

Chapter 1 - Introduction

1.1 Executive Summary

1.1.1 Plan Organization: The Minneapolis Bicycle Master Plan is organized into 8 chapters; an introduction chapter, a bicycling history chapter, a policy framework chapter, a goals/objectives/benchmarks chapter, a needs analysis chapter, a project identification/prioritization chapter, and a funding chapter.

1.1.2 Purpose of the Bicycle Master Plan: The purpose of the Bicycle Master Plan is to establish goals, objectives, and benchmarks that improve safety and mobility for bicyclists and increase the number of trips taken by bicycle. The Bicycle Master Plan includes bicycle policy, existing conditions, a needs analysis, a list of projects and initiatives, and funding strategies to be implemented to complete the plan. This plan will replace the 2001 Bikeways Master Plan and the 2001 5-Year Bikeways Plan.

1.1.3 Community Process: A public meeting was held in June 2008 where over 150 people attended three sessions at Minneapolis City Hall. It took over one year to prepare this plan and an additional year to prepare the Minneapolis Bicycle Design Guidelines. Five additional public meetings were held in August and September 2010 to receive public comment on the draft plan. There was a 45-day comment period beginning on August 17, 2010 and ending on October 1, 2010. The Minneapolis Bicycle Advisory Committee reviewed all comments and offered suggestions for improvement.



Above: Bus on the Nicollet Mall



Above: Abandoned bicycle in Downtown Minneapolis



Above: Biker at Glenwood and 12th Ave.



Above: Downtown Minneapolis skyline

1.1.4 Bicycle Plan Content: The Minneapolis Bicycle Master Plan includes:

- A new Bikeways Master Plan Map that shows proposed facilities (see following page).
- A vision statement and a list of guiding principles.
- A look at the history of bicycling in Minneapolis.
- A close examination of existing policies pertaining to bicycling.
- Objectives, benchmarks, performance measures, and responsibilities for three bicycling goals.
- An existing conditions analysis.
- A needs analysis for the 6 E's; education, encouragement, enforcement, engineering, equity, and evaluation.
- A detailed on-street and off-street bikeway gap analysis.
- A list of proposed non-infrastructure projects and a process for prioritizing bicycle projects.
- A discussion of capital and maintenance funding strategies.



Above: Winter biker on the Nicollet Mall



Above: Cedar Lake Trail at Glenwood Ave



Above: Cedar Lake Trail at Cedar Lake Road

1.1.5 Highlights: The Minneapolis Bicycle Master Plan intends to accomplish the following:

- Reduces bike crashes/injuries by 10% every year and cuts fatalities in half every 5 years.
- Identifies dozens of infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects/initiatives.
- Adds 183 miles of bikeways at a cost of \$270 million (\$134 million without the Grand Rounds Completion). It will take 30 years to complete this goal.
- Identifies full build-out infrastructure maintenance costs to be \$1.3 million/year.
- Cuts bicycle theft through targeted enforcement and education.
- Adds 300 bicycle parking spaces each year through the City's 50/50 cost share program.
- Expands bike share in Minneapolis to all parts of the city; doubles the number of locations where bicycles can be rented by 2015.
- Highlights existing policies that strengthen bicycling within the city.
- Discusses funding sources for capital and maintenance funding.
- Recommends additional bicycle education, encouragement, and enforcement.
- Ensures that all residents are within 1 mile of a trail, 1/2 mile of a bike lane, or 1/4 mile of a signed bike route by 2020. The plan encourages innovative treatments where appropriate.

The Bicycle Advisory Committee Recommendations for Implementation of the Bicycle Master Plan also includes the following topics:

- Bike Plan Amendment Process and BAC Roles.
- Intergovernmental Relations Topics.
- Policy Recommendations.
- A Prioritizing Criteria Chart for the BAC.
- Capital Program Implementation Strategies.
- Maintenance Program Implementation Strategies.



Above: Midtown Greenway near West River Parkway

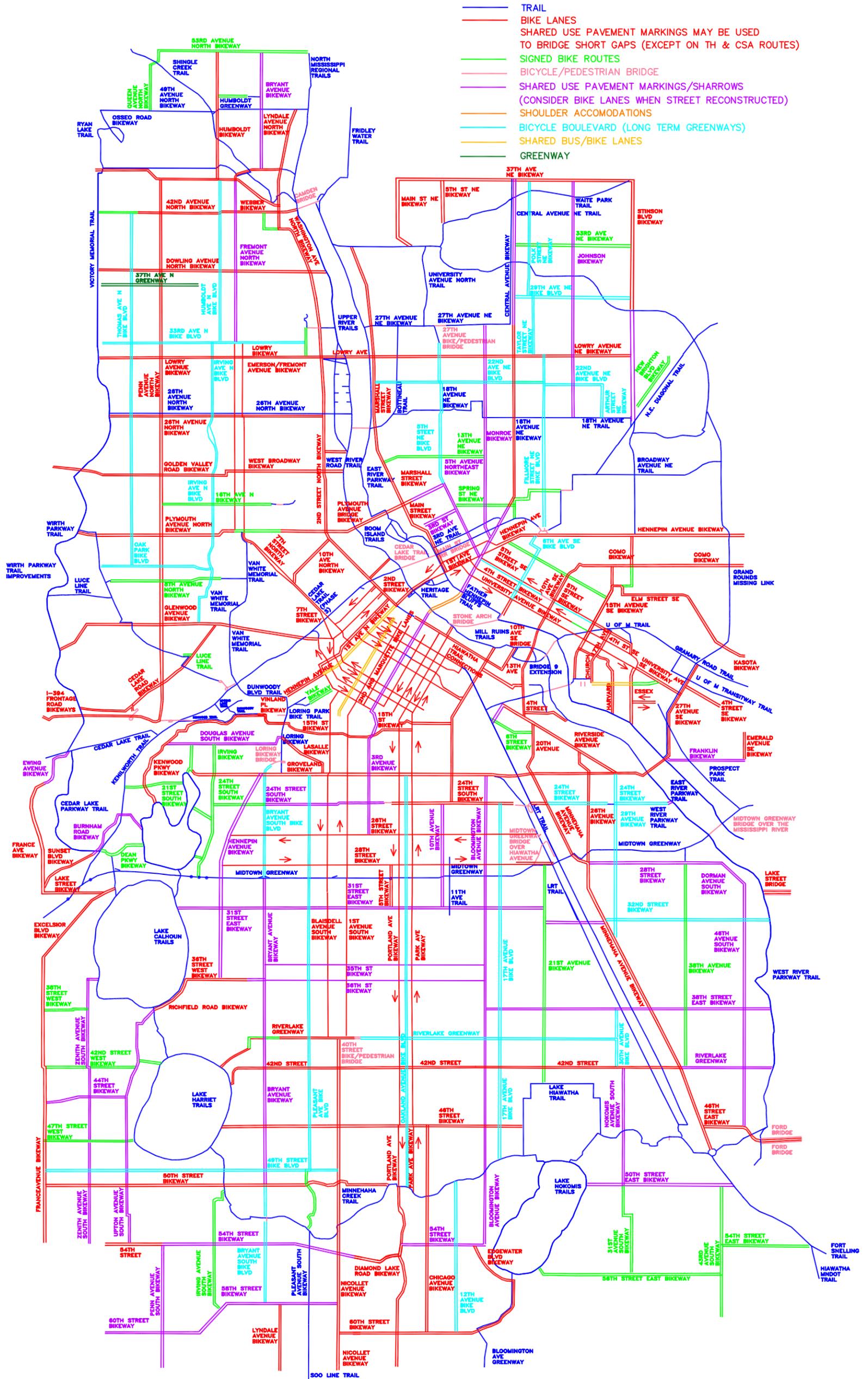


Above: West River Parkway Trail



Above: West River Parkway at Lake Street

Figure 1.1 - Bikeways Master Plan



1.1.6 Document Overview: The Minneapolis Bicycle Master Plan is organized into 8 chapters:

Chapter 1—Introduction: This section states the purpose of the plan, establishes a vision, discusses guiding principles, explains the community input process, and presents how the plan is organized.

Chapter 2—History of Bicycling in Minneapolis: This chapter looks at bicycling in Minneapolis through the past century.

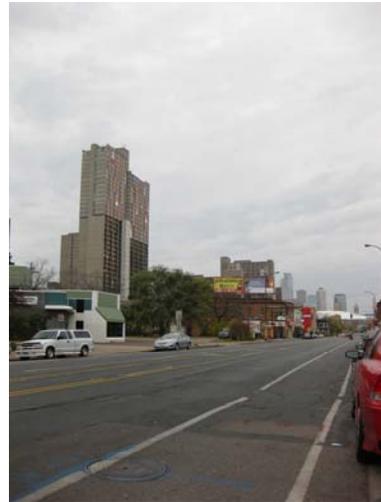
Chapter 3—Policy Framework: The policy framework evaluates the various plans currently in place including the 2001 Bicycle Master Plan, the Hennepin County Bicycle Transportation Plan, the Metropolitan Council Regional Trails Plan, and the Minneapolis Comprehensive Plan.

Chapter 4—Existing Conditions: This section examines the existing state of bicycling throughout the city. The section looks at bicycle program strengths and weaknesses with emphasis placed on what has been working well for the city.

Chapter 5—Needs Analysis: The needs analysis is a staff assessment on what is needed to make the city more bicycle friendly. Although the city has demonstrated success with the bicycle program, improvement is still needed.

Chapter 6—Goals, Objectives, and Benchmarks: Setting goals, objectives, and benchmarks are important steps in creating a bicycle friendly city. This section looks at goals, objectives, and benchmarks for each of the E's; education, encouragement, engineering, enforcement, evaluation, and equity.

Chapter 7—Project/Initiative Identification and Prioritization: This section takes a look at all of the suggested projects and categorizes them by region.



Above: Riverside Avenue Bike Lane



Above: West River Parkway ramp approaching Lake Street



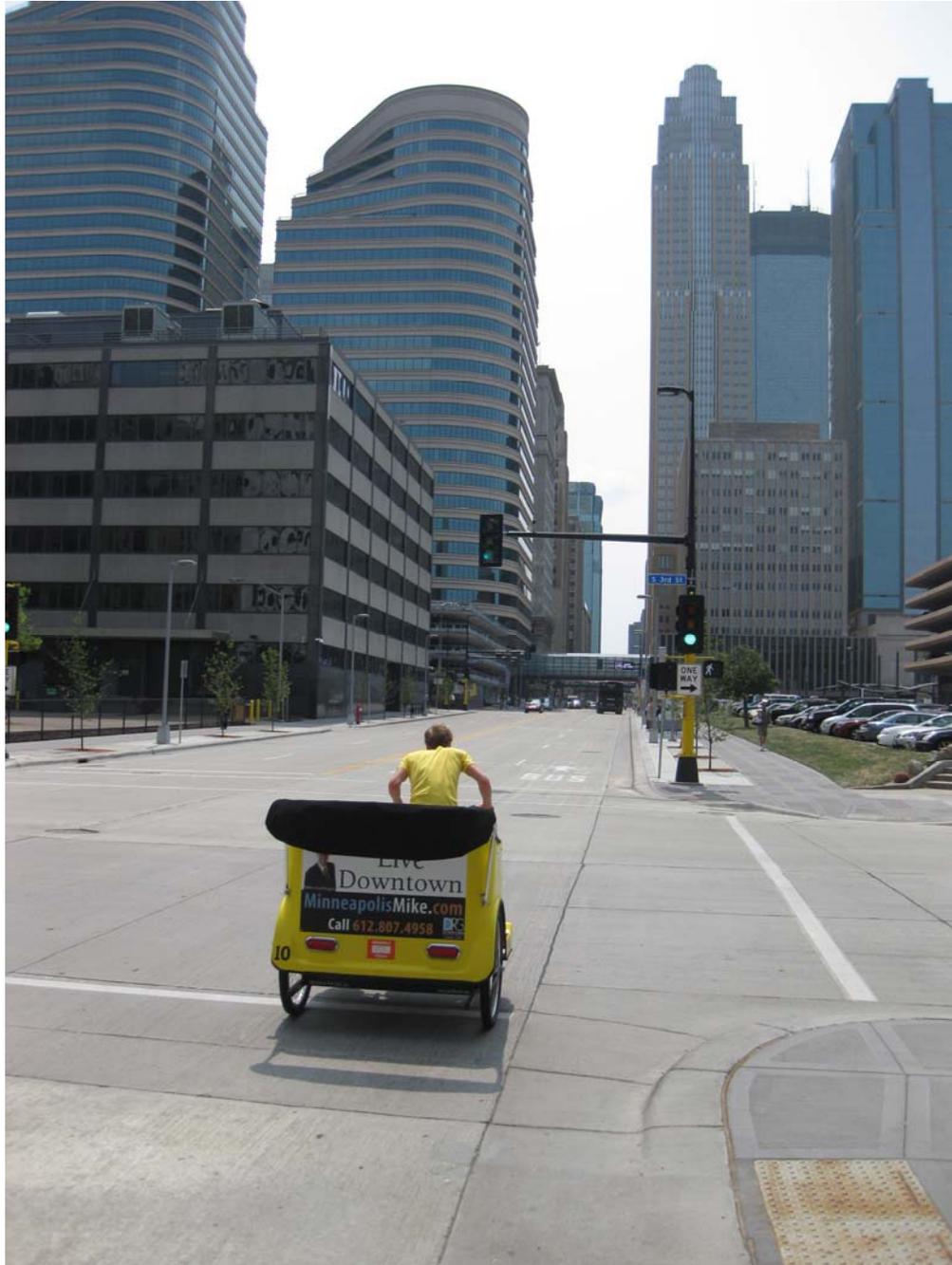
Above: Minnehaha Avenue Bike Lane

1.1.6 Document Overview: Continued

Chapter 8—Funding and Implementation Strategies:

The final chapter looks at what it will take in terms of funding options to complete the plan with limited available resources.

Appendix: The appendix includes public comments and other useful supporting information.



Above: Pedicab on 2nd Avenue in Downtown Minneapolis.

1.2 Purpose and Vision

1.2.1 Plan Purpose: The Minneapolis City Council and Mayor directed city staff to complete a new Bicycle Master Plan in 2008 as one of the recommendations from the Access Minneapolis 10-Year Transportation Plan. Unlike bike plans of the past, which were maps of proposed bicycle facilities, this plan includes policy language, goals, objectives, and benchmarks in addition to an examination and prioritization of both infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects and initiatives. The Minneapolis Bicycle Master Plan is intended to serve all types of bicyclists for trips of all purposes. The City of Minneapolis is committed to maintaining a safe and vibrant city where bicycling is encouraged and embraced. A comprehensive Bicycle Master Plan is the first step in achieving a better city for bicycles and creates the framework for future projects and initiatives.

1.2.2 Vision: This plan is intended to guide the city with regard to all topics relating to bicycling for years to come. The Minneapolis Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) advises the Mayor, City Council, and Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and had an active role in the creation of this document. The vision was composed by the Minneapolis Bicycle Advisory Committee and illustrates what could become a reality if this plan is fully implemented. In order to accomplish this vision, a balanced approach needs to be taken. The League of American Bicyclists recommends that a balanced bicycle program focus on education, encouragement, engineering, enforcement, equity, and evaluation initiatives. Determining the varying needs of all bicyclists and completing an assortment of cost effective projects is also critical. It is important that all stakeholders including residents, elected officials, city staff, and bicyclists work cooperatively with a common vision.

The Purpose of the Bicycle Master Plan:

To establish goals, objectives, and benchmarks that improve safety and mobility for bicyclists and increase the number of trips taken by bicycle. The Bicycle Master Plan includes bicycle policy, existing conditions, a needs analysis, a list of projects and initiatives, and funding strategies to be implemented to complete the plan.

The Vision:

All bicyclists enjoy a welcoming environment; riding safely, efficiently, and conveniently within the City of Minneapolis year-round.

1.3 Guiding Principles and the Minneapolis Commitment to Bicycling

1.3.1 Guiding Principles: The Bicycle Master Plan Guiding Principles are basic philosophies on how bicycle plan goals should be approached. Guiding principles should help guide priorities and should represent the sentiment and values of the elected officials, staff, advocates, and the public. Below are descriptions:

- Improve Safety—Safety is considered first and foremost. Goals, objectives, and policies must consider the safety of bicyclists and other users in a corridor.
- Improve Mobility—Goals, objectives, and policies should make it easier for bicyclists to move throughout the city more efficiently. Mobility should be enhanced for all types of bicyclists and projects should better facilitate trips for different purposes.
- Increase the Numbers of Bicyclists— Goals, objectives, and policies should facilitate more bicyclists. Increasing the number of bicyclists is one of the fundamental values that drive the bicycle program.
- Increase Mode Share— Goals, objectives, and policies need to work toward higher bicycle mode share. Efforts should be made to balance the needs of pedestrians, transit, freight, motor vehicles, and bicyclists.
- Ensure Community Support—Goals, objectives, and policies need to work toward improving the community. Efforts should be made to facilitate neighborhood input and to respect residents concerns and business needs.
- Ensure Wise Investments—Goals, objectives, and policies need to guide projects and initiatives that consider capital costs in addition to operation and maintenance costs. The value of a project or initiative should consider both cost and need. Both public and private funding partnerships are strongly encouraged.



Above: Bicycle in Downtown Minneapolis



Above: University of Minnesota Bike Parking



Above: Nice Ride kiosk at the Guthrie Theatre

1.3.2 The Minneapolis Commitment to Bicycling:

The Minneapolis Commitment is a promise that the city will commit to the following:

- The City of Minneapolis recognizes that bicycling is a mode of transportation that has many tangible benefits to the people of Minneapolis, including better health, a cleaner environment, less traffic congestion, and financial savings both to government and to individuals.
- Minneapolis will continue to be a national leader in bicycle infrastructure and programming, investing in projects and initiatives that improve safety, increase the number of people who choose to bicycle and foster a bicycle friendly environment that supports a thriving bicycle culture.
- Minneapolis will use an integrated strategy that includes education, encouragement, enforcement, engineering, equity and evaluation to continue to make Minneapolis a more bicycle friendly place and to judge progress.



Above: Minneapolis is considered to be a Bicycle Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists.



Above: Bike Box at the intersection of Franklin Avenue and East River Parkway.

1.4 Community Involvement

1.4.1 Community Process—The city solicits community input as part of all citywide plans and capital projects. Projects and initiatives can originate from bike advocates, elected officials, residents, businesses, neighborhood groups, or the general public. The Minneapolis Bicycle Master Plan is a document that will need to be updated to reflect changing conditions and needs. Updates are anticipated every 5 to 10 years. Included in the Appendix are all the comments received by the public. This plan is intended to serve the city for years to come.



Above: West River Parkway Trail

1.4.2 Public Input—This plan is shaped by the comments that have been received by the public at the June 2008 and Summer 2010 public open houses and from past bike plans. Open house participants were able to ask questions, to comment on plan content, to suggest improvements, and to learn more about the bicycle program. A survey was also conducted in 2008. As part of this process the Minneapolis Bicycle Advisory Committee reviews public comments and recommends plan changes. The city has attempted to draft a plan that when implemented meets the needs of as many bicyclists as possible while mitigating negative impacts for those who live or work in a given improvement area. Many of the projects and initiatives in this plan have been derived from the 2001 Bikeways Master Plan process, where all 81 Minneapolis neighborhoods had the chance to suggest bicycle projects. Some of the 2001 projects have already been accomplished, however many are still in the planning or resource identification phase. Dozens of projects have been suggested over the years at community meetings, from citizen groups, from bicycle organizations, and from technical studies.



Above: University of Minnesota



Above: University of Minnesota