapolis lacks bike/walk destinations and access to facilities.
- We aren't involving communities of color.
- We don't tie our bike/walk efforts to health issues — especially those facing communities of color and areas of poverty.
- We miss opportunities to bike on streets because of safety concerns.

Multiple jurisdictions make it harder to get things done.

- Conflicting goals of the City, Park and Recreation Board and watershed district get in the way of some projects.
- The stormwater utility creates a divide between the Park and Recreation Board and the City.
- There's no unifying, regional vision. A lot of silo efforts means we sometimes work at cross-purposes.

Developers aren't on board.

- Developers don't have information about the economic value of biking and walking; they need to be convinced to provide facilities for biking and walking.
- Developers are missing the opportunity to create more pedestrian space in front of buildings.

Exotics and invasives threaten our environment.

- If and when zebra mussels get here, we won't have beaches. No one is taking leadership on this.
- Walkers want trees, and the emerald ash borer is endangering our tree canopy.

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What should be done next

Designate key bike trails and sidewalks as snow emergency routes so they get priority maintenance.

Promote walking and biking.

- Place street furniture in downtown and in neighborhoods where people walk. Provide economic incentives for private landowners to make benches available in their neighborhoods.
- Plant trees downtown to make walkers view downtown as safe and walkable.
- Promote walking as a commuting option.
- Make walking easy, informative and fun.
- Offer incentives for businesses and developers to promote biking and walking.
- Promote winter biking by offering winter biking clinics and providing information about winter biking gear.
- Help neighborhoods visualize bike infrastructure by doing a pilot project or showcasing bike infrastructure. If neighborhoods can see working bikeways, projects won't seem so threatening and there would be less of a "not in my backyard" reaction.
- Provide continuing education to staff. For example, offer engineers professional development education about non-motoring options.
- Share lessons learned and successes about innovative economic development around bikable, walkable projects.

Think long-term.

- Fund maintenance, not just construction.
- Hire a full-time bike coordinator.

- Hire a pedestrian coordinator.
- Develop comprehensive management plans for lakes.
- Address our two remaining frontiers: 1) above the falls/upriver and 2) the missing Grand Rounds link.

Seek funding.

- Lobby for buses, streetcars and urban-interest projects so that local — not just regional — transit gets money when the federal transit bill is reauthorized.
- Make our needs known to ensure Minneapolis gets its fair share of the money that will come from the newly passed amendment to the Minnesota Constitution.

Promote driver and biker civility.

- Promote driver and biker civility and traffic lawfulness as civic responsibilities.
- Organize a community campaign led by a well-known person to challenge us on the need to slow down and pay attention to one another.
- Train the police and others to enforce traffic laws strategically for all users (drivers and bikers).

Improve community engagement.

- Be more equitable when setting meeting times and locations.
- Make greater efforts to involve communities of color.
- Involve all generations. If we don't create stewards now, we'll lose future public support.

Make it easier for residents to get credit for rainwater diversion.

"The water quality in our Chain of Lakes is unheard of for a city this size."

- Watershed District employee
