

MINNESOTA NONMOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Formerly the State Bicycle Advisory Committee

Annual Newsletter
2008



October 2008

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The State Bicycle Advisory Committee Becomes the Minnesota Nonmotorized Transportation Advisory Committee

-Michelle Natrop, MNTAC Coordinator

Under the 85th Legislative session, the State Bicycle Advisory Committee has become the Minnesota Nonmotorized Transportation Advisory Committee. According to Minnesota Statute 174.37, Mn/DOT will establish an advisory committee on nonmotorized transportation. The committee will make recommendations to the commissioner on items related to nonmotorized transportation, including safety, education, and development programs. The committee shall review and analyze issues and needs relating to operating nonmotorized transportation on public rights-of-way, and identify solutions and goals for addressing identified issues and needs. The committee will consider bicycling issues, pedestrian activities, and other forms of nonmotorized transportation.

The structure of the committee remains the same as when it was the State Bicycle Advisory Committee, but does provide additional membership for new interest groups. The new membership terms are four year.

A new website should be available in early December.

Mn/DOT's Office of Transit Director's Perspective

-Mike Schadauer, Director

Bicycling has always been a transportation option for me. Growing up in Madison, Wisconsin, it was my way of getting to high school and to jobs. After graduating from the University of Minnesota in 1983, I resumed my bicycle commuting with my new job at the Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT).

Recently a lot more cyclists have joined me on the streets. People are rediscovering what many knew as a child. Bicycles are not just recreational vehicles. They are the most efficient form of transportation. Whether the motivation is higher fuel costs, environmental concerns, or better health, more people are turning, or returning, to bicycles as transportation.

Given that, it has never been more important to incorporate bicycle facilities into the transportation network. The State Bicycle Advisory Committee, which has now become the Minnesota Non-motorized Transportation Advisory Committee, is instrumental in helping Mn/DOT do just that. Their focus will now expand to include pedestrian issues as well.

Recognizing the current trend, Mn/DOT is engaged in a Complete Streets study that will look at how roadways can be designed to accommodate all users—pedestrians, bicycles, automobiles, transit vehicles, and freight movers. This may result in future policy, law, or guidance on roadway design.

This may prove to be a transitional time in transportation. The Minnesota Non-motorized Transportation Advisory Committee's ongoing input will be important to help Mn/DOT strive for a transportation network that best serves all citizens of Minnesota.

2008 Minnesota Bicycle Summit

The 2008 Minnesota Bike Summit took place on Saturday, April 26, 2008 in Bloomington at Quality Bicycle Products. Over one hundred bicycle advocates, industry representatives, and public agency professionals from all around the state gathered to learn from each other and discuss how to communicate more effectively on bicycle issues throughout the state.

The day began with a keynote presentation from Wisconsin neighbors, Tom Huber and Dave Schlabowske. The pair credited the important relationship between a state agency and a citizen advocacy group, the Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin, with improving the quality of bicycling throughout the state.

Attendees split into smaller break-out sessions covering topics on Facilities & Policy, Promotion & Education, and Organizing. Speakers from the DNR, DOT, and others provided valuable information on the various policies, planning processes, and funding sources necessary to be effective in working with agencies on upcoming bicycle related projects.

Dominic Liberatore of the Thunderhead Alliance lead the organizing track to facilitate a discussion on the possibility of starting a state-wide advocacy group.

The working session group assembled and prioritized both short-term and long-range goals that can become a work plan for a more formal group.

There was also an exhibit area where non-profit organizations including State Bicycle Advisory Committee, The Twin Cities Bicycle Club, Three Rivers Park District, National Park Service and the Complete Streets Movement setup displays with information about their organization and activities.

At the end of a cold and snowy spring day, attendees left energized and more educated on how to take bicycling to the next level throughout the state. It was an amazing day thanks to everyone who gave their time and energy. There was strong interest to expand the Summit next year with even more participation from the bicycle industry and the community and a lot of enthusiasm for starting a state-wide bicycle advocacy group.

BACKGROUND

The 2008 Minnesota Bike Summit was born from the Bicycle Leadership Workshop in 2007 that took place in St. Cloud and consisted of about 100 professionals and citizens from around the state interested in bicycling issues. Attendees appreciated the opportunity to network and learn from each other; there was strong

-Lisa Austin and Nick Mason

interest to congregate again in 2008.

A dedicated committee of both citizen and agency representatives from the SBAC met regularly for several months to plan and organize the event. The committee included: Darryl Anderson, Lisa Austin, Dan Brevia, Nick Mason, Dave Minge, Tim Mitchell, Steve Sanders, Liz Walton.

The original plan for the 2008 Bike Summit was to hold it in conjunction with the Bike Expo to be held at the Minneapolis Convention Center. When that event was cancelled the committee quickly came up with an alternate plan. Quality Bicycle Products offered their facility and meeting rooms for the summit. The date was selected because of the proximity to the Ironman bike ride to accommodate bicyclists from Greater Minnesota who would already be traveling to the area.

Summit partners included members of the Mn/DOT State Bicycle Advisory Committee (SBAC), Quality Bicycle Products (QBP), and Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota.

For more information contact Lisa Austin, laustin@visi.com and ask for a copy of the proceedings.

First Year Reflections

During my first year as a Metro rep, I was in learning mode concerning the role of the MNTAC in influencing state bicycling policies. As a member of the law committee, we reviewed bicycle-specific Minnesota state traffic laws and discussed if and how the laws should be modified. This discussion will continue into our next year and any changes we recommend will be sent to the legislature. I also took part in the public hearing process for both the Central Corridor LRT line and the Transportation chapter of the City of St. Paul's Comprehensive Plan.

-Benita Warns, Metro Rep

Third Annual Bicycling Around Minnesota—BAM Tour

-Mary Nelsestuen, Former Metro Rep

One hundred twenty bicyclists representing thirteen states and Canada participated in the third annual Bicycling Around Minnesota-BAM tour on August 20-23, 2008 and gained a new appreciation for Western Minnesota. Beginning at the Prairie's Edge Casino Resort, the bicyclists covered 272 miles on the back roads of Big Stone, Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, Swift and Yellow Medicine counties and experienced first hand the "wind swept prairies."

The overnight cities of Benson, Ortonville and Montevideo provided great hospitality and facilities as did lunch stops in DeGraff and Appleton. "Surprise" rest stops providing beverages and treats by the cities of Maynard, Marietta and Madison were greatly appreciated. These stops also offered an opportunity for discussions between local residents and the bicyclists.

This year BAM offered tours of local industry or attractions and these, as well as lunch at a local vineyard, helped to showcase the area. To promote bicycling in each community, Dero Bike Racks again presented a bicycle rack to each overnight city.

Plans for BAM 2009 are underway so put the dates on your calendar and come join the fun. It will be August 19-22, 2009.



Nick Mason presents a bike rack to Ortonville mayor, Blair Johnson

Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota

- Lisa Austin, Chair and Bicycle Club Rep

After the 2008 Minnesota Bike Summit in April, there was a lot of energy and interest in starting a statewide bicycle advocacy group. Most other states with active bicycle communities have a non-profit organization that provides a unified voice and advocates for all bicyclists in the media, at events, and at the legislature. Bike advocacy groups also facilitate communication between bicyclists, bicycle and related organizations, government agencies, professionals, politicians and the bicycle industry.

Throughout the summer there have been several meetings of volunteers who are actively working to get the organization started by either reviving the dormant Minnesota Coalition of Bicyclists (MCB) or filing a new 501c3 non-profit organization. In either case, the name has been selected: **Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota** (BikeMN for short). This name was chosen because alliance reflects a group of individuals and organizations working toward a common goal. The volunteer group is also working on a mission and vision statement, and the logo and identity materials. The 2008-09

program goals for the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota will focus on education, advocacy and technical assistance.

What is the difference between MNTAC and the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota?

MNTAC advises Mn/DOT on non-motorized transportation and is not designed to fill the role of advocates and does not have program goals or fundraising activities. The Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota will be a non-profit organization that will have program funds and staff. MNTAC and BikeMN will be a good partnership that can support each others efforts. For example, BikeMN can help distribute information such as Share the Road materials and other educational information. They can also enlist citizens to attend public meetings and provide additional input when needed.

Watch for more information and launch events in the near future!

League of American Bicyclists National Bike Summit 2008

-Nick Mason, Industry Rep

"Climbing Capitol Hill" was the theme of the 2008 National Bike Summit. This year's conference hosted more than 500 advocates, industry and professionals for another excellent summit in Washington, DC, March 5th-7th. The conference is organized by the League of American Bicyclists and presented by Bikes Belong with new partnerships from The National Bicycle Dealers Association, Trek, and the International Mountain Bike Association.

As usual, Minnesota had a strong turn out with 10 people attending from throughout the state. Minnesota delegates represented industry, health, advocacy organizations, and citizens concerned about bicycling in their respective districts. Every district office as

well as both senate offices received a visit from MN delegates. Once again, Minnesotan legislators demonstrated knowledge that they have committed cyclists back home and voiced their support. Delegates brought attention to past issues such as Complete Streets as well as asking for support new initiatives, including the National Park Service Centennial Initiative.

Our best achievement was getting co-sponsorship of the Bicycle Commuter Act in the US Senate by MN Senator Norm Coleman. Thanks to Senator Coleman for his support. Also, special thanks go to retiring Congressman Jim Ramstad for his leadership and dedication to bicycling in the third district. Minnesota can also take pride in its strong presence of bicycle industry

including two companies, Dero Bike Rack Company of Minneapolis, and Quality Bicycle Products of Bloomington, who were again sponsors of this year's summit.

With rising gas prices and talks of new energy policy, bicycling is moving to the mainstream. The National Bike Summit continues to be both an excellent resource for those wishing to create more bicycle friendly communities and for voicing the needs of bicyclists to leadership in Washington. Unlike many issues, we are fortunate to have one that is truly, bike-partisan! To find out more about the Summit visit:

<http://www.bikeleague.org/>.

Join us next year for the 2009 National Bike Summit, March 10-12.

2008 Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Design Training -Liz Walton, Mn/DOT Bicycle & Pedestrian Section

In 2008, the Mn/DOT Office of Transit, Bicycle & Pedestrian Section, sponsored bicycle and pedestrian facility design training. The training was intended for people involved with Mn/DOT roadway design and offered guidance to plan and design safe bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Mn/DOT offered four full-day bicycle training sessions in May, where approximately 100 people attended. The pedestrian training included one two-day and one three-day session in July; approximately 85 people attended. John LaPlante, a Traffic Engineer and nationally recognized bicycle and pedestrian design expert, presented both training sessions.

Among other things, bicycle training participants gained an understanding of bicyclists' characteristics and needs; became familiar with design and traffic engineering tools and options to optimally accommodate bicycles with other roadway users; learned to identify and design bicycle facilities for a variety of roadway and land use conditions; and learned of the advantages of bicycle lanes and shared use trails. The training was based on Mn/DOT's 2007 *Mn/DOT Bikeway Facilities Design Manual*.

Pedestrian training participants learned of pedestrian design and engineering tools and options, as well as the value of including education and enforcement. Both pedestrian courses provided a special focus on current American with Disabilities guidance to ensure construction projects follow current disability directives. This training was based on the 2004 AASHTO *Guide for the Planning, Design and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities*.

The bicycle and pedestrian training included field sessions so participants could experience first-hand both successfully designed facilities and those in need of improvement. The pedestrian training participants viewed the facilities on foot; the bicycle training participants viewed the facilities on bike--some of the cyclists had not been on bicycles in years!

People finished their training by putting what they learned into practice. Each session included a group exercise where people evaluated, redesigned, and then presented design options to improve a location reviewed during their field trip.

Mn/DOT plans to hold bicycle and pedestrian training routinely and will soon begin discussions for future training.

Expanding Audiences for the Share the Road Messages

- Mary Nelsestuen, Former Metro Rep

A goal of the Share the Road campaign for 2007-2008 was to find new audiences for our STR messages and to have the STR logo and links to the STR website in as many places as possible. To accomplish this, we:

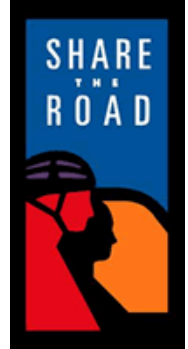
- Sent emails to 17 new organized bicycle events around Minnesota offering STR materials for the event and asking them to include the STR logo in their ride brochures
- Sent emails to 51 Minnesota bicycle shops asking them to include our logo and a link to our website on their website and have the STR materials in their shops.
- Emailed 31 bicycle clubs asking them to promote Share the Road Distribution of Spanish language brochures to five locations
- Emailed Transportation Management Organizations requesting that they add our logo and a link to STR on their websites.
- Released A Share the Road press release to newspapers in the area where the 2008 BAM tour was held.
- Hosted booth at the Minnesota State Fair where we distributed STR materials and talked with fair attendees about the importance of bicyclists and motorists Sharing the Road to decrease bicycle motor vehicle crashes.

We continued these marketing efforts from previous years:

- Sent the video, "Share the Road; Same Rules, Same Rights" and related teaching materials to 100 Commercial Driver Education Teachers in the State.
- Advertised on back lit panels featuring the STR poster and take-away brochures in the skyways in Minneapolis, St. Paul, Duluth and Rochester in May and June as well as in Minneapolis in July and in St. Paul for the RNC.
- Submitted articles for the *Minnesota Police Journal* and *Minnesota Police Chief* magazines written by Gerald Johnson, Chief of Police in Bemidji and a BAM participant and Heidi Miller, the law enforcement representative to MNTAC. There was also an article in the online newsletter for the Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association, *Communication Notes*.

- Posted a STR message and a picture on the home page of the Minnesota Department of Public Safety's Driver and Vehicle Services website from April through August.
- Distributed STR materials at bicycle events from previous years.

These efforts did make a difference as we saw 35 new requests for STR materials from a wide variety of organizations including police departments, bicycle shops, colleges, businesses, chambers of commerce, health organizations and a library. We should see the STR window clings in more vehicles as several hundred were distributed during the State Fair. The Share the Road campaign will continue



First Year Reflections - Dan Breva, Metro Rep

Here in the metro, I worked with the Minneapolis Bike Advisory Committee and the Hennepin County Bicycle Advisory Committee on an intermittent basis. Work included the development of the proposals for the Bike Walk Twin Cities grant solicitation. I now work for Free-wheel Bike in their new shop as part of the Midtown Greenway's bike center. "Share the Road" was represented there during the Grand Opening in May. The shop is an outlet for various programs promoting biking. I also presented a program "Biking on Minnesota Trails" at the Minnesota State Fair at the DNR's outdoor stage. I attended the University of Minnesota's Transportation Fair the opening week of school in September.



An eleven-foot tall biker sculpture by Victor Yopez files the Midtown Greenway Coalition's office window by the Bike Center.

Friends of MNTAC

-Kurt Franke

We are in the process of forming a "Friends" group to assist the MN Non-motorized Transportation Advisory Committee (MNTAC). We envision this group being somewhat loosely organized, made up of people interested in pedestrian and bicycling transportation issues, education and advocacy.

The Friends of MNTAC would be a good network for sharing information. It would be beneficial to have contacts in all parts of the state for just that reason. This could be a great resource for improving biking and walking throughout our state.

Having served 6 years on the MN State Bicycle Advisory Committee, I have seen many instances when we could have used some Friends. Friends could help in staffing events around the state as well as spreading the word on the Share the Road campaign and other education pieces.

We would like to extend an invitation to you to become a Friend of MNTAC. Thank you for your consideration. Please contact:

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MNTAC says Goodbye & Welcome to Members

This year the committee said good-bye to 8 representatives. Kurt Franke, District 3, and Michael Huber, Metro, both completed two - 3 year terms. David Brierley is replacing Michael as the metro representative. A replacement has not been found for District 3 yet. Dave Wogan, District 6, left after one- 3 year term, and Randy Perkins has been named as his replacement. Charles Thomas, District 7, has also left after 2 years of service. Tom Engstrom has replaced Charles as the District 7 representative. Chad Johnson, District 8, and Patricia Puetz, District 4, have also decided to leave the committee. Replacements for these positions have not been determined.

Safe Routes to School

-Kristie Billiar, Safe Routes to School Coordinator

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is a program in the federal transportation bill, SAFETEA -LU, designed to improve the conditions and quality of bicycling and walking to school. The goal of the program is to reverse the 30 year decline in the numbers of children walking to school and reintroduce opportunities for regular physical activity.

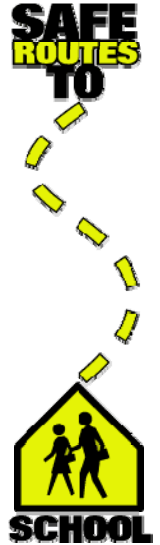
The third solicitation was held in the fall of 2008. Fourteen infrastructure projects totaling \$1,649,835 were awarded along with thirteen non-infrastructure projects totaling \$366,500.

The solicitation for 2009 monies opened September 2nd and will close November 21st. During this solicitation \$2.1 million is available in awards. The awards for this solicitation will be announced in early March 2009. This will be the last solicitation under SAFETEA-LU.

The website will be undergoing a makeover and educational materials will be available to teachers, parents, and students.

The program will be moving to the State Aid Division within Mn/DOT in mid-October. It is currently housed in the Bicycle and Pedestrian section in the Office of Transit.

For more information about the Safe Routes to School program visit <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/saferoutes/> or contact Kristie Billiar, the SRTS coordinator at kristie.billiar@dot.state.mn.us.



David Minge, Parks and Trails Council of Minnesota, has been reassigned by the Council and will be replaced by Bill Morrissey. Bob Fischer, Dept. of Education, retired in May from state service. A replacement has not been named.

The committee has added a new representative position. Michelle Musser, St. Cloud Area Planning Organization, will represent the Metropolitan Planning Organizations in the state. Phil Wheeler, Rochester-Olmsted Council of Governments will be an alternate.

The committee will miss all of our members as they move onto new things. We look forward to all of the opportunities our new members will bring to the committee.

2008 Pro Walk Pro Bike

- Susan Koschak, District 1 Rep and Liz Walton

This year's biennial Pro Walk Pro Bike conference was held in Seattle on September 2-5, 2008. Over 800 people attended the conference, including representatives from every U.S. state, Canada, Mexico, and other international locales. 54 people from Minnesota attended, including MNTAC members Steve Sanders and Susan Koschak and Liz Walton of Mn/DOT's Bicycle and Pedestrian Section.

Participants could choose from over 80 classroom workshops, 48 poster sessions, 21 mobile workshops, and a dozen special interest meetings. Topics addressed facility design, proposed changes to national technical design documents, new design treatments, mapping, assessing the demand and value of cycling improvements, research findings, traffic calming, adopting and enacting Complete Streets policies, the U.S. Bicycle Route System, Safe Routes to Schools, healthcare partnerships and active living, and much more.

Visitors to Seattle found a large, often-rainy, and very hilly city that serves as a model for others. It is a city of few stops signs, over 1,000 traffic circles, three-bike-rack buses, and a growing number of experimental shared lane markings (sharrows). Seattle and its surrounding communities have successful and innovative bicycle and pedestrian facilities, effective agencies,

partnerships, clubs, and advocacy programs, which all lead to a large (and growing) number of active cyclists and pedestrians. This became even more evident on Friday, September 5th, when the League of American Bicyclists announced that Washington State was recognized as number one in the newly created Bicycle Friendly State Program. Where was Minnesota? It ranked number five, which puts our state in good company with Washington, and reason to be proud!

Congressman Jim Oberstar provided the closing comments. He applauded the numerous accomplishments gained for bicycles and pedestrians and proclaimed his commitment to working hard for continued gains in the next transportation bill. He aims to seek expanding funding for facilities, greater recognition of bicycling and walking as modes of travel, and even announced his intention to create an Office of Livable Transportation within the USDOT.

The conference was informative and provided ample time for networking and sharing information and ideas amongst participants. The only frustration may have been that there were so many interesting workshops that it was impossible to attend them all! The 2010 conference will be held in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

"As an advocate for non-motorized transportation, this conference is an excellent chance for me to meet and talk with all sorts of professionals and volunteers from across the country. I've attended dozens of conferences over my career and this one provides more practical and usable information than any other."

Susan Koschak

"It was great to see so many people with diverse backgrounds together—from the health care industry, elected officials, state and federal agencies, engineers, planners, to volunteers—all supporting the common goal of encouraging safe bicycling and walking and improving those facilities in our communities. With so many pursuing this common goal, the future of bicycling and walking is very promising".

Liz Walton



Bicycling Around
Minnesota tour,
Photo by Nick Mason

MNTAC Sets Priorities for 2008-2009

- Michelle Natrop, MNTAC Coordinator

The MNTAC met September 19, 2008 in Arden Hills to discuss priorities for 2008-2009. The group brainstormed different issues to work on in the next year. These issues were grouped into five topics. Subcommittees were formed for each topic and members will determine which issues under the topic heading the committee will engage in for 2008-2009. The topics chosen for next year are Pedestrians, Outreach, Facilities and Way-finding, Education, and Policy and Research.

The facilities and way-finding committee plans on supporting a new bike map, expanding the Share the Road program, and researching bike sharing programs.

The outreach committee will focus on the MNTAC identity by updating the website and materials. This committee will outline the plans for the Friends of MNTAC, ascertain MNTAC's relationship with other committees, and continue to support BAM. The outreach committee may also head up another bike summit if another group does not take it over. If another group takes the lead in organizing the bike summit, the outreach committee will help. The outreach committee will develop an annual award program to recognize outstanding leadership in supporting bicycling and walking. The outreach committee will head up the effort to apply for Bicycle Friendly State recognition. At the November meeting the committee will present logo and mission/vision ideas and a draft press release. The outreach will also work with Kurt Franke to develop the Friends of MNTAC.

The Pedestrian committee wants to understand what a "pedestrian" is and to appoint someone to represent pedestrian issues on MNTAC. This committee would also like to help frame bicycle and pedestrian issues in transit. The pedestrian committee will compile a list of existing pedestrian organizations, and have guest speakers present on bike and pedestrian relationships at future meetings. They will present their findings and arrange for a speaker for the November meeting.

The Education committee will be reviewing the Share the Road information to see how it can be expanded for other nonmotorized modes. The education committee is interested in how people use and interact on facilities. They will conduct a literature search on how other communities resolve conflict and determine best practices and report their findings at the November meeting.

The Policy and Research committee would like to add a state aid representative to the committee, participate on the Complete Streets advisory group, and improve travel on arterial and collector streets. The committee would also like to improve data measurements such as bike counts and economic impact studies. They will investigate best practices and report their findings at the November meeting.



Meeting Schedule

- **9/19/08** Planning meeting—Arden Hills
- **11/13/08** Bi-monthly meeting—St. Paul
- **2/12/09** Bi-monthly meeting—St. Paul
- **4/9/09** Bi-monthly meeting—St. Paul
- **6/4/09** Bi-monthly meeting—St. Paul
- **8/19-8/22/09** Bicycling Around Minnesota Ride



Bicycling Around Minnesota tour,
Photo by Nick Mason

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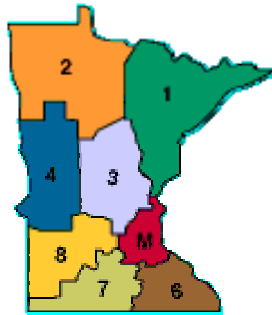
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MNTAC Coordinator

Michelle Natrop

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Under MN Statute 174.37, Mn/DOT has established an advisory committee on nonmotorized transportation. The committee makes recommendations to the commissioner on items related to nonmotorized transportation, including safety, education, and development programs. The committee reviews and analyzes issues and needs relating to operating nonmotorized transportation on public rights-of-way, and identifies solutions and goals for addressing identified issues and needs. The committee considers bicycling issues, pedestrian activities, and other forms of nonmotorized transportation. The committee currently has 15 citizen members and 12 agency members and conducts 5 meetings per year. The executive committee and various short-term issue committees work on specific priority projects. The MNTAC and Mn/DOT bicycle and pedestrian staff work to coordinate work plans and objectives.