

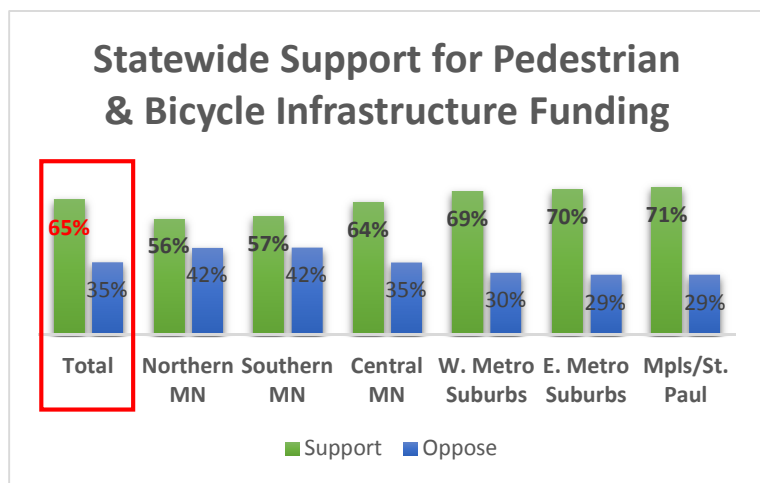
A Majority of Minnesotans Support Additional Pedestrian and Bicycle Funding as Part of a State Transportation Package

To build healthier communities and remain competitive in a regional and global economy, Minnesotans recognize that the state must invest in a modern transportation system that includes real options for safe and convenient walking and bicycling. During the 2015 legislative session, Minnesota legislators and the Governor will likely consider options for increasing funding for transportation. **Any funding proposal should be balanced and provide real options for how people can choose to commute by including significant, dedicated and statewide funding for improving the pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure in Minnesota.**

- A significant majority of Minnesotans (65%) -- 72% of whom cite driving as their primary means of transportation -- favor including additional funding for pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure in road and public transportation funding proposals.
- Support is also high in every age group -- ranging from 55% in Minnesotans age 65 and older to 73% in 35-44 year olds.

Support for walking and bicycling is statewide. A clear majority of Minnesotans in all regions of the state want to see funding for pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure included in any transportation funding discussions at the Capitol next session.

- Support is highest in the metro area (69%-71%) and is high in every region of the state -- Northern Minnesota (56%), Southern Minnesota (57%), Central Minnesota (64%). (See graph)



Minnesotans see pedestrian and bicyclist needs as a critical component of transportation funding because it impacts so many of our daily lives.

- Seventy percent of respondents said they or members of their household walk daily or at least once a week in their community -- more than a third (36%) said that members of their household walk every day.
- Twenty-two percent of respondents said they or members of their household bicycle at least once a week in their community and 6% said members of their household bicycle daily.

Minnesotans walk and bicycle for a variety of reasons including supporting local economies through visits to local stores and shops. Walking and bicycling is a common source of exercise and recreation, but Minnesotans also utilize these modes to commute to work and school as well as running errands in the community.

- Eighty eight percent of respondents said they or members of their household walk in their community. Along with recreational purposes, walking is also used for commuting to work (7%), commuting to school (11%) and to get to local stores, shops or other errands (44%).
- Of the 53% who said they or members of their household bicycle in their community, bicycling is also used for commuting to work (5%), commuting to school (9%) and to get to local stores, shops or other errands (38%).

- Walking and bicycling play an important role in physical activity. Of respondents who said they or members of their household walk or bicycle in their community, 95% said walking is also used for exercise and recreation and 94% said bicycling is used for exercise and recreation.

Safety and convenience were identified as key barriers. The infrastructure must exist for walking and bicycling in order for those modes to be safe, convenient and genuine transportation options.

However, many neighborhoods throughout Minnesota lack the basic infrastructure that supports walking and bicycling. Those who ranked their community’s pedestrian infrastructure as good, only fair or poor identified several changes needed to make walking safer:

- Additional sidewalks, trails or paths (54%).
- Improved safety of intersections or street crossings (57%).
- Improved street lighting (69%).

Those who ranked their community’s bicycling infrastructure as good, only fair or poor also identified needed changes to improve the safety of bicycling:

- Bicycle lanes or paths separated from vehicle traffic (55%).
- Improved road or street maintenance (58%).
- Additional bicycle lanes, paths or trails (59%).
- Improved safety of intersections or street crossings (63%).
- Improved street lighting (68%).

Concerns about Minnesotans’ health. More than 60% of Minnesota adults are overweight or obese leaving more than 2.2 million of them at risk for high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke and certain cancers.¹ **Minnesotans are concerned about the health of children, see childhood obesity as a growing problem, and support community based approaches to combat childhood obesity.**

- Twenty percent of respondents believe Minnesotans are getting less healthy and even more (35%) say Minnesota children are getting less healthy.
- Forty-one percent believe more Minnesota children are obese now than ten years ago.
- The vast majority (86%) feel childhood obesity is a “serious” problem in Minnesota. In fact, 37% consider it a “very serious” problem.
- Forty-eight percent of Minnesotans view childhood obesity as a problem to be solved through a combination of families, education, and government.

Conclusion. Funding for pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure is critical if Minnesotans want to develop a modern transportation system, support healthier communities and ensure the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists. **While many Minnesotans acknowledged that a lack of infrastructure, dangerous crossings and other structural barriers to walking and bicycling exist in their community, the good news is that a majority (54%) say that fixing these barriers would make them more likely to walk or bicycle.**

Minnesotans for Healthy Kids Coalition is a diverse group of statewide partners with a mission to promote healthy eating and increase physical activity to improve health and reduce obesity among Minnesota’s children through state and federal policy. Partners include: Allina Health | American Academy of Pediatrics—Minnesota Chapter | American Cancer Society—Cancer Action Network | American Heart Association | Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota | BLEND CentraCare Health Foundation | Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota | Boys & Girls Clubs of the Twin Cities | Children’s Defense Fund—Minnesota | Children’s Hospitals and Clinics of Minnesota | Conservation Minnesota | HealthPartners | Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy | ISIAH | Local Public Health Association of Minnesota | Minneapolis Health Department | Minneapolis Heart Institute Foundation | Minnesota Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics | Minnesota Alliance of YMCAs | Minnesota Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance | Minnesota Association of Family and Consumer Sciences | Minnesota Cancer Alliance | Minnesota Medical Association | Minnesota PTA | Minnesota Public Health Association | Playworks Minnesota | Transit for Livable Communities | Twin Cities Medical Society

This 2014 study contains the results of a survey administered to 1,000 randomly selected residents across Minnesota. Professional interviewers conducted the survey by telephone between September 22nd and October 10th, 2014. Both landline and cell-phone residents were included in the overall sample. The typical respondent took seventeen minutes to complete the questionnaire. The results of the study are projectable to all adult Minnesota residents within ± 3.2% in 95 out of 100 cases. For full results, visit www.heart.org/MNHealthyKidsPoll.

¹ Physical Activity and Healthy Eating in Minnesota: Addressing Root Causes of Obesity: *Addressing Root Causes of Obesity*, St. Paul, MN: Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota, Minnesota Department of Health; May 2010.