

Continued from page 86

biking and walking trails that loop Minneapolis. The best part about Grand Rounds is that each area gives visitors a true sense of the neighborhood—from Northeast's working-class past to the New England feel of the Chain of Lakes, especially the Linden Hills side of Lake Harriet, where city dwellers had their summer "cabins." [minneapolis parks.org](http://minneapolis-parks.org)

↘ If you want to clear your mind with quiet countryside, go west. The **Luce Line Trail** starts in Plymouth but quickly gives way to farmland, woods, and tall prairie grasses. Built on an old railroad bed, the 63-mile trail gets more rustic as it goes, starting as crushed limestone in Plymouth and ending as a natural dirt-and-grass path near the small town of Cosmos. If you plan to bike the entire trail, grab your mountain bike or hybrid and leave the skinny tires at home. For a step back in time, make a pit stop at the Ox Yoke Inn in Maple Plain for a burger or some soft-serve ice cream. [dnr.state.mn.us/state\\_trails/luce\\_line/index.html](http://dnr.state.mn.us/state_trails/luce_line/index.html)

↘ We get it: Riding around Minneapolis's Chain of Lakes is fun, beautiful, scenic, and so on. Don't get us wrong—we enjoy it, too. But for a truer taste of Minneapolis, try the **Midtown Greenway**. Built on an old railroad corridor, it lets users get

across the city efficiently, without the hassle of traffic. Not only does it offer a great ride—with 5.5 miles of paved trail stretching from West River Parkway to just past the Kenilworth Trail, near the west side of Lake Calhoun—but it also is home to some of the city's best-kept secrets. At the Freewheel Midtown Bike Center, you can rent bikes and lockers, and even freshen up with a shower after a long ride. Our favorite stop? The Midtown Global Market, where you can refuel with a taco at La Sirena Gorda or a sweet treat at the Salty Tart. [midtowngreenway.org](http://midtowngreenway.org)

↘ Although it's riddled with potholes, **Theodore Wirth Parkway** is an excellent destination for easy riders who enjoy making a few pit stops. In fact, a trip along this trail warrants an entire afternoon—not only because its core 3.5-mile stretch cuts through the largest park in Minneapolis, but also because of the inner-city oases it intersects: most impressively, the park's Quaking Bog and Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden. An adjacent mountain bike trail draws all manner of dirt lovers, but that singletrack course is hilly, twisted, and littered with rocks and other large obstacles. Beginners ought to save their daredevil impulses for the various crevices and buckles they'll encounter along the parkway's blacktop. [minneapolis-parks.org](http://minneapolis-parks.org)



## Riding Resources

We live in one of the country's top metros for bicycling, so there's no excuse for frittering away the short summer cycling season. For Twin Citians who feel the urge to ride but lack the requisite accoutrements, this handy tip sheet provides the necessary nudge to get equipped, get outfitted, and most important—get moving!

**1. Rent Some Wheels: Wheel Fun Rentals, [wheelfunrentals.com](http://wheelfunrentals.com)** | Rentals are a great alternative for those who aren't ready to purchase their own two-wheeler. Though there are many rental locales around town, we prefer Wheel Fun Rentals, which allows you to rent a bike—from beach cruisers to quad sport contraptions—by the hour for cheap. A mountain bike costs \$7 per hour and \$15 for half a day. Bike rentals and hours vary by location. Locations include Lake Calhoun, Lake Nokomis, and Minnehaha Falls.

**2. Get Outfitted: Twin Six, [twinsix.com](http://twinsix.com)** | Two graphic designers and Twin Cities-based bike lovers churn out an assortment of fashionable jerseys and vintage-style tees. There's even a selection of sweat-proof socks and water bottles emblazoned with sassy bike-friendly slogans.



**3. Stay On Course: Twin Cities Bike Map, available at area bike shops** | This comprehensive map of the seven-county metro is updated every three years, so it's an excellent resource for those who want to use their bikes as modes of transportation—or for anyone who wants to venture onto less-traveled trails and roads. \$11.95.

**4. Rate Your Ride: [cyclopath.org](http://cyclopath.org)** | Although this new website is still in beta testing, it already gives the inside dish on lots of Twin Cities bike trails—from their connectivity to other trails to their physical condition and safety ratings. Best of all, it's a wiki site, so riders are free to impart their own nuggets of wisdom.

**5. In the Distance: Minneapolis bike-share program** | The city of Minneapolis is currently developing a bike-share program, set to debut in 2010. If all goes according to plan, the program will include 1,000 bikes for rent from 75 self-serve kiosks in downtown Minneapolis. Annual passes will cost in the ballpark of \$50; one-day rides will set you back five bucks.