



# Bike Rides Statewide

More than 800 cyclists, of all ages and abilities, joined the inaugural Med City Meander in Rochester on Saturday, May 25, over Memorial Day weekend. "It truly was a showcase of the strong community-wide desire for more family-friendly, healthy events," says Erik Noonan, communications chair for We Bike Rochester.



A 30-mile ride and a 12-mile option challenged and accommodated cyclists of all ages, with the majority of riders being age 50 and older.

We Bike Rochester — one of BikeMN's 11 chapters throughout the state — works to "normalize bicycling in Rochester," according to its website ([webikerochester.com](http://webikerochester.com)); that includes advocating for safer, more extensive cycling infrastructure in the growing city. According to Noonan, ride planners struggled to find a sufficiently long, "contiguous looping route without dangerous crossings — evidence that there is work yet to be done on stitching together the disparate segments of our trail network and bike grid," he explains.

Although not all Med City Meander riders answered questions on demographic data, among the 500 or so who registered in advance, 485 were from Minnesota, 53% were male, 46% were female and a handful of riders identified as nonbinary.

For news about the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota's next inaugural ride in 2024 — the Twin Cities Bike Tour on Sunday, September 15 (which replaces BikeMN's previous affiliation with the Saint Paul Classic Bike Tour) — see pages 4 and 5.



## CHALLENGES AND FUN!

Learn more about these rides and other opportunities at [bikemn.org/events](http://bikemn.org/events).



### Tour of Saints

Saint Joseph/Saint Cloud  
SUNDAY, JULY 21



### Rock 'n' Roll the Lakes

Albert Lea  
SATURDAY, AUGUST 10



### Mankato River Valley 100

Mankato  
SUNDAY, AUGUST 25



### Twin Cities Bike Tour

Minneapolis-St. Paul  
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 15



### Rosewood Gramble

Thief River Falls  
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

# Executive Director's News and Views

Dear Friends and Supporters,

I am nearing my one-year anniversary as executive director of the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota. The experience has been both a joy and a challenge. Our organization continues to perform well with an outstanding team, board and statewide support network. The work that our team gets to do makes Minnesota safer, healthier, more equitable and enjoyable — for pedestrians, cyclists and others on wheels. What a pleasure it is to be part of such an effort!

Minnesota is the best state in the nation for safe active transportation, and we're only getting better:

- The Twin Cities is the best bicycling metro in North America, hands down.
- Small communities like Grand Marais, Crosby, Fergus Falls and Lanesboro demonstrate that great infrastructure builds communities irrespective of size.
- Working with We Bike Rochester, we created a wildly successful Med City Meander ride in May — our first one, with over 800 riders — and we look forward to welcoming all of you to the first Twin Cities Bike Tour in September, which we promise will be an annual event.
- In early 2025 we look to expand Minnesota's leadership with a summit that will bring together policy leaders to focus on e-bike challenges and opportunities.

Nearly every day I am struck by the goodwill and respect that cyclists, policymakers, townspeople, business owners and residents statewide show our organization. Across the country, BikeMN is both noticed and admired for demonstrating how a group of caring individuals can come together to advocate for the simple right of people to be able to bike, walk or roll safely.

In my short time as executive director, our organizational membership and volunteer base have continued to grow. We were honored to formally welcome the Greater Mankato Bike Walk Advocates to the BikeMN family of



BikeMN Executive Director Michael Wojcik at an age-friendly bike program at Quarry Hill Nature Center in Rochester.

local chapters. We held our 2024 Bike Walk Summit at the State Capitol in March with record participation and partners. We continue to build strong partnerships with other organizations that are committed to equitable, safe and healthy mobility.

We are excited to take on new challenges, which you will be hearing about in the coming months. We are eager to expand statewide education programs through new partnerships with industry professionals and state agencies. We continue to grow our statewide network and connect all parts of Minnesota with resources.

As always, your volunteerism and financial support is instrumental in creating a Minnesota where every person everywhere can easily walk, bike and roll as ways to move in daily life.

Thank you for this opportunity.

Michael Wojcik, executive director  
Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota (BikeMN)  
Email: [michael@bikemn.org](mailto:michael@bikemn.org)

WE HOST GREAT RIDES. • WE EMPOWER AND EDUCATE PEOPLE. • WE CONNECT CYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS ACROSS THE STATE.

# TWO GREAT CITIES.

# ONE GREAT RIDE.



When the BikeMN team was designing a new metro-area ride for this September, they kept a single word in mind: **Differentiate**.

Other goals were paramount, including affordability, accessibility, routes for riders of all ages and experience levels, collaboration with community partners. But BikeMN also wanted a ride distinctly different from the Saint Paul Classic Bike Tour, whose owner parted ways with the Bicycle Alliance last winter after more than two decades.

And so, meet the inaugural Twin Cities Bike Tour (TCBT), a two-city ride on Sunday, September 15, whose longest route — the 46-miler — takes riders along portions of more than a dozen different trail systems in Minneapolis and St. Paul. All three routes begin and end at Wabun Park near Minnehaha Falls in Minneapolis, where music along with guided yoga and stretching by Alex Daye (certified through Yoga Sanctuary) will invigorate the early-morning riders.

“We felt our ridership was ready to see more of the Twin Cities,” says ride organizer Kerri Kolstad, who runs Wahoo! Adventures, a TCBT sponsor. Ride planners are excited about the Minneapolis focus, especially given that the city’s one-day Minneapolis Bike Tour ended in 2018.

Other Twin Cities Bike Tour differentiators:

- The 20-mile route is primarily in Minneapolis, widely considered one of the nation’s best biking cities.
- Rest stops showcase community partnerships with groups like Biking with Baddies (bikingwithbaddies.com), created by a Black woman for people of color; and businesses like woman-owned Bread and Pickle at Lake Harriet.
- Music curated by a DJ will guide riders to their well-earned breaks at most of the rest stops.
- All types of bikes (including e-bikes) and riders of all abilities are welcome, especially if this is your first cycling event.
- Riders can customize and lengthen the 20-mile route by riding full loops around Lake Nokomis and the Chain of Lakes: Harriet, Bde Maka Ska and Lake of the Isles. “And 46-mile riders can also add Lake Phalen!” says Ted Duepner, supporter relations and engagement manager.

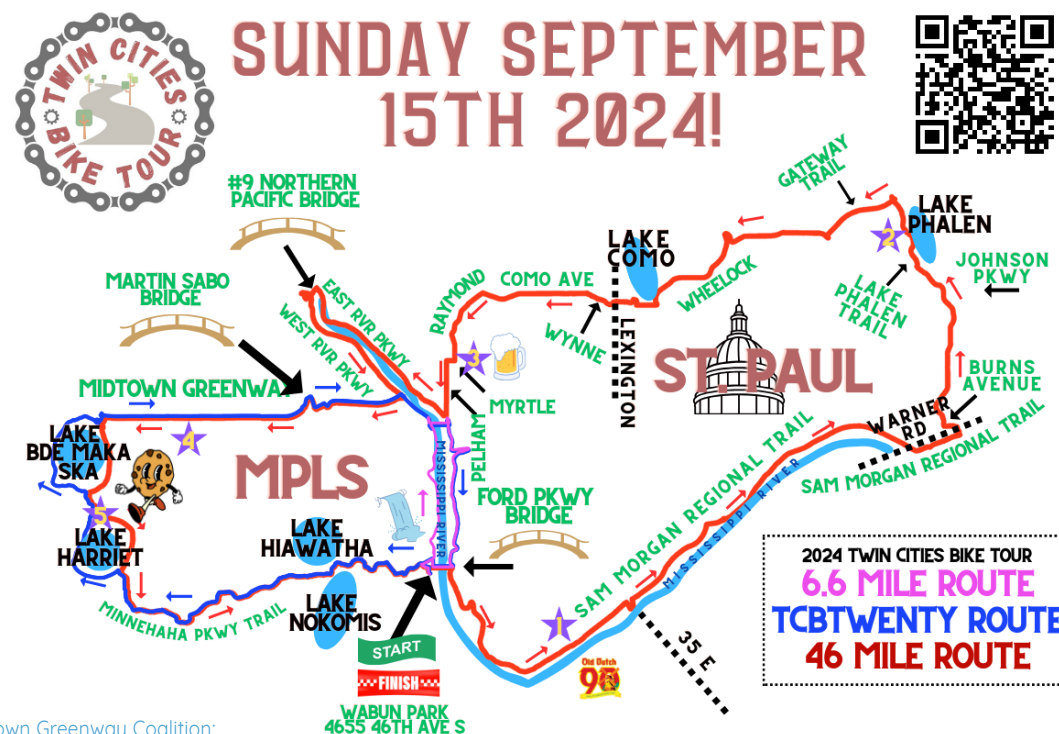
Advanced-registration pricing: \$10 for the 6.6-miler (a “group start” ride that’s free for anyone under 18); \$30 for the TCTwenty; and \$46 for the 46-mile ride.

Calling it “a new annual tradition,” the Bicycle Alliance hopes to make the ride a favorite event for cyclists in a four-season state where warm weather cycling opportunities abound. “With a calendar bursting with so many bicycling event offerings, I was surprised to find one glaring omission: None seemed to include routes within the City of Minneapolis,” Duepner wrote in a blog post on the Bicycle Alliance site (bikemn.org). That, plus the addition of a good chunk of the Saint Paul Ground Round on the 46-mile route, ensures that the Twin Cities Bike Tour will be — as Executive Director Michael Wojcik describes it — “a grand celebration of the best bicycling cities in North America.”

## Rockin’ Rest Stops

With an emphasis on mixing and mingling at the community partner rest stops, the Bike Alliance has the following stops planned for the 46-mile route (the 20-miler goes past only the last two):

- Twin Cities in Motion, pump-you-up music and snacks.
- Lake Phalen Pavilion, with scenic water views.
- Dual Citizen Brewing, enjoy a buck off your beer.
- Venture Bikes, a party zone of demos, bike clubs and tunes.
- Bread & Pickle, with delicious homemade cookies (including vegan options).



PHOTOS, TOP TO BOTTOM: Midtown Greenway: Photo courtesy of the Midtown Greenway Coalition; Biking with Baddies: Photo by Searra Hetherington; Tater tots: Photo courtesy of Bread and Pickle; Lake Phalen: Photo by Wolfie Browender

## TCBT by the Numbers

**3 ROUTES OF VARYING LENGTHS AND CHALLENGES**

the family-friendly 6.6 miles, the “push yourself a bit” TCTwenty miler and the two-city, Flagship 46 miles, which BikeMN is pricing at a buck-a-mile.

**2,500 RIDERS**

are the goal for this first-time event.

**ONE HUNDRED VOLUNTEERS** and counting.

**34 SPONSORS** SO FAR

including AARP, Our Streets and Sustain Saint Paul.

**30 POUNDS OF FAIR-TRADE COFFEE**

FROM SPONSOR LOONS COFFEE for the Wabun Park starting and ending point.

# CYCLING FOR COMMUNITY

BY AMY GAGE / MANAGING EDITOR, STREETS.MN



BikeMN board member Reyna Lopez, a native of Mexico, founded the cycling group Latinos en Bici Mn for the Latino community.



Reyna Lopez joined the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota board in August 2022, barely four years after migrating to the United States from Monterrey, Mexico. A teacher and social worker in her home country, she is passionate about cycling education — almost as passionate as she is about bicycling itself.

“Education is the first tool to be a safe and responsible cyclist,” says Lopez, 34, an energetic woman who lives and rides in St. Paul. A cycling instructor, she teaches classes in Spanish for people from the Latino community (the term she prefers over “Latinx” or “Latine”) who are learning to ride “from scratch.”

“People think you can jump on a bike and that’s it,” says Lopez, who owns two road bikes, one mountain bike and dreams of building a gravel bike for “bikepacking.” As she explains to her students, first it is essential for a cyclist to know:

- How to wear and adjust a helmet.
- When to strobe the red light behind the bike and the white light in front.
- How to turn, especially on busy city streets.
- How to navigate among car drivers who think the road was built for them.

“You have to be careful,” Lopez says. “You have to be predictable.”

Lopez was not yet fluent in English when she came to Minnesota in 2018, a year after her now-husband, Marco, had moved to the United States to work for Polaris, the same company that employed him in Monterrey. Reyna immersed herself in the community — especially through CLUES

(Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio), where she both took and taught ESL classes. (“The best way to learn is teaching.”) She continues to volunteer in a CLUES shelter that provides social services and healthy food.



“I’m always trying to be part of the place and help others,” she says. “I am a connector.” A year-round cyclist (“I try!”) who estimates she rides about 3,200 miles during peak biking season, Lopez co-founded the cycling group Latinos en Bici Mn

for people who grew up in Latin America or want to learn about the Latino community. The group has about 80 people on its email list and Facebook page.

Her empathy and facility for engaging with people led Lopez to the Bicycle Alliance, where she was recruited to the board by founder Dorian Grilley and then-board member Verónica Jaralambides, communications and equity manager for the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED).

“I would love to have more [Latino] participation in our events,” says Lopez. “I’m so happy to be part of the board because I can share my perspective as a Latin person.”

She also is eager to help continue the Bicycle Alliance’s inclusive direction, its efforts “to connect all the communities,” including LGBTQ, Latino, Somali, Hmong, Black and Indigenous people. “Now, BikeMN has these connections everywhere,” Lopez explains. “Sometimes you need someone to bring you in.”

## BOARD TALK...

*“BikeMN actively builds relationships with communities all over the state through education, advocacy and cooperation to pass progressive active-transportation legislation at the Capitol.”*  
— ANDY LAMBERT, MINNEAPOLIS

*“Biking has so many positive benefits: physically and mentally, environmentally and economically. What is there not to love about biking?”*  
— CINDY WINTERS, MANKATO

## Meet the BikeMN board

### BOARD OFFICERS:

**Andy Lambert** (he/him), chair, Minneapolis

**Reyna Lopez** (she/her), vice chair, St. Paul

**Kim Struk** (she/her), secretary, Roseville

### BOARD MEMBERS:

**Bob Bierschied** (he/him), Roseville

**Luke Ewald** (he/him), Jackson

**Wayne Hurley** (he/him), Fergus Falls

**Dina Khaled** (she/her), Minneapolis

**Marcie Lowry**, St. Louis Park

**Thomas Lavin III** (he/him), St. Anthony

**Khaleel Qandeel**, Minneapolis and Chicago

**Tom Steen**, Rochester

**Anne Walli** (she/her), St. Paul

**Cindy Winters** (she/her), Mankato

*“I serve on the BikeMN board to add a voice for walking, biking and rolling in Greater Minnesota.”*

— WAYNE HURLEY, FERGUS FALLS



## BAM and Bicycle Alliance Join Forces

This summer's annual Bicycling Around Minnesota (BAM) event — slated for August 15-18, 2024 — is sold out, but that's not the real news. For the first time in its 18-year history, the BAM ride is affiliated with the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota.

The Thursday through Sunday outing is BikeMN's only multi-day ride, says Ted Duepner, supporter relations and engagement manager. This year's ride will feature a return to the Iron Range, starting and ending in Hoyt Lakes with visits to Chisholm, Grand Rapids and Hibbing in between.

Lisa Rippe, a member of the 2024 planning committee, credits the ride's popularity to meticulous route planning, a deep dive into the communities where cyclists spend the night, and extras such as yoga at the campgrounds, local speakers, and "a lot of mixing and mingling" that helps friends, couples and single riders alike feel welcome and included.

The statistics from previous BAM outings demonstrate the ride's diversity:

- Riders may range in age from 22 to 85.
- Half of the participants last year were first timers.
- More than 350 riders in 2023 came from 31 states and provinces.

"We highlight and showcase different small communities throughout Minnesota that others may not see," says Rippe. "It's not just about getting from A to B. It's a relaxed ride. We see sites along the way." She notes that BikeMN has retained longtime BAM Tour Director Mary Derks to "curate" this year's ride.

Lisa Austin, who was president of the BAM board when the organization was its own nonprofit, calls the merger a "win-win." She dates the origins of both BAM and the Bicycle Alliance back to MnDOT's State Bicycle Advisory Committee around 2005, back when cycling was just gaining recognition as a form of transportation.

Bicycling Around Minnesota's last trip to the Iron Range. (photos courtesy of Lisa Rippe).



BAM's mission — "to promote bicycle safety, Minnesota's bike route network, fitness, tourism and bicycling as transportation" — fits hand-in-glove with BikeMN's network of 11 chapters across the state and its emphasis on safety and education for cyclists and pedestrians statewide.

Says Austin, who was a citizen rep on the State Bicycle Advisory Committee: "We've had a symbiotic relationship between BAM and the Bicycle Alliance all along."

Learn more and join a waiting list for this year's ride at bambiketour.org.



## ADVOCATE FOR CHANGE

### Alice Tibbetts argues for equitable infrastructure in Duluth: "Never give up."

"Without strong advocates," says Alice Tibbetts, "when bad things happen on our roads, the only voice the City Council hears is city staff, primarily engineers. We advocates provide other perspectives and challenge the so-called solutions."

She should know. At age 70, Tibbetts — a former Twin Citian who migrated to Duluth in 2017 — has been advocating for 50 years for better bike infrastructure, safer sidewalks and crosswalks, Safe Routes to Schools and improved transit. In addition, she has been a strategic planner, branding consultant, grant writer and community organizer.

If you've lived in or walked and cycled through St. Paul, you may appreciate her work a decade ago as a leader of the Safer, Greener Marshall Avenue initiative, a citizens' group that worked with the city to develop the first median on a major thoroughfare in St. Paul, plus the first garden traffic-calming circle in the Merriam Park neighborhood.

The city she is working in has changed, but the mission remains the same: "Our motto at Vibrant Streets Duluth is, 'Safe Streets for Everyone,'" says Tibbetts, who co-founded the advocacy group.

It is poised to become BikeMN's 12th chapter, all but one of them in Greater Minnesota.

Formerly called We Walk in Duluth, the organization now encompasses cycling, transit and traffic calming in a city that attracts 6.7 million tourists each year. As owner of the North Shore Adventure Park in Silver Bay, Tibbetts advocates for better bike infrastructure "not just for the community but for tourists as well."



For three years, the priority for Vibrant Streets has been to form a city mobility commission to advise the mayor and City Council. She uses the term *mobility* intentionally over the more common *active transportation*. "Transportation



is something you do. Mobility is something you have," explains Tibbetts. She credits the Mobility Lab research center ([mobilitylab.org](http://mobilitylab.org)) for inspiring her. "Without mobility, transportation is meaningless."

The proposed commission will be a platform to discuss every road project five years out so it can influence design. This strategy will help Duluth build roads that are safe for everyone, she says. "We must develop a more inclusive view and stop dividing our community between [travel] modes."

How does she keep going after 50 years of advocacy? "I am always optimistic," says Tibbetts. "I never give up. I can always find someone who is willing to listen to me."

## Act Local, Think Global

With the addition of BAM, the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota now has 11 chapters across the state. These chapters have a formal relationship with BikeMN, and our members can opt-in to share their membership dues with the chapter(s) of their choice to support work in local communities.

Our 10 geographically based chapters are located in: Albert Lea, Cannon Falls, Fargo-Moorhead, Fergus Falls, Grand Marais, Hopkins, Mankato, Rochester, Thief River Falls and Willmar. Duluth will be adding a chapter soon.



## Met Council Awards Major Grant to BikeMN

BikeMN is pleased to have received a two-year grant from the Metropolitan Council to encourage residents of the Twin Cities metro area to choose to bike instead of drive, one day a week. The grant funds will be combined with operating funds to support the development, implementation and data reporting of two exciting new programs designed to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMTs).

Both programs will be piloted this year and fully implemented in 2025. Our Met Council funding requires a 20% match, and donor contributions make programs like this possible.

- The first program, the **E-Bike Commuter Assistance Program (ECAP)**, will place a fleet of up to 10 e-bikes in organizations located in or near Areas of Concentrated Poverty in the Twin Cities. In partnership with BikeMN, the organizations will provide training and incentives to encourage employees to check out an e-bike to try commuting in a more sustainable way at least once a week. The first organizations to participate include Move Minneapolis, the Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce, International Institute, Seward Redesign and Venture Bikes.
- The second program, the **iBikeMN Challenge**, will encourage residents of the broader metro area to hop on a bike instead of driving a car at least once a week. BikeMN will offer fun incentives to get Twin Cities-area residents to track their miles and rides to earn rewards, whether they're biking for commuting, errands or pleasure. Our Adult Learn to Ride classes will continue as part of this initiative.

### iBikeMN Challenge PARTICIPATE AND PROVIDE FEEDBACK!

Watch for news of the iBikeMN program launch, and then help us kick off the iBikeMN Challenge by signing up to track your miles. Tell your friends to do the same. Every ride you record as part of the iBikeMN challenge will support the success of the program.

We plan to start small and build the program more fully throughout the year. As always, we appreciate your feedback and support!

To learn more about both programs, visit [bikemn.org/ECAP](http://bikemn.org/ECAP).



BikeMN will collect data about the programs — through an app, iBikeMN, that is still in development — and deliver a final report in 2026. The app will provide even more ways to track your rides, earn incentives and connect with your cycling community.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

BikeMN has a side-by-side tandem, a wheelchair tandem and other adaptive equipment that Walk! Bike! Fun! program participants can access for their students ([walkbikefun.org](http://walkbikefun.org)).



## GUIDEPOSTS FOR GIVING

ANY GIFT, OF ANY SIZE, HELPS POWER OUR WORK

BY DAN NEMES / DEVELOPMENT LEAD, BIKEMN

We're inspired by how deeply our donors feel about safe and accessible streets for all Minnesotans. And your donations to the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota help so many people, in so many ways.

Consider:

### Walking, Rolling and Biking Is PERSONAL

Riding your bike or walking down your street is a joyful act. Your contribution conveys and shares that sense of joy.

### Walking, Rolling and Biking Is COMMUNITY

You envision a different kind of transportation culture, one that creates connected communities and wellbeing for all our neighbors. No matter how our bodies work, our donors plan and work together to create ways for everyone to move.

### Walking, Rolling and Biking Is GOOD

Our donors know that more people walking and biking makes all of us safer. You give not only for yourself, but so everyone can be safer on the way to school, the grocery store, work, the library or the park.

### Walking, Rolling and Biking Is AUTHENTIC

We're always honest about how and where we use your donations, and we are vocal about how active transportation lightens people's impact on the planet. Whatever your ability or level of athleticism, every person can make a difference in their own way.

### Walking, Rolling and Biking Is IMPACTFUL

We partner with schools and educators, healthcare systems and healers, businesses and employees, units of government and decision makers, and with all of you — our supporters — to make it easier to walk, roll and bike in Minnesota.

Thank You  
for Giving!

Your generous contributions power our shared work across Minnesota. Let's celebrate pedestrian- and bike-friendly legislation, and always look for creative ways to help our children, friends and neighbors enjoy our streets and trails on foot or by wheel.

We welcome  
your donation  
at [bikemn.org/donate](http://bikemn.org/donate)  
or use the QR code.

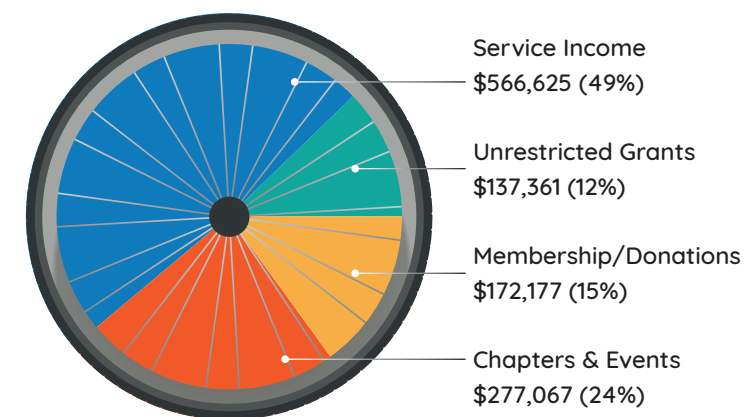


## Why I Give

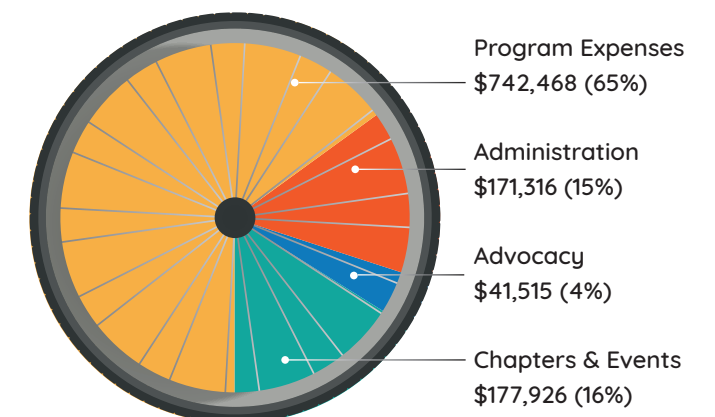
"I contribute to BikeMN because bike and pedestrian safety benefits our community and Perennial Cycle. I really appreciate the heavy lifting that BikeMN does for Minnesota advocacy."

— Luke Breen, proprietor,  
Perennial Cycle, Minneapolis

### WHERE OUR MONEY COMES FROM



### WHERE OUR MONEY GOES



Note: All figures are for 2023 and pending audit completion.



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# Thank You, Donors!

## ADVOCATES LIKE YOU MAKE MINNESOTA ONE OF THE BEST PLACES TO WALK, BIKE AND ROLL!

Your philanthropic investment in BikeMN supports a growing and powerful network of cyclists and pedestrians throughout Minnesota.

- Together, we empower and educate children and adults so everyone can experience joy and freedom on our streets.
- We lobby with a collective voice at the state Legislature for common-sense transportation policy prioritizing community connection, human health and sustainability.
- We are an inclusive community that comes together to enjoy great rides that strive to be accessible to everyone.

Your thoughtful giving makes all this possible. Thank you!

BikeMN is grateful for your continued support, and we look forward to recognizing all our donors in an annual publication.

## Climate-Conscious Commuting

The BikeMN office is dog-friendly (to friendly dogs). Here, Ted Duepner's dog, Freeda, rides in her Yuba Supermache cargo bike. She occasionally rides in the Wike trailer, too.

