

Chicagoland's voice for better biking, walking and transit

## **ANNUAL REPORT** Y 2013 & 2014



Chicagoland's voice for better biking, walking and transit.

here's a growing wave of interest in choosing healthier ways of getting around. Indeed, it's an exciting time to be working for cleaner transportation options in Chicagoland, and we're pleased to have played no small role in sparking this enthusiasm.

We work with communities across Chicagoland to help them make their streets safer and more accessible, no matter if you're biking, walking, using transit, using a wheelchair or driving a car. We educate kids about safely using active transportation, and we help communities make it easier for kids to walk and bike to school. We work to create bicycling infrastructure through the region that is appealing for everyone no matter if you're 8 years old or 80.

Another goal of ours is encouraging people to consider healthy transportation options. Our biking events, for example, every year attract tens of thousands of people — many of whom are new to cycling.

All of this is part of our overall goal to make walking, biking and transit easy and safe travel options. Please take a look at some of the great things we've accomplished in fiscal years 2013 and 2014.

# Working for more livable **Communities**

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We work with residents, community organizations and local governments to make walking, biking and transit easier and more inviting.

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#### BRT in Chicago

To build momentum for expanding rapid transit in Chicago, we mobilized supporters and made our voice heard on the benefits of building bus rapid transit on Ashland, in the Loop and throughout the city. We worked with civic partners to raise awareness about Ashland and Central Loop BRT among local businesses and transit riders, and rallied supporters to attend public meetings. Overall, we engaged nearly 6,000 riders and worked with dozens of businesses and community organizations.

### Better laws to protect people biking

Active Trans advocated for laws passed by both the City of Chicago and the State of Illinois that allow people riding bicycles to confidently pass slow-moving cars on the right side of the road. Active Trans also provided extensive input on a new Chicago ordinance that doubles fines for "doorings," allows people biking to take a full traffic lane when necessary, allows people biking to ride two abreast and allows adults to ride on sidewalks to access bike facilities.

#### Protected bike lanes on the march

Since 2012, more than 12,000 people have participated in Active Trans' Neighborhood Bikeways Campaign. More than 4,500 people signed a petition endorsing the Dearborn Street Protected Bike Lane and 3,000 others voiced their support for the Milwaukee Avenue Spoke Route. Active Trans also mobilized 2,500 people to urge the State of Illinois to lift its ban on building protected bike lanes on state roadways. Today, Chicago has installed nearly 20 miles of protected bike lanes and nearly 70 miles of new buffered bike lanes.

## Working for better **COMMUNITIES**

## Red Line South Reconstruction

To ensure that the five-month-long Red Line South Reconstruction Project progressed smoothly, Active Trans created the Red Line South Bill of Rights and held a "transit riders day of action" with community partners across Chicago's South Side. Hundreds of people signed on to the bill of rights, which asked the CTA to provide transparency, clear communications and good alternative transportation options during the reconstruction project. We continue to work with South Side advocates pushing to extend the Red Line further south to 130th Street.

#### Bike sharing in Chicago

Active Trans worked with Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel and the Chicago Department of Transportation to bring Divvy bike sharing to the City of Chicago. Once the bikes were rolled out, we promoted the new service and recruited Divvy members, who receive Active Trans' Everyday Biking guide and an invitation to join Active Trans.

## A campaign to expand rapid transit

We partnered with the Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) to launch the Transit Future campaign to establish a dedicated source of revenue to fund the transit improvements and expansion in Cook County. Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle and Mayor Rahm Emanuel spoke in favor of the Transit Future vision at the launch, and we continue to build support among residents, businesses, community organizations and elected officials across the county.

## Chicago neighborhood organizing

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Active Trans supports local advocates in developing concrete priorities and advocacy strategies through workshops, walking audits, community bike rides and other activities. Over the past two years we have engaged more than a dozen Chicago communities in this work, including Pilsen, Little Village, West Town, Garfield Park and others.



In the fall of 2013, Active Trans convened the first of what would become three suburban Active Transportation Councils — one each for the northern, western and southern suburbs. The councils bring together local champions of sustainable transportation so that they can learn about and advocate for improved biking, walking and public transit in their communities.

### North Lake Shore Drive reconstruction

As the North Lake Shore Drive reconstruction planning process kicked off, Active Trans forged a coalition of 15 civic organizations to publicly press for a lakefront that better serves everyone's needs. The coalition's recommendations call for a bold vision focused on greater mobility, safety, connectivity and livability. Thanks to our efforts mobilizing supporters, the most popular ideas emerging from public meeting and project surveys was the need for biking, walking and transit improvements – and not adding capacity for private vehicles.

### Tragedy sparks positive changes

In May of 2013 Robert "Bobby" Cann was struck and killed by a drunk driver while biking in Chicago. After an outpouring of support and calls for action, Active Trans coordinated efforts with the Chicago Police Department's CAPS program to train 40 individuals to become courtroom advocates who would attend hearings and advocate for justice. Active Trans also worked with the 27th Ward Alderman's office to install an honorary street sign to commemorate Cann.

As a result of the high profile nature of the crash and the surrounding advocacy efforts, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), which had previously refused authorization of protected bike lanes on state routes until it had obtained three years of crash data on such facilities, accelerated its timetable to allow for the implementation of barrier protected bike lanes on state routes and identified the stretch of Clybourn, (a state route) on which Cann was killed as the pilot location for IDOT's first concretecurb protected bike lane.

# Active transportation means **better health**

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Active Trans works to create more opportunities for adults and children to be active and choose to bike, walk and use transit.

#### State-wide support for Complete Streets and Safe Routes

Twenty county health departments around the state received technical assistance from Active Trans for creating policies and implementation strategies for Complete Streets, Joint Use Agreements and Safe Routes to School programs. The initiative helped catalyze six new Complete Streets resolutions and three new Complete Streets policies in Illinois municipalities. We developed two new guides to advance Complete Streets policies and implementation in Illinois communities. Active Trans also assisted the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning in the development of its Complete Streets Implementation Toolkit.

## Bike racks and safety signs

Active Trans provided technical assistance to public health departments in 60 municipalities throughout Illinois for the installation of 599 bike racks and 186 pedestrian safety signs.

#### PlayStreets

PlayStreets are pop-up playground events that increase physical activity options for thousands of kids by closing down city streets and activating them for play. Funding from both national and local sources supported 187 of these events on Chicago's south side, providing more than 28,000 youth and adults in 27 different communities with opportunities for physical activity, play and socializing. Active Trans partnered with the Chicago Department of Public Health, LISC Chicago and World Sport Chicago on the PlayStreets initiative.

#### Safe Routes for CPS

As part of a project to boost the number of children who are walking and biking to school, we worked with 25 Chicago public elementary schools located in communities with higher levels of childhood obesity to create action plans for each school. In addition to action plans, schools received materials, such as traffic cones and handheld stop signs, to increase student safety and provide tools for walking and biking encouragement programs.

# Planning for **Safer streets**

Whether we're creating biking maps or guiding local municipalities on how to improve walking conditions, Active Trans is recognized as a leader in active transportation planning.

#### New edition of Chicagoland Bike Map

Active Trans published an updated and newly designed edition of the Chicagoland Bike Map. As part of the updating process, we recruited more than 100 volunteers to evaluate and select routes within an expanded coverage area.

### Complete Streets manuals for CDOT and the City of Memphis

Active Trans was hired by the Chicago Department of Transportation to design and write a new Complete Streets manual for the city and to improve its process for designing roadway projects. We also worked with the City of Memphis, Tennessee to craft its Complete Streets Project Delivery Manual.

### Improving on- and off-street access to bikeways

We developed transportation plans for the communities of Winfield, Illinois and Lowell, Indiana, and helped develop plans for improving access to the Green Bay Trail in Kenilworth, the Illinois Prairie Path in DuPage County and the Des Plaines River Trail in northwest Cook County. We also engaged more than 500 residents and trail users in identifying barriers to bicycling and trail access their community.

#### Planning award

Active Trans received an award from the Illinois Chapter for the American Planning Association for the implementation of Chicago Heights' transportation plan.

# Events that encourage **biking & walking**

Active Trans events bring together anywhere from 50 people to 20,000. No matter the size, you can count on a fun, well organized event that brings people together while strengthening the community.

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#### Bike rides galore!

Active Trans enjoyed two more great years for our flagship fundraiser, MB Financial Bank Bike the Drive, and in 2013, we introduced Bike the 'Burbs, a more intimate, no-cost ride offered for our suburban members and supporters. We also introduced a new twist to the Four-Star ride — tasty samples from the menus of local restaurants. Finally, Bike to Brew, a new Active Trans' event in 2014, took suds-loving riders on a fun ride through the city followed by a party at Revolution Brewery.

#### Open Streets on Milwaukee Ave.

In 2013, Active Trans held an Open Streets event in Wicker Park/Bucktown, shutting down nearly three miles of Milwaukee Avenue to car traffic and opening it for people to walk, bike, skate and play games. Despite uncooperative weather, many people turned out to enjoy activities and a car-free Milwaukee Avenue.

#### Bike swap

The 2013 Active Trans bike swap brought hundreds of people together to connect with a variety of local businesses, clubs and individuals that rented out booth space at the event. There were how-to presentations, panel discussions and opportunities to try new bikes and check out gear. Part of the proceeds from the event went to local grassroots biking groups.

#### Bike Commuter Challenge

Active Trans' annual bike commuting competition — open to people throughout the region, no matter their experience level — was again a great success in both 2013 and 2014. In 2013, 434 teams comprised of 5,277 participants logged more than 110,000 miles. In 2014, a whopping 946 teams made up of nearly 6,200 participants logged nearly 152,000 miles. Both years, we brought in throngs of newly minted bike commuters and maintained a strong showing of female riders (43 percent in 2013 and 42 percent in 2014).

# Sharing our message through education

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Active Trans uses a variety of tools to educate kids and adults on how to bike and walk safely and confidently.

#### Biking and walking education

Thanks to our education efforts, nearly 4,000 students in the Chicago region each year learn about bicycle and pedestrian safety while enrolled in classes where active transportation curriculum was taught. In 2012-2013 school year, some 2,400 students in five school districts — Wilmette, Oak Park, Northbrook, West Chicago and River Forest — received direct biking and pedestrian education thanks to Active Trans.

### Kids on Wheels program launched

In the spring of 2014, we launched the Kids on Wheels program, which takes bicycles, helmets and program materials directly to schools. Our pilot program in Oak Park conducted safety training with 638 students at seven schools over seven weeks. While the bikes were used for three days of park district programming in Oak Park, we trained seven physical education teachers, 14 adults and four Oak Park Police officers to conduct bicycle safety trainings.

#### **Online Education**

Active Trans released a series of online education videos addressing a variety of topics for adult riders. Thirteen videos have been created covering a range of topics like choosing a bike route and securely locking your bike. The videos have received more than 17,000 views.

#### Crash Support

Our crash support programs continue to provide assistance to bicyclists and pedestrians who have been involved in crashes. The Crash Support Hotline assisted 127 crash victims and trained 25 new operators. We also provided support in two separate fatal crashes of people biking — Bobby Cann and Hector Avalos. For this work Active Trans staff received an Advocacy and Service Award from the Cook County State's Attorney's office and a special commendation by the Chicago Police Department, strengthening our relationship with both agencies.

## Special thanks to our donors (FY 2013 & 14)

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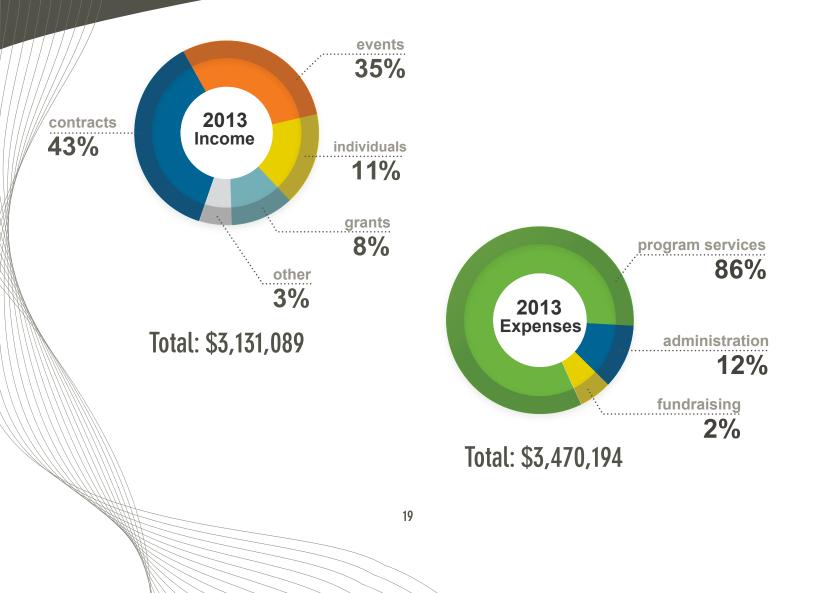
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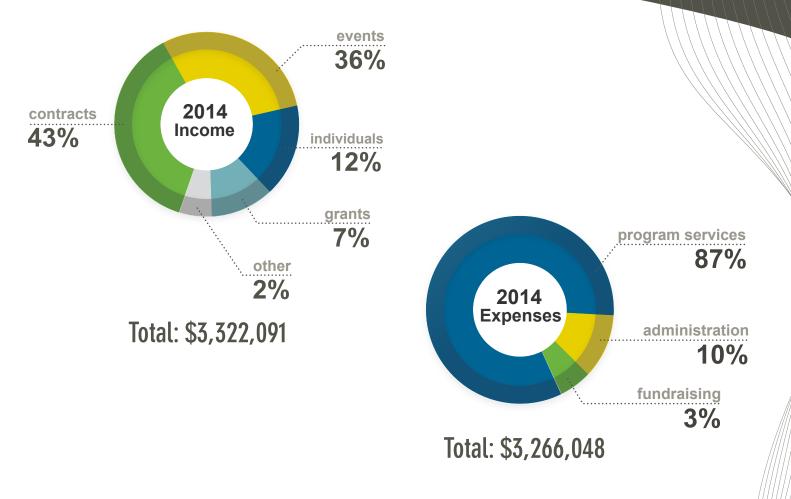
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## Fiscal Year 2013 Year-end report



## Fiscal Year 2014 Year-end report





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