

# Commuting Resource

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## Spring 2009 Bike Edition

### Anoka County Transportation Management Organization

#### Celebrate Bike to Work Day May 14 Bike2Benefits

The first Twin Cities Bike Walk Week was in 2008. It was a huge success with over 1,000 people participating by walking or biking to work. The celebration provided a great reason to try biking and walking as a form of transportation - one in ten participants had never biked or walked to work.

This year, Bike Walk Week is May 10-15, with **National Bike to Work Day** taking place on **Thursday, May 14**. You can try walking or biking alone or in a commuter convoy.

Commuter convoys are group rides or walks that are open to anyone and led by experienced volunteers. Simply show up at the designated start time and location.

Pledge to ride your bike on **National Bike to Work Day or any day in April, May, and June**, and be eligible for great prizes.

The Anoka County TMO also has the Park & Bike Trail Map & Commuting Guide and TMO Bicycle Guide available. Pledge forms and other bike

information is also available for your employees at **AnokaCountyTMO.com** or 763-862-4260.

#### Bike2Benefits

The **Bike2Benefits** program, which launched in May 2008, asks participants to commit to bicycling once a week for any eight-week period. The program offers an online tool for tracking bicycle trips and mileage. By the end of 2008, more than 2,100 people had joined the program and logged more than 388,000 miles.

Those who complete the eight-week program online are automatically eligible for a prize drawing.

Bike2Benefits participants have recorded more than 50,000 bicycle commutes. In addition, they logged 6,200 commutes that combined bicycle riding with transit. All regional buses and trains have free onboard bike racks that allow commuters to combine bicycling and transit.

#### Why Bike?

Bicycling saves money, saves time, and improves fitness. Traveling by bicycle reduces traffic congestion and has virtually no impact on the environment.

Because bicycling is virtually emissions free, every car trip you can replace with a bike ride cuts greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality. For every mile you pedal instead of driving, you save about a pound of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), the primary greenhouse gas.



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Prizes included gift certificates, kits with head lamps, patch kits, commuter bags, maintenance books, and apparel. Bike2Benefits is open to anyone 18 or older who lives or works in these counties: Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott or Washington. There is no fee to participate. The Bike2Benefits program is partially funded by a Congestion Mitigation Air Quality grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation.

**For all bike related information visit [AnokaCountyTMO.com](http://AnokaCountyTMO.com) or call 763-862-4260.**

## 2009 Bike Helmet Fitting Clinics

The following cities in Anoka County are offering Bike Helmet Clinics throughout the spring:

Blaine Police Department  
10801 Town Square Drive  
Blaine, MN 55449  
763-785-6113

**May 5, 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.**

Ramsey City Hall  
Alexander Ramsey Room  
7550 Sunwood Drive NW  
Ramsey, MN 55303  
763-433-9891

**May 6, 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.**

Fridley Police Department  
6431 University Avenue NE  
Fridley, MN  
763-572-3626

**May 12, 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.**

Bunker Hills Park  
Main Street & Foley Boulevard, Coon Rapids  
Camping Registration & Visitor Building  
**June 2, 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.**

## 2009 Commuter Challenge

### HELP PROMOTE THE CHALLENGE.

The Commuter Challenge is held during the months of April, May, and June. Pledge to take the bus or train, carpool, vanpool, tele-work, bike, or walk.

The Anoka County TMO is available for commuter fairs at your business to help promote the Commuter Challenge to your employees.

If you are interested in hosting commuter fair or hanging a poster visit [AnokaCountyTMO.com](http://AnokaCountyTMO.com) for more information.



### COMMUTER CHALLENGE KICK-OFF EVENTS

The TMO held two kick-off events in April. Thank you to Aveda Corporation and Anoka Technical College for hosting these events and to everyone who attended.



## Construction Corner

**7th Avenue & Bob Ehlen Drive (CSAH 7)** - This project is scheduled to begin mid-May and will end approximately 30 days after start date. Traffic will be minimally affected.

**Main Street (CSAH 14) & Highway 65** - Work on the two new bridges to carry traffic over Highway 65 at 121st Ave/Paul Parkway and 129th Ave in Blaine resumed Monday, April 13.

**Main Street (CSAH 14) from I-35W to I-35E in Lino Lakes and Centerville** - Construction has resumed.



**Sunfish Lake Boulevard (CSAH 57)** - Construction will resume on April 27 for two weeks while BNSF installs new crossing guard arms.

For information on all county construction projects visit [www.anokacounty.us/highways](http://www.anokacounty.us/highways)

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## Economic downturn will spur upswing in tele-work

The recession may provide an extra stimulus for more companies to allow their employees to work from home. Many U.S. companies are realizing significant cost savings from tele-working.

Tele-working will spread quickly in 2009 due to demand from workers and because “when times are tough, there’s more willingness to take on change in an organization,” experts predict.

About 21% of employers currently allow tele-working on a full-time basis, and 35% allow it on a part-time basis, according to the Society for Human Resource Management.

Permitting workers to tele-work can save companies a lot of money through:

- \*Lower rent on office space.
- \*Reduced real estate costs.
- \*Lower utility bills.
- \*Higher productivity.
- \*Less employee turnover.
- \*Less absenteeism.
- \*Reduced cost of providing employee parking.

At the same time, it can save workers money by reducing the amount of money they spend on parking, transit, and other work related expenses.

Of course, there are some potential costs to consider when starting a tele-working benefit. The actual cost varies for each company, depending on the number

of employees, number of work sites, information technology needs, and type of work.

Some companies may need to hire additional information technology staff to assist teleworkers, or they may need to pay for additional training for their current IT staff. In addition, they may need to develop extra connectivity and secure networks to support tele-working. In some cases, companies need to purchase equipment for tele-workers, such as lap tops, phones, BlackBerries or printers. However, many companies are making these technological investments anyway, regardless of what’s happening with tele-working.

Before beginning a tele-working option, formalize the program and set rules, such as requiring staff to meet in person at least once a month.

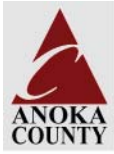
Clearly communicate expectations about how and when employees will keep in touch via phone calls, emails and instant messaging. That will prevent improper interruptions, misunderstandings, and problems that result from lack of communication.

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### TELE-WORK RESOURCES AVAILABLE

If you are interested in establishing a tele-work pilot program watch for more details or contact the TMO office at 763-862-4260 or visit [AnokaCountyTMO.com](http://AnokaCountyTMO.com)

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**TMO**  
*Your Commuting Resource*

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**We're on the Web!**  
**[www.AnokaCountyTMO.com](http://www.AnokaCountyTMO.com)**

## Dates to Remember

April 1 - June 30 - Commuter Challenge  
April 22 - Earth Day  
April 24 - Arbor Day

May 2-3 - Living Green Expo  
May 11-15 - Bike Walk Week  
May 14 - National Bike to Work Day  
May 25 - Memorial Day

Sources:  
[www.bikewalkweek.org](http://www.bikewalkweek.org)  
[www.benefitnews.com](http://www.benefitnews.com)  
[www.libertymutual.com](http://www.libertymutual.com)  
[www.metrotransit.org](http://www.metrotransit.org)

*The Anoka County Transportation Management Organization (TMO) helps local employers and commuters explore different choices such as carpooling, vanpooling, tele-work, transit, biking, walking, or flexible work hours. It is our goal to help make commuting easier, healthier, and more enjoyable.*

*These options can help you save money on fuel, improve your health, and keep our environment clean. With a little planning and consideration you might find that walking, biking, or taking transit to run errands or commute is as efficient as taking your car.*

*In addition, the TMO serves as a community resource providing information such as project detours and project time lines to help reduce traffic congestion around the areas impacted by road construction.*

*Anoka County TMO Staff  
Renee Sande Executive Director  
Sheri Engstrom Assistant TDM Coordinator*



You can now follow Anoka County on Twitter for more information on transportation, highway projects, parks, libraries and more.  
**[www.twitter.com/anokacounty](http://www.twitter.com/anokacounty)**