

# UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

---

*Twin Cities Campus*

*Facilities Management*

*Donhowe Building  
319 - 15th Avenue S.E  
Minneapolis, MN 55455  
Office: 612-624-2900  
Fax: 612-626-0234*

October 25, 2012

To Whom It May Concern,

The University of Minnesota ZAP Bike Commuting Program is an innovative way to encourage wellness and sustainable transportation. While there are several bike commuting reward programs across the nation, most, if not all of them, require cyclists to verify their rides through a web or paper form. This process can be onerous and prone to error or falsification. The University of Minnesota's ZAP program uses technology to address these shortcomings. The program utilizes radio frequency identification (RFID) tags and wireless, solar powered readers to record bike rides by participating members of the University community. An RFID tag is placed on the rider's bicycle wheel at no charge. When the user passes an RFID reader station – there is a comprehensive network of over 19 spread throughout and adjacent to the campus – their tag is "zapped" and the ride is automatically recorded. Users can then log in on a dedicated website to see their bicycle mileage, calories burned, gas and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions avoided, and the reader that they passed.

The University has developed several programs using zap data to incentivize bike riding. For example, University Parking and Transportation provides data on employee zaps to the University Wellness Program. The zaps accrue for the employee and if the employee logs at least 50 round trips in a year they are eligible to earn 75 points for their Wellness Points Bank. The Wellness Points Bank can be used to reduce the price of the UPlan Medical Program premiums for the following year. Likewise, students can earn monetary and other rewards for riding a certain number of times per month, and all members of the University community can form teams for bike commuting challenges and compete to get the highest number of zaps.

The ZAP Program hardware and software was developed by Dero Bike Rack Co., a local, Minneapolis based business, and pioneered at the University of Minnesota. It is an effortless way of verifying and logging bike trips, then rewarding and incentivizing bicycle commuters with prizes and wellness rewards.

This program is a great example of using innovative technology to advance a sustainable transportation option. There are incentives for all participants and the cost to riders is free, making it a program with very wide reach and appeal. It has had a significant impact in increasing the amount of people on campus willing to bike instead of traveling by less sustainable options.

Sincerely,



Shane Stennes  
Sustainability Coordinator  
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities