

Upper Peninsula 2022 Safety Report

Possibly the Safest Place in the USA to Ride Bikes

TOUR DA
YOOP, EH



Tour Da Yoop, Eh
12/1/2022
James Studinger



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Thank You

PEOPLE ARE AMAZING

“I believe in people” is at the core of my personal belief system and is proven time and again in my experiences with bikers and safety planners throughout Michigan.

“People are capable of more than they realize” – another foundational belief. We can do amazing things, but not in a vacuum. Milestones are achieved through the efforts of many. Cycling 1,200 miles can seem like an individual effort, but the accomplishment is realized through the vast support of others. I’ve been lucky enough to work with people from the Upper Peninsula Planning and Development from Eastern, Central, and Western U.P., Mdot, DNR, Road Commissions, community leaders, bikers, Lions Clubs, wonderful and helpful people throughout the U.P. You care tremendously and it shows! You are saving lives and providing tremendous experiences.

I also want to give a huge thank you to the amazing people that support the riders over our annual 10-day event. None of this is possible without you!



A small sample of so many people that make this ride a reality.





What is Tour Da Yoop, Eh – and Why Do We Write an Annual Safety Report

[Tour Da Yoop, Eh](#) designed a 1,200 mile biking route around the perimeter of Michigan’s Upper Peninsula (U.P.). I (James Studinger) founded Tour Da Yoop, Eh (TDY) in 2018 with the simple goal of showcasing what is possibly the safest place in the country to ride a bike great distances. I believed that if a group of bikers did something cool, like circle the U.P. in 10 days, it would get attention and therefore naturally invite others to explore the U.P. by bike. I knew that if more people bike in the U.P. vs. other populated areas, then more people would be kept safer from life changing and deadly vehicle accidents.

I grew up in Manistique, on the shores of Lake Michigan. Actively involved in triathlons, I'd train in the pristine Upper Peninsula whenever I visited family. There were two things I never saw while bike training in the U.P. – vehicles and other bikers. However, while driving back toward downstate, I'd see tons of vehicles and several bikers on the busiest highways, like US2. It was obvious that bikers didn't know that the safer roads existed, and needed to be shown where they were. Knowing many people would be apprehensive to bike unfamiliar roads without a known route, I developed thousands of miles of paved bike routes, including the 1,200-mile perimeter ride that would become Tour Da Yoop, Eh.

I created "[Chasing Plaid](#)" as further incentive and a fun challenge to inspire people to travel to the U.P. with their bikes. The Plaid Jersey can only be earned, something bikers adorn as they finish their final day of the 1,200-mile adventure. They can accomplish the challenge in as many days as they want. There are currently 50 people (including 12 women) who wear plaid. They have come from as far as Germany, Alaska, Hawaii and throughout the lower 48. Self-Supported rides like Loop da Yoop and BiKE UP also have their own unique jerseys.



TDY is about the same distance as riding from Detroit to Disneyworld. During the 2018 inaugural ride I saw the U.P. like I never saw it before. I rode my bike in and out of just about every town in the U.P., and I became increasingly aware of what makes for safer, or more dangerous biking. Each year I write a safety report from a biker's perspective. The report is written from my personal experiences from training, riding TDY, observing, and gathering feedback from other TDY riders. We had our 5th year around the U.P. this 2022 and partnered with the U.P. Lions Serve for Childhood Cancer. We raised over \$50,000 for families in the Upper Peninsula with children battling cancer.

This is the report from the 2022 ride. The report predominantly focuses on bike safety in the U.P., however the concepts behind the suggestions are applicable throughout Michigan (and beyond). Just because the U.P. is already an incredibly safe place to ride a bike does not mean that resources shouldn't be spent to make it even better. I subscribe to the Zero Deaths mentality. I also firmly continue to believe in my theory and main impetus for starting TDY, that the more people who bike in the U.P. the less injuries/fatalities we'll experience elsewhere in our state/country. I have found that biker feedback to road project decision makers/planners can help to ensure that the already incredible safe biking doesn't become worse through

unintended consequences of future road projects. I personally focus on pavement, using bikes that travel fast and cover long distances.

From an economic opportunity standpoint, biking benefits many throughout the U.P. It is not limited to just a few geographic areas in the U.P. Quiet paved roads exist throughout the entire Upper Peninsula. Any community in the U.P. that wants to embrace biking tourism has access to the same resource as another, safe rural roads that all road bikers dream of.

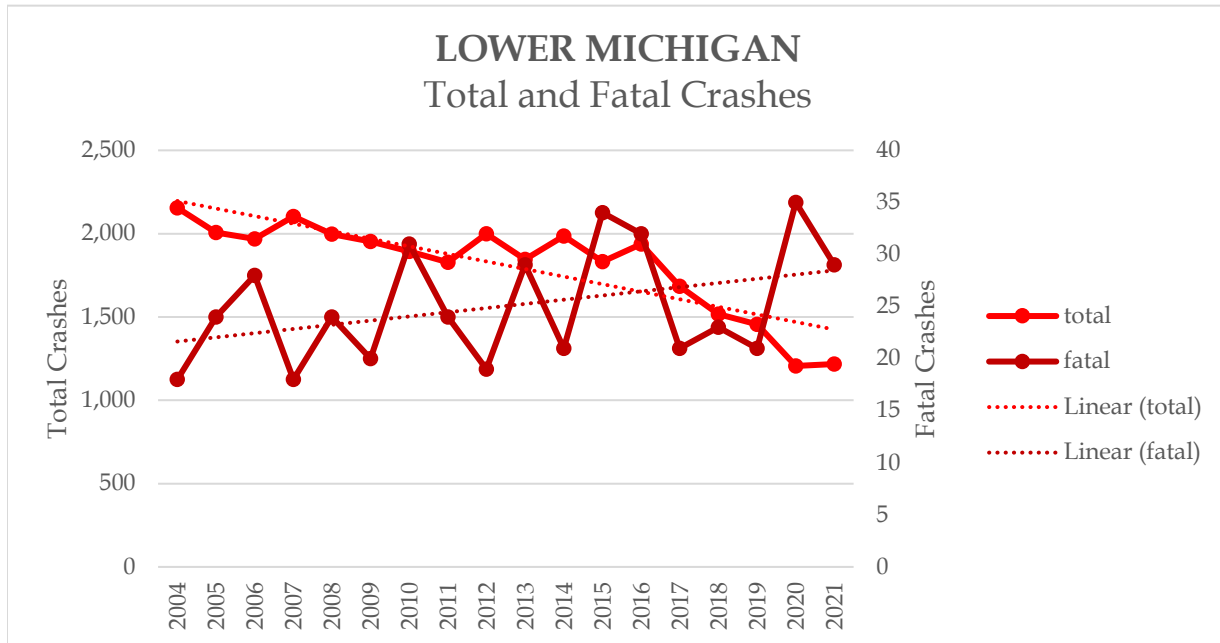




What All Bikers Fear – Vehicle Crashes

According to [Michigan Traffic Crash Facts \(.org\)](#), there were 1,248 vehicle/bike accidents in the State of Michigan in 2021, including 29 fatalities. There's good and horrible news here. The good news is that the number of accidents has gone down significantly since 2004 (first year of reporting on the site). The horrible news is that fatalities are trending much higher.

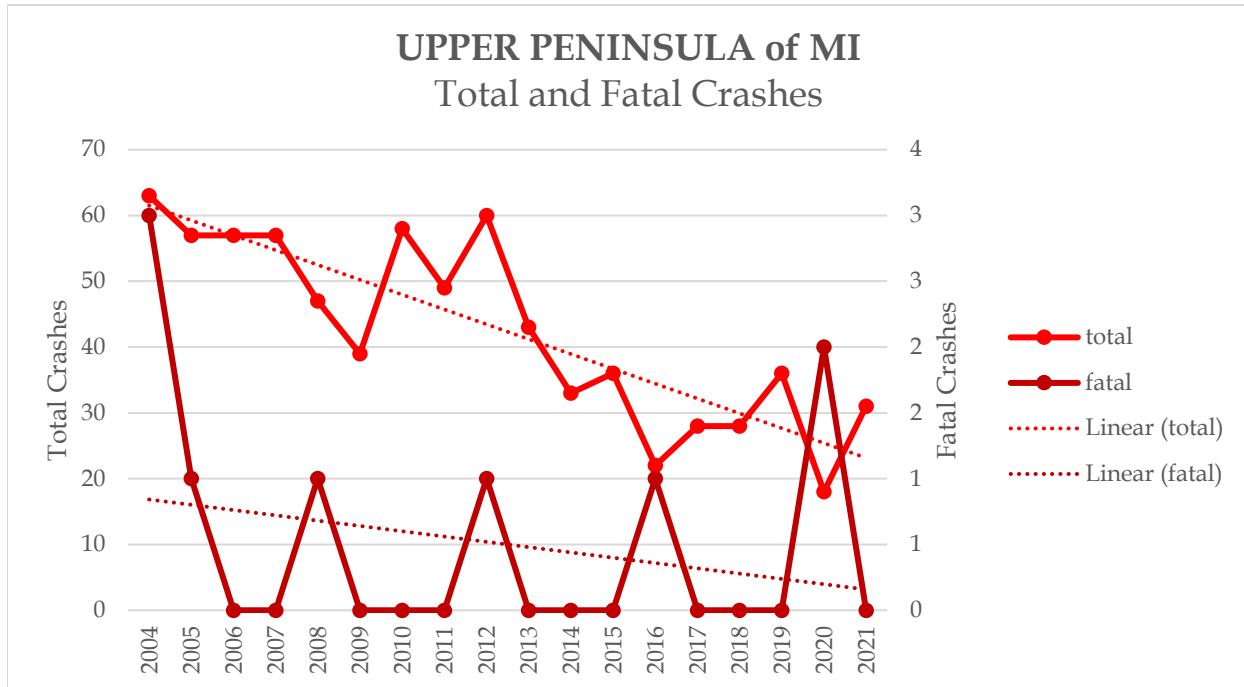
Just about every biker knows someone that’s been in a vehicle/bike accident. Unfortunately, many of us know people that have been seriously injured or even killed. Since 2004, there have been 33,350 vehicle/bike accidents in Michigan with 460 resulting in death. I have no way of knowing the injury severity in the other 32,890 people. I know that many of them were severe.



I’ve read every police report on the vehicle/bike accidents in the U.P. for the past decade. At first, having access to the police report seemed like a mountain of useful safety information. But then it quickly only left me longing for more relevant feedback. While I know where the accident took place, there is very little information as to exactly why the accident happened. The same holds true for accidents throughout Michigan. In my opinion, the police report is one of the most direct sources of information for future accident prevention. After all, safety planners are striving for “Zero Deaths”. Yet decisions to prevent deaths lack feedback for exactly why past accidents took place.

For example, there was a serious bike accident in 2021 involving a biker in Gulliver. A vehicle entered a gas station near the corner of a side road and US2. The biker was traveling southbound toward the intersection of US2 and unfortunately, was struck by the driver of the vehicle. I don’t know if the biker had on lights. Or if they did have lights, if they were flashing. I don’t know if it was raining or sunny. I don’t know if the vehicle had a clean windshield. I have absolutely zero idea why the accident took place, or what could have been different that would have prevented it. All I know is where and when the accident happened.

While crash reports lack useful detailed information, location is helpful and paints a picture when considered as a collective. For example, I know that most of the accidents in the U.P. are within city limits. I know some of the fatal accidents happen on or near major highways, including highway crossings. Therefore, in my route planning, I avoid those types of areas as much as possible. Still, busy roads persist throughout the State and some highway interaction is unavoidable. In fact, the above-mentioned accident was precisely at a location near my hometown of Manistique where I bike often.



Not only are crash trends going down in the U.P., but so are the fatalities. I don't know how to quantify this (as I can't find reliable crash data readily available throughout the country), but per miles of land mass and mileage of bikeable roads, the U.P. might be the safest place in the USA to ride a road bike.

The U.P. makes up about 1/3rd of the land mass of the entire state, yet only has 3% of its population. In 2021, the U.P. had 31 vehicle/bike accidents and no fatalities, which is 2.5% of Michigan's total accidents of 1,248. That's an impressive safety number, especially considering the millions of visitors that drive to the U.P. each year. It's a testament to all the wonderful people throughout the Upper Peninsula who meet regularly and discuss ways of keeping non-motorized users even safer.

Actionable Items

Crash reports can be more comprehensive in their data collection. The MMUCC has a crash report with considerable more information than Michigan.

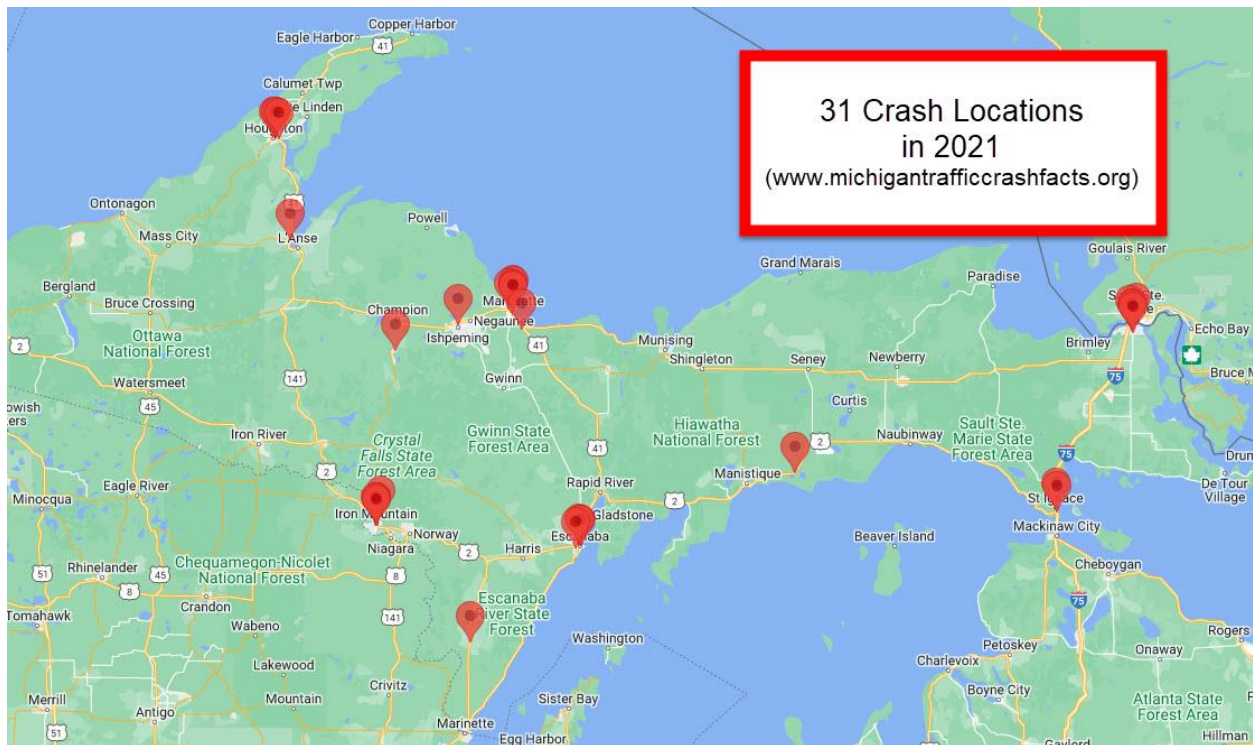
https://www.nhtsa.gov/sites/nhtsa.gov/files/documents/mmucc5_crashreportform2017.pdf.

That's just one crash report example, which appears to be from 2017. Besides the more extensive information on that report, additional relevant information would also be useful. For

example, the report has a place to select if the bike had lighting. It does not indicate if it were a front light, a back light, white or red, and if the lights were solid or flashing.

My suggestion is to use the previous crash report information to help paint a picture for where accidents are most likely to happen, based on where they have happened in the past. Look at the more severe accidents and see if there are consistencies in where they took place. If not by a specific geographic location, it might be the type of road, such as a busy highway, or other trackable condition. Are there shoulders available at these locations? Through this research and discovery, it will become increasingly obvious what more information is critical to help redesign a more comprehensive traffic report for the future.

Ideally, a report would indicate the most likely reason why the accident occurred and what if anything could have been different for it not to have happened.





Methodology for Safety Success – Separate Bikes from Vehicles

My main strategy for successful bike safety boils down to the simplicity of a primary principle – separate bikes from vehicles. In my planning I don't have boundaries relative to county, township, or city. I don't have boundaries relative to departments such as MDOT, DNR, Road Commission, government, and other groups. To be honest, I don't even have a boundary relative to Michigan as I actually sneak into Wisconsin for a short portion of the 1,200 mile bike ride.

I simply look at all available resources and devise routes that attempt to separate bikes from vehicles as often as possible.

I then identify where separation is not happening or is difficult to travel and attempt to find ways of making those areas safer than they are today. There are two methods of separation that I look for. 1) Separation by volume and 2) Separation by space.

Separation by volume means putting bikers on extremely low volume vehicle traffic roads. One of my favorite examples here is the connection between Houghton and Marquette. There is one predominant road that connects those two primary communities – US 41. The first couple years of TDY I patchworked a system of connecting gravel, paved, awfully paved bumpy roads, and US 41; all to avoid the highway as much as possible. It utilized about 16 miles of total gravel broken into 3 sections, some nice quiet backroads, about 10 miles of the worst condition paved road I’ve ever encountered (the yellow middle line looks more like a slinky than a straight line) and US 41. I knew my connections were far better than simply traveling alongside a dangerous highway for 50 miles. But it was a very difficult route.

What I really wanted to do was go through what I refer to as “The Hump” of the U.P., L’Anse up to AAA Road, past Eagle Mine and into Big Bay, arriving in Marquette from the North. My roadblock was an extremely sandy section 6 miles west of Eagle



Mine. In 2021 I finally made the change, and what an amazing difference! There is 16 miles of continuous gravel, including around 5 miles of extremely soft sandy gravel that is impossible for a conventional road bike to traverse without some walking. But I would gladly take that sand over US 41 any day!

By using quiet country roads south out of Houghton, and then again northeast out of L’Anse – we are only on US 41 for 4 miles of the total 114-mile ride. And for 80 miles of that day, I can probably count the number of passing vehicles on two hands. Compare that to being passed by thousands of vehicles if we rode alongside US 41. The Hump route is infinitely safer for bikers.

That is separation by volume.

Separation by space is providing space between traffic and bikes. This generally refers to shoulder management. On a reasonably trafficked road, it only requires about three feet of open shoulder for bikers to have decent separation between them and passing vehicles. Decent shoulders have been seriously compromised by mumble/rumble strips. Corrugations are milled

into the side of the road, usually along the white line, or just outside the white line into the shoulder, to warn vehicles from going off the road. It is the general belief that this warning system categorically could reduce vehicle crashes. This is different from center line corrugations, which are meant to keep vehicles from crossing over the center lane into opposing traffic.

I do not know what the statistical crash changes have been on roads pre and post shoulder corrugations. I did however look at some roads where corrugations have been milled, like 123 extending between Newberry and Paradise, and read all the police reports over a five-year period prior to corrugations and did not find a situation where someone went off the road (shoulder lane departure)



because there wasn't a warning system. For example, one report indicated a driver swerved off the road to avoid a road worker. Another hit a bear. One was the result of an RV trying to back into a spot to turn around. I'm not saying that corrugated shoulders don't have merit for vehicles. But I do know that they categorically made things much more dangerous when eliminating the shoulder of heavily trafficked areas of both vehicles and bikers. In those situations, the mumble/rumble strips removed the space between bikers and vehicles, creating a safety issue.

Math is not conducive to a safe sharing of the road for bikers and vehicles when a busy road has no shoulder. Take for example a 12-foot-wide road lane. That's 24 feet for two opposite direction vehicles. RV's and other large vehicles are often 8 feet 6 inches wide. Then there are the oversize mirrors, possibly adding another foot. Two large vehicles with mirrors would then be 19 feet wide. To complicate matters, many logging trucks have double loads of wood, and the trailers can be offset from one another and thereby take up even more room. Setting that very relevant reality aside for the moment, there remains only 5 feet of available space for the vehicles to pass. That's enough unless there are also bikers on the road. The biker takes up 2 or 3 feet of space, thereby only allowing a foot between each of the vehicles and the bike. Clearly not enough space, which pushes one of the vehicles off the road. Here's one more factor. Biking is a thriving recreation and continues to grow in waves throughout the world. So now add in another biker going in the opposite direction of the first biker, and you potentially have a deadly accident scenario. There is simply not enough real estate to keep people safe.

The paved shoulder has been removed because of the mumble strips on most of 123, but there is a soft shoulder for vehicles to depart the main road in the first above mentioned scenario. However, when you consider bikes going in opposite directions, even if they are aware of the imminent danger coming from behind them and attempt to go into the ditch, someone could get hit.

In situations where there is not a soft shoulder for a vehicle to avoid the accident, like on US 41 between Lac La Belle Rd and Copper Harbor, accidents are more likely to occur with bikers on only one side of the road. Biking and vehicle tourism are heavily promoted in that area. The accident exposure will continue to rise if not addressed soon. This is a curvy road with lots of tree cover. Even in sunshine the visibility is poor. Current law in Michigan allows vehicles to pass bikers on a solid yellow line.



US 41 between Lac La Belle Rd and Copper Harbor

These small to no shoulder risks on busy roads are further elevated when bikers travel in groups as it takes longer for a vehicle to pass. That problem is magnified when a long line of vehicles builds behind a group of bikers, and drivers start taking chances they shouldn't.

You might notice from pictures throughout this report that many of the roads we ride have no shoulder. We see so few of cars on those roads that it's like having a giant bike path.

Actionable Items

Separate by volume as often as possible. Look for routes that connect communities and identify areas for improvements to open safe routes for more bikers. This will naturally separate bikers from vehicles as the bikers explore much safer and enjoyable routes. For example, in "The Hump", pave or put a bike path on those 5 miles of soft sandy gravel. Consider making improvements on the other 11 miles of gravel to make it safer and more conducive to long distance bikes with skinnier tires.

Where separation by volume is not possible, look at where separation by space is insufficient – like on 123 and US 41 near Copper Harbor. And then spend resources to improve those

problem areas. I know it will take a long time to fix some of the unintended safety consequences caused by mumble strips. But there are less expensive fixes that dramatically improve the safety for both motorized and non-motorized people. Therefore, we don't have to wait for the perfect solution.

In the short term –

- Post warning signs of upcoming mumble strips. Give bikers and vehicles a heads up so they aren't surprised by their sudden encounter. Mumble strips aren't always seen by the biker in the lead and certainly not by the bikes that are following. Especially in poor weather. The mumble strips themselves can create crashes if a biker accidentally rides over them and loses control.
- Use signs where bikers are forced onto the road to let vehicles know bikers are ahead, pass with care, give three feet, be patient, etc. Let vehicles know bikers might be in the road. It's not the bikers fault they are there, yet drivers often take out their aggression on the bikers. Trust me, the bikers don't like the situation at all.
- Build bike passing lanes. I understand there are complications with widening the entire length of roads like 123. In areas where obstacles to fully expanding a shoulder exist, build bicycle "passing lanes", like the vehicle passing lanes on US2. Put a sign letting vehicles and bikers know of upcoming passing opportunities. This will encourage vehicles to have patience, knowing they will have a safe opportunity to pass bikers ahead. The passing lane is a section of shoulder that is much wider than normal, maybe six feet wide, for as long as is possible, at least a quarter mile, this lets bikers move off the road onto a shoulder. This will allow the line of patient vehicles to safely pass the bikers. I personally think this is a brilliant solution.
- Sweep the mumble strip shoulders more than once and inspect to make sure the tire popping gravel created by milling the strips has been thoroughly removed. Debris does not go away on its own and one sweep is far from sufficient. Sometimes there is technically enough separation by space with the mumble strips, but the debris on the shoulder creates another set of hazards and the bikers are unable to use the shoulder. Shoulder inspection and proper sweeping is a simple fix. Examples of this are along 26 between Hancock and Lake Linden. The shoulders are clean where there are no mumble strips. Then, as soon as you get to the mumble strips the shoulders are full of debris and not bikeable, forcing groups of bikers onto the road.

Longer term –

- Once the optimal mumble strip method is achieved, go back and fix the "other ones". Create consistency throughout the U.P. in the mumble strips milled so bikers and vehicles learn how to navigate them. Make them all the same.
- Improve the shoulder to a true useable three foot or wider where mumble strips are laid. True three foot (or wider) means that the shoulder is in good, clean, paved condition. Some shoulders might be specified as being three feet, but in reality, they are only inches as the shoulder has eroded.



Critical Safety / Planning Areas

There are two primary safety/planning areas I focus on.

1. Riding in and out of towns
2. Connectivity of Communities

This combined focus covers the most congested parts in the Upper Peninsula (towns) while also ensuring that safe routes exist between towns so that bikers can safely ride throughout.

Riding in and out of towns.

As mentioned before, most of the vehicle/bike accidents in the U.P. are within city limits. From reading the police reports, I know that many of these accidents happen near parking lot entrances, driveways, intersections, etc. I make a great deal of effort to route bikers in and out of towns in the safest way possible by avoiding areas where I believe carless vehicle driving could take place. Even if it means routing bikers “the long way” into town.

In 2019 we rode into Houghton (from Ironwood) going downhill on highway 26. It’s a beautiful view with the Portage Bridge and Hancock in the background. Not to mention, a very exciting descent. Especially after a day going up so many hills. However, one small group of bikers had a close call with a vehicle entering M26 from the



busy shopping center. Soon thereafter, I also had access to the police reports, and realized the increased dangers inherent within city limits. I changed the route to enter downtown Houghton from the west. We now enjoy a quiet, beautiful, and safe ride into Houghton while only adding a couple of extra miles. In fact, Houghton has become one of my favorite towns to ride into.



6 Separate Routes that Spell - BiKE UP

The vast majority of the Upper Peninsula towns reside along the perimeter borders of the U.P. Therefore, our 1,200-mile bike ride goes in and out of just about all the towns in the U.P. Two self-supported events, Loop da Yoop and BiKE UP pretty much cover the rest of the

towns. So, one way or the other, I’ve reviewed town entry/exits throughout the entire Upper Peninsula.

Some towns, like “Bike Friendly” Soo, naturally have beautiful and safe passages. We arrive west of town going north on 20th Street and follow Portage Ave to the Locks. We exit east on Portage, and quickly find ourselves on the quiet scenic Riverside Drive south along St. Mary’s River and into the farmlands. Even though the Soo is a very busy town, there are roads that outskirt the congestion and allow for safe entry/exit by bicycle.

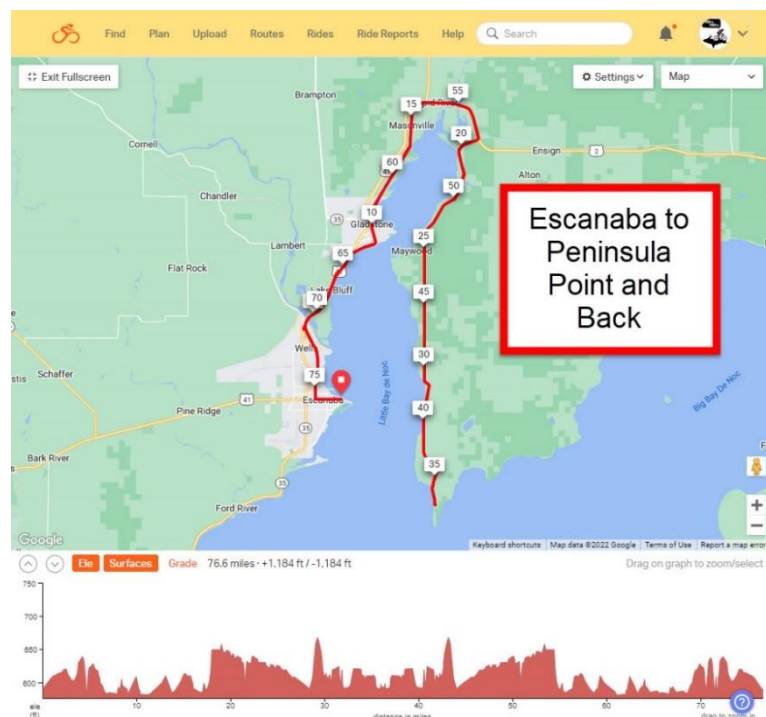
Marquette has worked to solve their entry/exit problems with an extensive network of bike paths. They extend west to Ishpeming, south to Harvey, and north to Presque Isle/Big Bay Rd. Bikers need only to find a way somewhere along the path to enter/exit.

Escanaba is another busy city that has done some excellent work to improve their entry/exit from Gladstone. However, for years now, this work doesn't reach its full potential due to gaps in the system. The gaps are mostly due to a lack of "biker information/communication", and in some areas, there are also physical gaps. Nobody wants to ride their bike on the shoulder of US2. The Escanaba/Gladstone community clearly recognizes this and built phenomenal separation by putting a bike path from Lakeshore Drive in Gladstone to P Road North of the Escanaba River bridge. But how do bikers get from where they might live/vacation in downtown Escanaba to P Road (or vice-versa)? That unfortunately requires some insider route information.

The safest way to enter Escanaba from P Road is to stay on the east side of US2, heading south toward the Escanaba River Bridge. There they can pick up a pedestrian path coming from Pioneer Park. Bikers that aren't aware of that pathway would unfortunately risk crossing US2 to head south and put themselves in greater danger. That said, the east shoulder of US2 isn't marked as a "Bike Lane", and vehicles probably aren't accustomed to accommodating bikers/pedestrians heading toward them as they travel north out of town. Once safely across the bridge, North 3rd Street provides a fantastic safe and quiet access into Ludington downtown.

In that example, most of the pavement is already in place. The biggest obstacle to clean and safe pedestrian passage between downtown Escanaba and Gladstone is signage, and possible separation enhancements between 18.25 Road (by Grain n' Grape) and Pioneer Trail Park.

Taking it one step further, the town of Rapid River is a very difficult and dangerous place for non-motorized people. However, west of town is Bay Shore Drive, a lovely quiet road extending all the way to Gladstone. East of town is County Road 513. An incredible ride all the way to Peninsula Point Lighthouse. The only problem area is the three and a half miles through Rapid River. Fix that, and you have now created a world class 75-mile bike route between Ludington Park and Peninsula Point Lighthouse. All it requires is about 4 miles of shoulder/bike path improvement and signs.



Connectivity of communities – the space between

The second part of my focus on critical safety planning areas is connecting communities – the space between towns. Many bikers, especially those traveling long distances, want to/must ride from one community to another. So, I look for the safest routes to get people between towns, like Manistique to Curtis. Or much further, like Manistique to Escanaba. During the 1,200-mile U.P. perimeter ride, we go through just about every town with overnights in Manistique, Escanaba, Iron Mountain, Ironwood, Houghton, Marquette, Grand Marais, Sault Ste. Marie, and St. Ignace. We travel through Nahma, Rapid River, Gladstone, toward Menominee, Norway, Kingsford, Alpha, Caspian, Iron River, Watersmeet, Wakefield, Ramsay, Bessemer, Ontonagon, South Range, Hancock, Lake Linden, Gay, Copper Harbor, Eagle Harbor, Eagle River, Tamarack, Bargara, L'Anse, near Big Bay, Chatham, near Munising, Newberry, Paradise, Bay Mills, Brimley, De Tour Village, Engadine, Curtis, Gulliver, and many smaller towns.



No shoulder no problem - there aren't any cars

Throughout all those town connections, I'm looking for the safest route's (the space between) by utilizing separation (by volume and distance). Unbelievably, the Upper Peninsula already offers quiet paved connections to most of those towns. Along the 1,200 miles of biking around the perimeter of the U.P., there are only 36 miles of gravel used to connect rural roads. It's one thing for a biker to travel from across the world to join a supported group of bikers on a journey that includes a few miles here and there of difficult terrain. Those same bikers would be highly hesitant or unlikely to make the journey on their own if the community connections aren't improved. So even though the U.P. is "mostly" connected with pavement, huge benefits would follow if it were fully connected.

For example, one of my favorite rides is from Escanaba to Iron Mountain. Once we go past Bark River, we don't see another gas station for about 100 miles. That remote separation is available because we ride road bikes over 4 miles of difficult gravel. If a biker was visiting from another area, they would likely be scared away from the gravel on their skinny tires. They wouldn't know how bad the gravel might get, or how long it would last, and they would turn around. You see that happen often in Engadine. By looking at Strava Heat Maps, you can see that bikers head east out of Engadine, hit the gravel, get nervous and head back to Engadine, then ride south on 117 to connect with US2.

Not only is gravel difficult to ride, but it can be damaging to bicycles, especially in wet weather. Bikes have come a long way from my first Huffy dirt bike. It's common for bicycles to cost thousands of dollars, with some more than ten thousand dollars. The components of a bicycle (shifters, brakes, cassettes, chain, wheels, and even pedals) are a large portion of the bicycle's cost. People aren't made of money and take great effort to protect their expensive bike from damage. Gravel, especially softer, dusty, sandy gravel, gets into all the little areas of the components and can damage them. Riding over gravel requires extensive cleaning to keep the bike riding smooth and damage free. Bikers need their equipment to perform, especially when riding long distances.



There are two solutions for the gravel problem along the Cedar River south of Bark River. One is to bike path/pave the 4 miles of road that connects County Road 551 with the farm communities west of Cedar River. The other option is to pave a much longer distance all the way to M35.

If the goal is not to get bikers down to Lake Michigan or connect with Menominee, then improving the gravel section isn't needed as they could be routed east/west along County Road 374 through Carney. However, what an incredible tourism opportunity it would be to ride a bike from Green Bay to Escanaba on beautiful quiet roads and only need to improve 4 miles of gravel to make the Michigan connection.

Actionable Items

Riding in and out of towns – I encourage community/city planners to look at the various ways for non-motorized traffic to enter and exit their towns safely. And then ask yourself the following questions:

- Would someone not from the area know the safest routes into and out of your town?

- Are they marked?
- Do the routes showcase the “impression” you hope tourists get when entering or leaving your town?
- Can they enter/exit safely in all directions? Meaning, if your town sits on Lake Michigan shoreline, can they ride east, west, and north out of town depending on their destination?
- Do the routes take them past places of commerce (food/lodging/necessities)? Or, if not, are there signs or would it be obvious for non-locals to know that commerce is nearby?
- Are there small improvements necessary, such as signs, bike path or pavement connections, that would complete the safety and aesthetics of entering/exiting your town?

Connecting the space between – Then take it a step further and look at how bikers can ride safely to your neighboring communities.

- Is there a scenic/non-highway route available that is paved? People biking long distances have skinny tires and avoid gravel or rough roads. It’s important to be aware of the skinny tire factor. I ride my mountain bike around town all the time, sometimes going over 30 miles. I can jump over bumps, curbs, handle gravel, holes... whatever comes my way. But I would never ride my mountain bike 100 miles between two communities. It would take me hours longer and require significantly more effort. So, it’s important to consider the type of bike you are expecting to utilize the route, and if it’s realistic.
- Then, setting aside what is already in place and paved, what would be the ideal route for safety and scenic value?
- Identify the paving/bike path connection projects necessary to make the ideal route a long-distance bike reality.

Towns must consider both the entry/exit into town, and the connectivity to other towns. For example, Grand Marais has superb entry and exits from the west, going south, and heading east. No problems there. They also have good community connections west toward Pictured Rocks and south to Seney, which can get bikers to Curtis and further to Manistique. However they have horrible connectivity to all communities to their east. Basically, the entire corridor north of M28 and east of Seney, including the Tahquamenon Falls, is blocked. There are 13 miles of soft-sandy gravel east of Grand Marais to Muskallonge Lake State Park that would not be biked by 99% of road bikers. For the same 13-mile reason, bikers in Newberry touring west would be safest to head south toward the Lake Michigan communities and avoid Grand Marais, Pictured Rocks, Munising, Au-Train, etc. The 13 miles of sandy gravel is too difficult for a distance bike, and M28 is far too dangerous with the shoulders having been mostly eliminated because of the mumble strips. Therefore, if any community within Grand Marais, Newberry, Paradise, Bay Mills, Brimley, Sault Ste. Marie, Munising, Au-Train, Harvey, Marquette, Big Bay, Ishpeming, and Negaunee want to attract distance bikers alongside the Lake Superior side of the Upper Peninsula – those 13 miles of soft sandy gravel are probably their biggest obstacle.

This is where having the foresight to investigate the space between communities, and then looking for creative solutions to close gaps safely and effectively, will yield tremendous benefits for years to come. While if the communities only concentrate on their immediate areas, and ignore the space between, they might struggle to attract bikers and never understand why.



I See Things as a Collaborative

As mentioned up front – my report is written from the perspective of a biker/event coordinator and not from the standpoint of understanding physical and departmental boundaries.

That perspective allows for creative solutions but is not always realistic. Over the years my open boundaries mindset leaves me feeling somewhat naïve as to what projects could get done.

But I suppose I'm an eternal optimist.

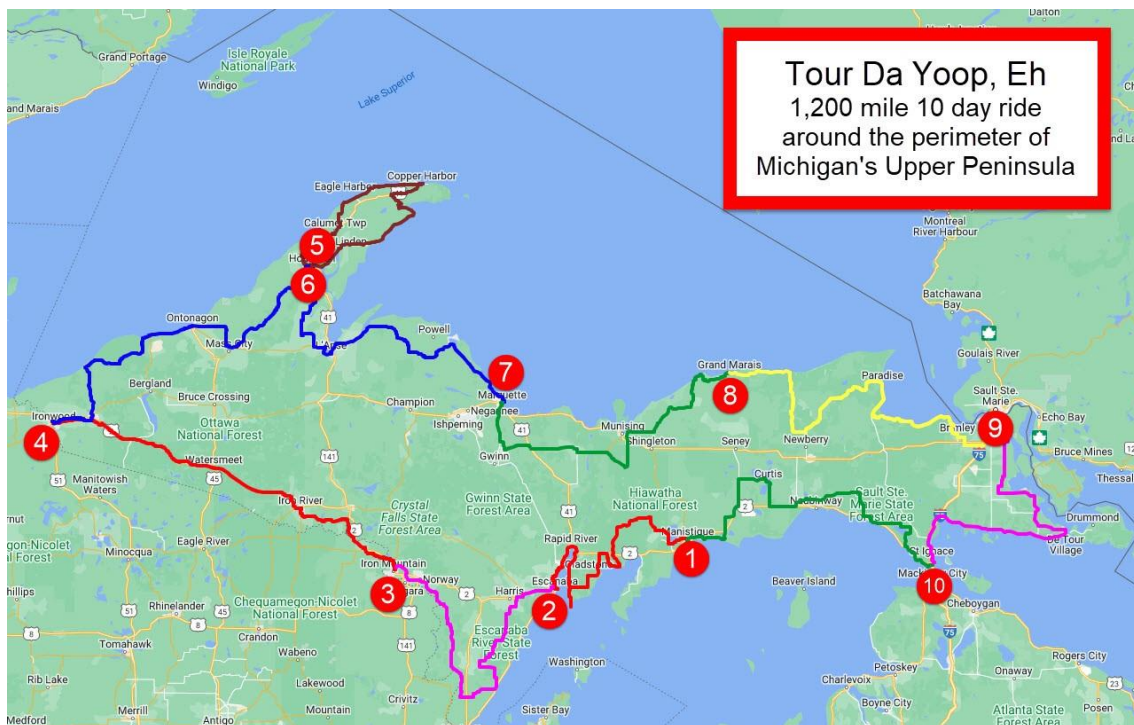
The DNR, MDOT, Road Commissions, Townships... all have their own unique directives, jurisdictions, and very important - funding. I hope that when looking at bike safety, saving lives, and expanding biking tourism to all communities that want it – those individual boundaries could become blurred and out of the ordinary solutions implemented.

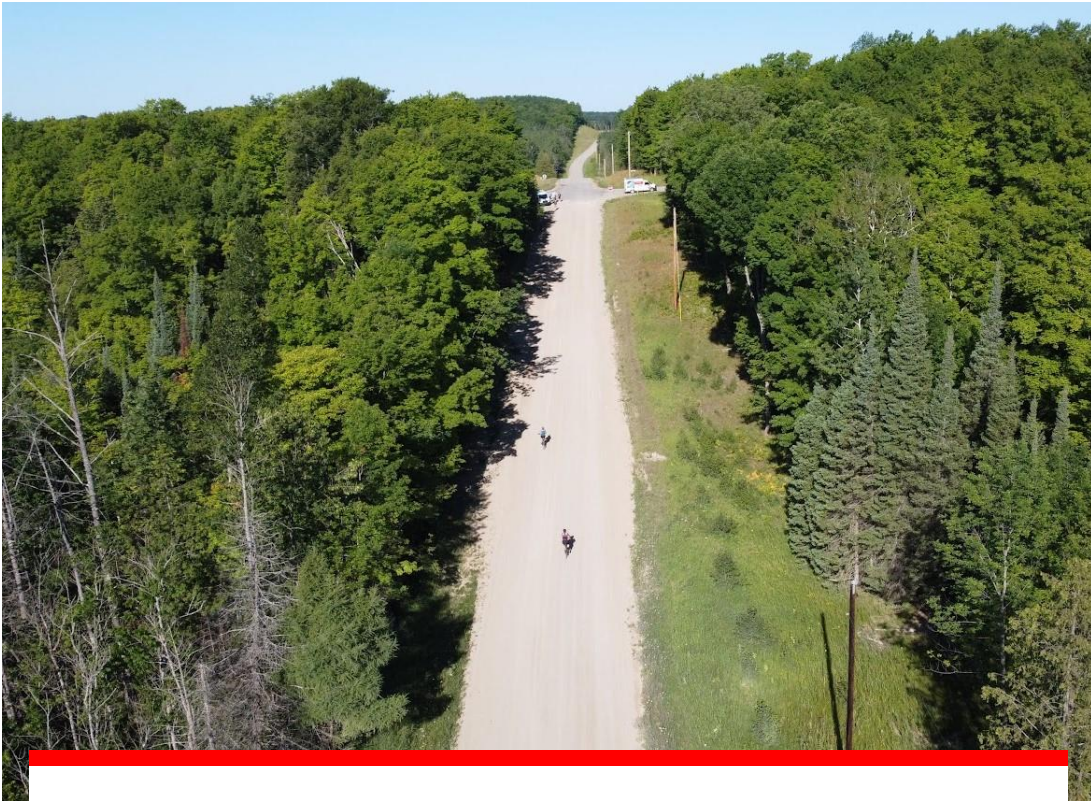
Keep in mind that bikers don't see boundaries. Someone biking from Cleveland Ohio to Duluth Minnesota doesn't think about the DNR, MDOT, Road Commissions, Townships, or other organizations. They don't understand why they biked on 50 miles of beautiful quiet pavement, then hit 10 miles of inhospitable sandy gravel, then finally pavement reappears. They wonder why millions of dollars was spent expanding shoulders on a nearby major highway instead of paving the 10 miles of gravel, that would allow them to avoid the highway completely. What they mostly care about is that they can enjoy their experience and be alive when they reach their destination.

Actionable Items

Those around the country reading this report that do live within boundaries for a living, continue to keep an open mind to the possible connectivity solutions and look for creative ways to safely route non-motorized traffic. I know from speaking with planners in the U.P. and Lansing that you absolutely care about keeping people safe. You have regular meetings with all departments (including EUP, CUPPAD, and WUPPDR) throughout the entire Upper Peninsula multiple times a year. I'm confident the communication platform you developed will yield tremendous "open boundary" solutions.

I envision a day when the 1,200-mile loop around the perimeter of the Upper Peninsula is as widely known as the Appalachian trail, with bikers coming from around the country to freely enjoy quiet and safe biking as a bucket list adventure.





Specific Actionable Safety Items for the Upper Peninsula

The safety recommendations are categorized as:

- 1) Connecting Communities
- 2) In and out of towns
- 3) Other noteworthy community connection opportunities to greatly enhance the biking experience

*The following suggestions are focused on my perspective for road biking. There are numerous safety projects taking place and scheduled throughout the U.P. and I'm not suggesting that these take resources away from those projects.

Connecting Communities



Recommendations for Connecting Communities

The most dangerous areas I experienced biking in 2022 were in the space between communities along busier roads with non-existent shoulders or shoulders that have been eliminated due to the milling of mumble strips. Busy highways like US2 have wider shoulders, which can be biked. However, the shoulders are often full of debris, the road is huge, windy, loud and the traffic is relentless. It a stressful biking experience and full of safety hazards. The community connection suggestions are designed to separate bikes from vehicles as often and reasonable as possible. Providing solutions to keep people away from highways.

1 - Pave 5 miles of gravel on County Road 503 alongside Ogontz Bay.

The shape of the U.P. is defined by its peninsulas. The Garden Peninsula and the peninsula between Little and Big Bay De Noc's distinguish the Lake Michigan shoreline. Routing bikers through these peninsulas not only magnifies the incredible biking experience, but it just as importantly separates bikes from the dangerous traffic on US2 highway.

County Road 503 turns to gravel near the Ogontz Bay boat ramp and then connects with pavement on County Road 511 five miles later. Paving the gravel opens the entire peninsula to non-motorized travel, including all the way to Peninsula Point Lighthouse and allows bikers freedom from US2. If heading to or from Nahma, bikers are then only on US2 for two miles between the peninsulas.

2 - Pave 4 miles of gravel on County Road 551 and 366 over the Cedar River.

Routing bikers into the Escanaba River State Forest south of US2 takes bikes away from 50 miles of highway between Escanaba and Iron Mountain. Doing so by paving just four miles of gravel on County Roads 551 and 366 further allows bikers to explore the entire Menominee region free from the busy highway M 35. This paving project (or bike path) allows for a tremendous bang for your safety buck when you consider the biking access and separation from highways.

3 - Repair and clean the shoulder of M26 between M38 and Atlantic Mine.

M26 was a necessary test bed for shoulder mumble strips. They are inconsistent, dangerous, and extremely difficult to see in rainy weather. Bikers have very few options outside M26 to ride to Houghton from Ontonagon/Porkies or if coming from the South. I consider this a priority fix and suggest that the mumble strip design is made consistent with most recent preferred state/federal standard. I also recommend signs to warn of upcoming mumble strips. They are very hard to see, especially in a line of bikes, and create a dangerous hazard when you suddenly hit them. I urge this section of highway shoulder to be fixed and consistent throughout.

4 - Clean corrugated shoulder on M26 between Hancock and Lake Linden.

The shoulder is technically wide enough to ride bikes, but it is dirty and full of hazards. This eliminates the shoulder for most of the section and forces bikers onto the busy road. There are

small portions that don't have mumble strips. Those sections are clean and free of debris. As soon as it changes to corrugated shoulders the debris is everywhere. The difference is completely obvious, and further supports why I believe it is important to inspect shoulders for cleaning immediately post the initial milling of the strips. The construction of the strips creates debris, which is not swept thoroughly from the shoulder. This debris continues to collect more debris. Sweeping is a cheap, easy, and immediate fix. But an extremely necessary one if you want to see bikes separated from traffic and using the shoulder.

5 - Widen shoulder on 10 miles of US 41 between Lac La Belle Rd and Copper Harbor.

Bikers have alternate options of riding the southern side to Copper Harbor until they get east of Lac La Belle Road. US 41 is then the only route to Copper Harbor and unfortunately it doesn't really have a shoulder. Not only is the paved shoulder extremely small (if any at all), but there also isn't a soft shoulder. The road abruptly ends on either side and dumps into a gully. The road is beautiful as it twists and turns through the forest. But this beauty comes at the cost of visibility with double yellow lines throughout. Traffic become impatient with slow bikes in front and passes when it shouldn't. They take blind risks that endanger themselves, bikers, and oncoming traffic.

This is a project that needs to be inspected and solved. The entire Keweenaw is a tourist destination hot spot which continues to grow in both motorized and non-motorized traffic. I see more bikers in the Keweenaw than any other area of the U.P. I would consider widening the shoulder where possible. Create passing lanes. I would also run an information campaign with signs warning of upcoming bikers and encouraging vehicles to wait to pass the bikers only when a passing lane is available.

6 - Widen the shoulder of M26 between Eagle River and Copper Harbor.

This is another beautiful road that is increasing with both motorized and non-motorized traffic. Long lines of vehicles, including RV's, congest behind bikers and make dangerous decisions to pass when they can't see what's ahead. During our event we route up Brockway Mountain to reduce the exposure on this area of M26 by 70%. I love the Brockway challenge, but to be honest, most distance bikers aren't going to attempt to climb that hill. I strongly recommend widening the shoulder where possible and creating passing lanes that allow vehicles to safely pass bikes. Post signs that inform vehicles of the upcoming passing lanes, so they have the patience to wait until the time is safe before they pass.

7 - Pave or bike path 5 miles along an extremely sandy section of AAA road west of Eagle Mine

This is one of the largest separation and safety gains per miles of bike path/road construction throughout the entire U.P. By riding north from L'Anse into "The Hump" of the U.P. east to Big Bay, you can avoid over 50 miles of highway US 41. The benefits are tremendous. In order to do this, bikers must traverse 16 miles of continuous gravel – including 5 miles of extremely soft and sandy gravel. Those 5 miles are impossible to bike on a traditional road bike, and must be

walked for much of it. That section of road is on the top of the hill, which has a raised forest floor on either side of the road. The trees are small and not crowding the road. It's a perfect natural position to place a bike path. For as remote as the area is, I believe a bike path is a simple and mostly maintenance free solution.

The remaining 11 miles of gravel are harder packed and can be ridden on a road bike. But it's not easy. There are large chunks of gravel/rock and an occasional flooded beaver dam. It's an adventure to say the least. Obviously it would be incredible (and still an exciting biking adventure), if the entire 16 miles were paved. But I believe if the main problem 5 miles had a bike path, and the other 11 miles had some improvements with a culvert and filling in of some holes, it would stand as a fantastic separation solution to remove bikes from 50 miles of extremely busy and dangerous US 41.

8 - Passing lanes on H35 between Munising and Grand Marais

The word is out on the Pictured Rocks. People are flocking to that area in droves and I don't think that is going to change. H35 is a wonderful and scenic road. But it is filling up with more vehicles than in the past. While I still felt safe riding this road on a bike, it's obvious there could be a problem in the near future. I would flag any upcoming road project with "separation" in mind, and budget in areas for passing lanes and/or wider shoulders throughout.

9 - Paving 13 miles of sandy gravel on the Grand Marais Truck Trail west of Deer Park.

This is a project that I can't stop talking about because I believe it (along with the 5 miles of sandy gravel on AAA road) is one of the most important bike safety projects in the entire U.P.

M28 between Munising and I75 is not safe for biking – period. It is an extremely busy road with narrow shoulders. Those shoulders have been largely eliminated with various mumble strip methods. It is a major highway moving millions of vehicles east and west across the U.P.



Bikers' alternative is to use Lake Superior Shoreline Rd and 123 to Newberry. From there, bikers are forced to risk M28 or more likely, be routed south to the Lake Michigan communities. Bikers would, however, travel up a beautiful and quiet road to Deer Park, and then ride along the Great Lake to Grand Marais if it weren't for 13 miles of extremely sandy gravel west of Deer Park. The horrors of the road are known in the biking community, and they avoid it at all costs. To be honest, someone could probably make a living setting up a shuttle service for bikes in that area.

This 13 mile section is the epitome of the power of focusing on connectivity between communities, and realizing the flow of biking tourism potential that can exist across hundreds of miles when a small section of access is opened.

10 - Widen shoulders or create bike passing lanes along 123 between Newberry and Lake Superior Shoreline Rd. south of Paradise.

Ideally, I would review the entire 123 section all the way to St. Ignace, but the area between Newberry and Lake Superior Shoreline Rd. are the most critical. If the word is out on the Picture



Rocks, there's also no secrets about Tahquamenon Falls or Whitefish Point. Vehicles are beaming there in the millions and they don't waste time sitting behind a bike. The shoulders along 123 have been eliminated with the corrugation of mumble strips and bikers are forced to share the road with every car, RV, and oversize truck speeding from one tourist spot to the next.

I suggest repaving the entire shoulder to remove the mumble strips. I believe there are some complications with having a wide shoulder throughout because of wet lands, but I would add bike passing lanes wherever possible. As always, place signs of upcoming passing lanes to give vehicles the patience to pass when the time is safe, and bikers can move off the road.

11 - Clean the shoulders on 134 between I75 and Port Dolomite.

The biggest problem area is between Hessel and Port Dolomite. The shoulder has less debris west of Hessel. It is generally clean between Port Dolomite and east to De Tour Village. **In fact, the mumble strips between Port Dolomite and De Tour Village are actually a very good example of effective corrugation construction. The shoulder is wide and clean where bikers can safely ride within the available space. They are well separated from the traffic on the road.** I don't know what happened between Hessel and Port Dolomite, but there is a night and day difference with the usability of the shoulder with respect to debris. My assumption is that it wasn't properly cleaned and has continued to collect debris throughout the years.

12 - Pave 5 miles of St. Ignace Rd. just west of N. 3 Mile Rd (North of Hessel)

Taking it one step further on separation, you completely remove bikers from 12 miles of vehicle traffic on 134 between Hessel and Pine River (near I75) by paving just 5 miles of St. Ignace Rd.

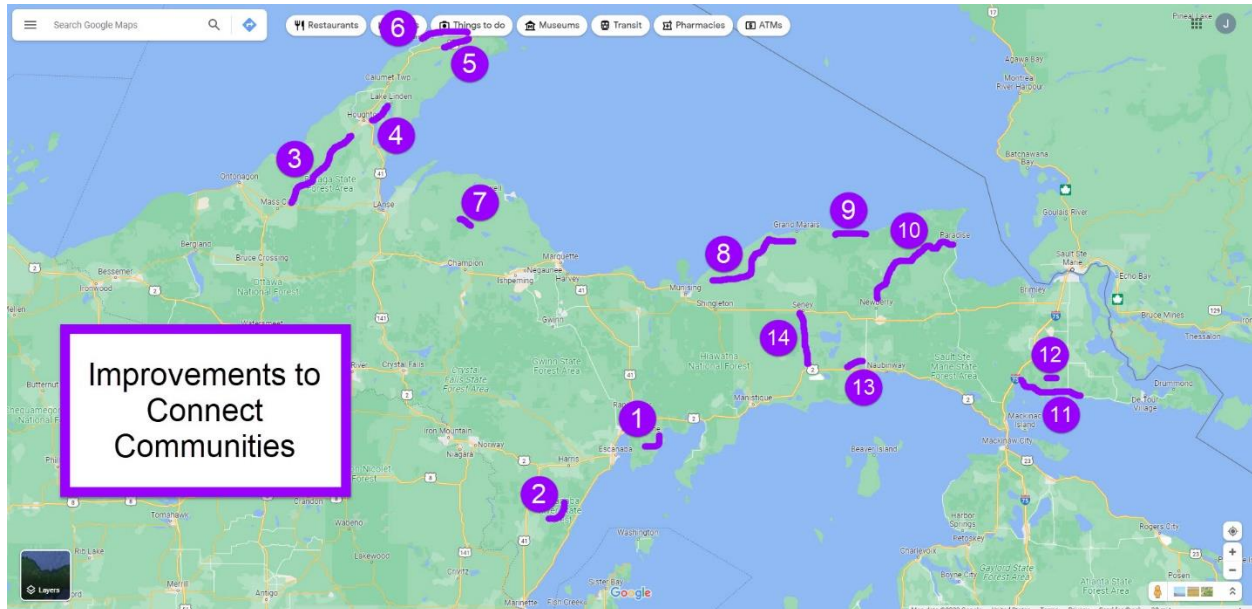
Bikers still get to see most of the Lake Huron shoreline on 134 and ride through the towns of Cedarville and Hessel. But this diversion onto St. Ignace Rd. gives them a break from the busy traffic traveling to and from the Drummond Island Ferry.

13 - Pave or bike path 5 miles of Hiawatha Trail west of Engadine

Paving 5 miles of Hiawatha Trail (or bike path) separates bikers from 5 miles of US2 traffic. The shoulder on US2 is wide enough to accommodate bikers. But it's an especially busy section of highway and very difficult for bikers to traverse with the wind, noise, traffic, debris and danger.

14 - Widen the shoulder on M77 between Seney and Blaney Park

Even though this is a straight road with good visibility, it's a busy major north/south connection for vehicles. There is a shoulder, and it doesn't have mumble strips. So that's good. But the shoulder is too narrow for how busy this road is.



Only 37 miles

In total, those recommendations are only 37 miles of new bike path/pavement, yet they open the door to thousands of miles of biking possibilities. They fully connect a 1,200-mile bike ride around the entire perimeter of the Upper Peninsula (and just 11 more miles would make the connection 100% paved). They create access for biking tourism to all communities throughout the U.P. and create a biking phenomenon not likely found anywhere else in the country.

Riding In and Out of Towns

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Recommendations for in and out of towns

Most of the towns throughout the U.P. are easy and safe to ride your bike in and out. But there are a few problem areas that if fixed, could further expand biking tourism for that area and greatly improve safety.

1 - Safe Passage through Rapid River

Rapid River sits right on US2 and is sandwiched between Lake Michigan and a massive river watershed. There are no alternative roads to get through town. The main problem is only 1.5 miles between Bay Shore Rd and Rapid River Knifeworks. But the best solution would extend all the way east out of Rapid River to County Road 513, for a total of 3.5 miles. My suggestion is to put a bike path on the South side of US2 connecting Bayshore Dr. to County Road 513. From either of those points, bikers can divert away from US2 on wonderful quiet roads. The closer you get to town the more difficult it is to cross US2 on your bike. I'm sure it's a problem that the residents of Rapid River deal with daily. For that reason, I would also believe there would be a tremendous bonus to have overhead passage available on Main Street. Aside from helping the residents, it would allow bikers traveling North to cross the highway and find their way to 35 through Rock. Creating safe bike/pedestrian passage through Rapid River further connects a huge opportunity all the way from Ludington Park in Escanaba to Peninsula Point Lighthouse for people to explore on bike.

2 - Signs and small shoulder improvement between Gladstone and Escanaba

There is a wonderful bike path connecting Gladstone and Escanaba, but access to it can be complicated for people not familiar with the area. I recommend establishing clear bike path signs leaving Gladstone, taking people down P Road, past Grain n' Grape on 18.25 Road. Then expand the shoulder as a designated bike path between there and Vanlerberghe Drive where they can connect with a bike path to cross the Escanaba River Bridge. Then use signs to direct bikers down North 3rd Street and to Ludington Park. There is very little construction needed here, mostly just information through the use of signs.

3 - Pave 2 miles of South Street from McKinley Manor to Portage Ave near the Soo Locks

The Soo does have a good entry into town using Portage Ave. However, it can get a bit congested and dangerous near the Portage Ave and West Easterday Avenue intersection. Paving or putting a bike path along South Street for just under 2 miles provides first class scenery and a wonderfully safe entrance into town.

4 - Build an overpass/tunnel connecting St. Ignace to Bridge View Park

Mackinac Bridge and Mackinac Island are two of St. Ignace pillars they are known for. But accessing Bridge View Park with anything other than a car is extremely difficult and dangerous. Ideally, it makes sense to build two access points, one crossing I75 from the welcome center

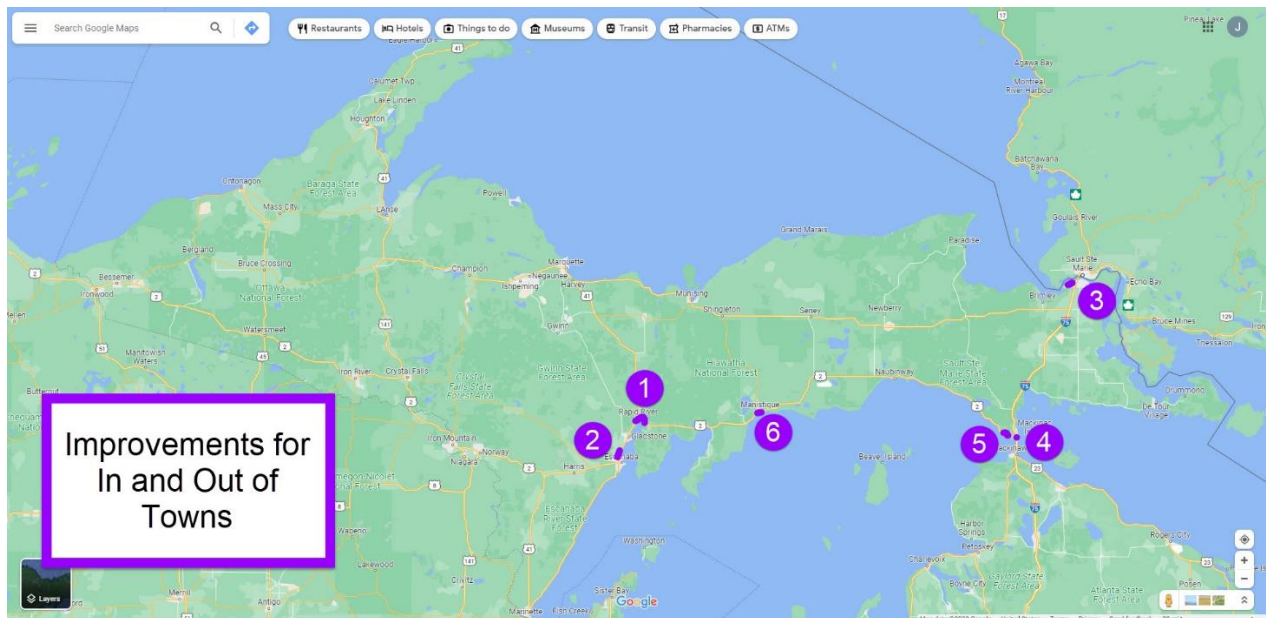
and another crossing US2 near South First Street and Boulevard Drive. Not only does it open the park for recreation, but it also opens wonderful biking opportunities going west out of town along Boulevard Drive.

5 - Pave Boulevard Drive by St. Ignace Bridge View Park

Boulevard Drive can be lovely to ride a bike, but the gravel and uncertain conditions can deter it from tourist and distance bike use. Paving this small 2.5 mile section provides a reliable access into the St. Ignace community from the west. It also creates wonderful bike loops people can explore, showcasing some of the best views in town. It separates bikes from an extremely busy section of US2, opening access all the way past Lehto's Pasties with less than a mile of highway exposure. All while giving tourists a way to explore Deer Ranch, the Mystery Spot, or ride all the way to Cheesman Road for a nice loop back into town.

6 - Expand, brighten, and highlight the pedestrian passage between downtown Manistique and its harbor

Manistique has a wonderful downtown, a harbor, an iconic lighthouse, and an in-demand Lakeshore Campground. But these gems are divided by a busy highway US2 and a bridge. There is a boardwalk, but it doesn't allow bikes. There is a highway crossing under the bridge and US2, but it isn't well known. There is a sidewalk going over the bridge, but I don't believe it's well marked as a bike path. I recommend that Manistique look at these unique resources, identify the current infrastructure that exists to connect them, and work to highlight, brighten, inform, and expand on the access.



Other Community Connection Opportunity

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Other notable community connection opportunities

1 - Pave or bike path along 13 miles of gravel on Little Harbor Road south of Thompson

The Garden Peninsula all the way to Fayette is a wonderful place, but somewhat locked out of biking tourism due to US2 and a gravel road. Little Harbor Road runs south from Thompson and turns to gravel at Gierke Road for 13 miles as it continues south and west toward Garden. Paving or putting a nice bike path (that would stay free from the gravel debris) on that 13 mile section opens the entire Garden Peninsula to non-motorized tourism. Manistique already has good biking from town to the east and north. This would create wonderful biking opportunities to the south and west. It opens the door to distance biking to Nahma and beyond, keeping bikers far from US2 for most of their travels.

2 - Keep shoulders free from mumble strips on Highway 13

Highway 13 is an excellent connection option for bikers going between the Lake Superior and Lake Michigan communities. It does not have large shoulders, which is fine. But any corrugation of mumble strips on these shoulders would be devastating. No change required here – just notable good road to keep open as a North/South connection.

3 - Pave 5 miles of Camp Road south of Mansfield

I currently route people through Spread Eagle Wisconsin to avoid US2. The alternative would be gravel on Camp Road. It's a long ride between Iron Mountain and Ironwood, so introducing gravel isn't a friendly option for road bikes. If Michigan is interested in biking tourism (and staying out of Wisconsin), such as the Iron Belle Trail, without relying solely on US2 as it does today, then projects like paving 5 miles of Camp Road help to make this a reality.

4 - Pave 9 miles of Old Highway US2 between National Forest 16 road (west of Beechwood) near Watersmeet

This allows bikers relief from US2 for 20 miles as they enjoy a wonderful scenic biking experience through pristine wilderness.

5 - Pave 5 miles of Stage Coach Road from US2 to Lake Gogebic.

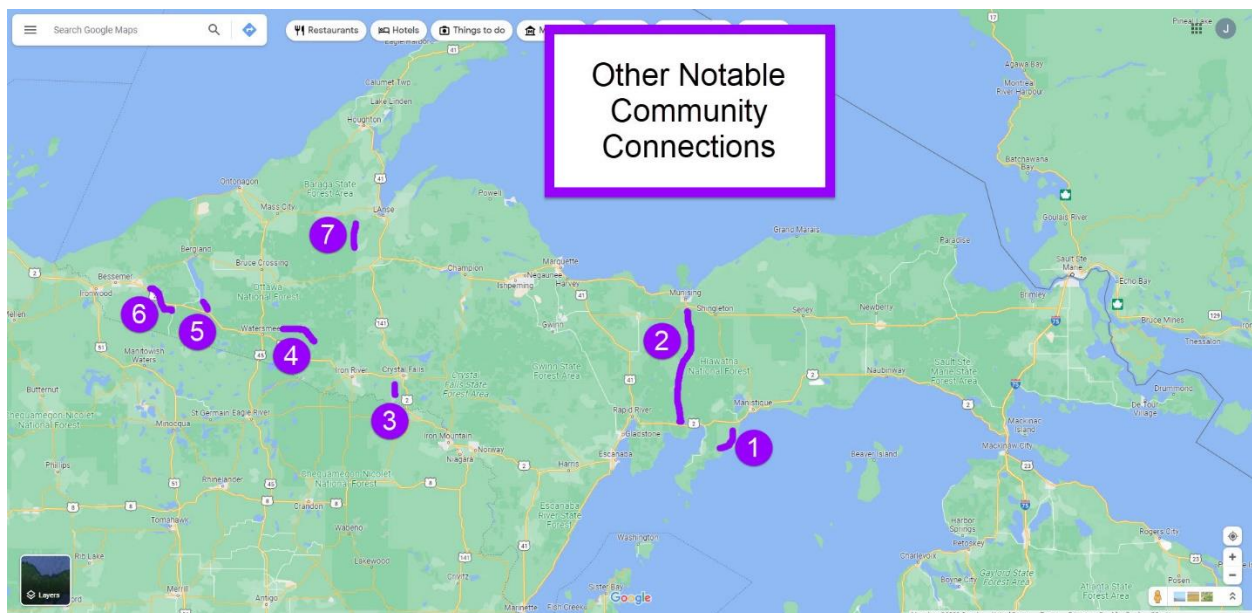
This separates bikes from US2 for 21 miles and expands overnight and tourism visits into Lake Gogebic. The current gravel on Stage Coach Road is too much of an obstacle for bikers to consider diverting. Paving provides options and highlights wonderful areas to explore.

6 - Pave Dunham Road south of US2 near Marenisco, then crossing US2 on Old US2 for a total of 11 miles.

This further separates bikers from US2. The downside is that it creates two or three US2 crossings along the route.

7 – Pave 10 Miles of E. Plains Rd

East Plains Rd is a wonderful north and south connection between M28 and M38. It provides access from the Keweenaw Peninsula into the southern side of the U.P. The only other access near the Baraga/L'Anse area is to use US41. A good stretch of the road is paved, but the middle section is softer gravel. I use my road bike on it, but it's tiring, dirty, and honestly – most road bikers would avoid it. Unfortunately, that forces them onto the very busy highway US41 when instead they could enjoy 20 miles of biking bliss with very few vehicles and awesome scenery.



These other “notable connectivity considerations”, along with the safety connectivity suggestions further enhance the biking experience across the entire southern U.P. distance. The Iron Belle trail currently simply utilizes US2 as a route. I don't believe that is safe nor do I think it's something we want to invite bikers into our state to experience. By implementing just 14 miles from the safety suggestions and paving or bike path an additional 43 miles of the other notable connections, you will have connected a completely paved bike route from the Mackinac Bridge to Ironwood as long as 500 miles (and shorter if desired) that only touches US2 for a total of just around 30 miles with most of those touches less than 4 miles at a time.

That would be impressive and certainly something to tell the world about. Improvements in the U.P. not only reduce the already small number of crashes in the U.P., but if more people bike there, it can further reduce the crashes throughout the state and elsewhere.



Safety Tips for Bikers

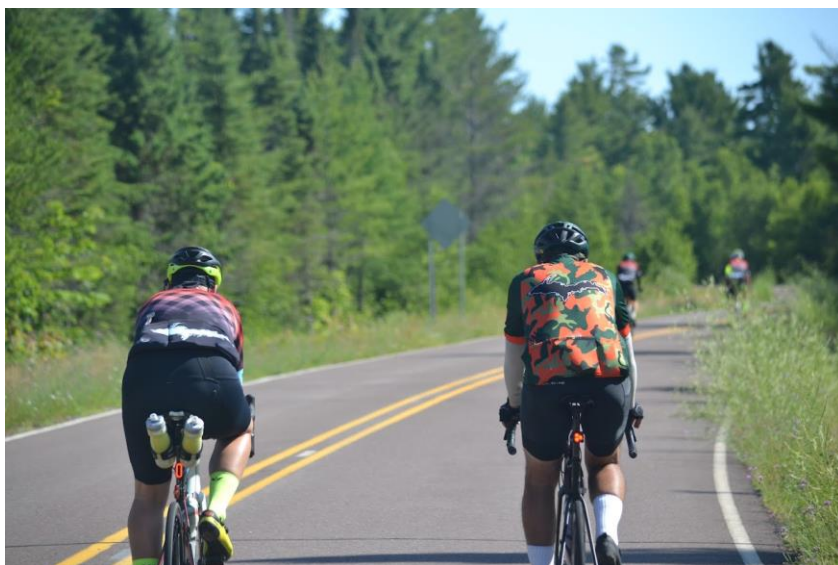
Safety improvements on roads and pathways will be an endless journey of constantly pursuing zero deaths. It will require millions of dollars and an ongoing quest to understand what methods work best in planning and construction. Throughout, bikers can adopt safety measures to increase their odds of enjoying the sport healthy and happy.

Over my years of biking, I developed three “Be” suggestions that I live by to increase biking safety.

- 1) Be Seen
- 2) Be Aware
- 3) Be Kind

Be Seen

- **Use flashing lights.** Bright flashing lights both in front and in the back of bikes do an incredible job of getting attention. Charge them often (each night on the tour) and use them even on rural roads.
- **Don't hide in the shadows.** Many riders that are new to biking on rural roads in the U.P. ride with only inches of pavement to their right, even when we haven't seen a vehicle for miles. This is common when biking on busy roads where we must stay as far from vehicles as possible.



However, when biking rural roads, vehicles need to know that you are there. I remember reading an accident report with two bikers drafting on a very quiet road when the oncoming vehicle turned directly in front of them to enter their driveway. I don't have any information other than that. But I wonder if the bikers were hidden on the far edge

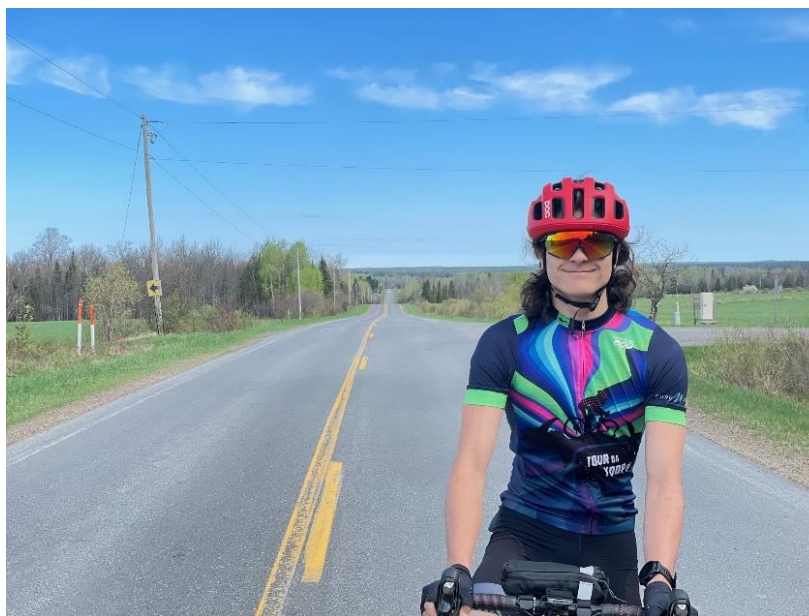
of the road. Of course, it's speculation on my part. But it's safe to assume that the driver wasn't accustomed to having bikes on that rural stretch of road and didn't see them.

- **Sit up at intersections** – Make yourself big and obvious when entering intersections, entrances, and exits. I look at the drivers' face trying to make eye contact with them. Be sure that they know you are there.
- **Wave** – Besides flashing lights, waving at a vehicle is an excellent way to get their attention. I generally put my hand up in a waving gesture as further confirmation that we see each other.
- **Helmet** – My boys and I have a red, white, and a black helmet. While riding with them I have noticed that the red helmet generally sticks out the most. Don't underestimate the important role helmet color can play in being seen.

Be Aware

- **Use your senses** – I'm blind in my right eye and somewhat deaf in my right ear. You better believe I don't do anything to further take away from my senses while biking.
- **I don't listen to music** – I know some people like to listen to music. As indicated above, I want to hear as much as my diminished body allows.

- **Reduce wind noise** – Cat ears are a wind reducing fluffy thing that attaches to helmet straps. I made another version I call the Belvis. They can look a little goofy, but they absolutely work and allow you to hear much more.



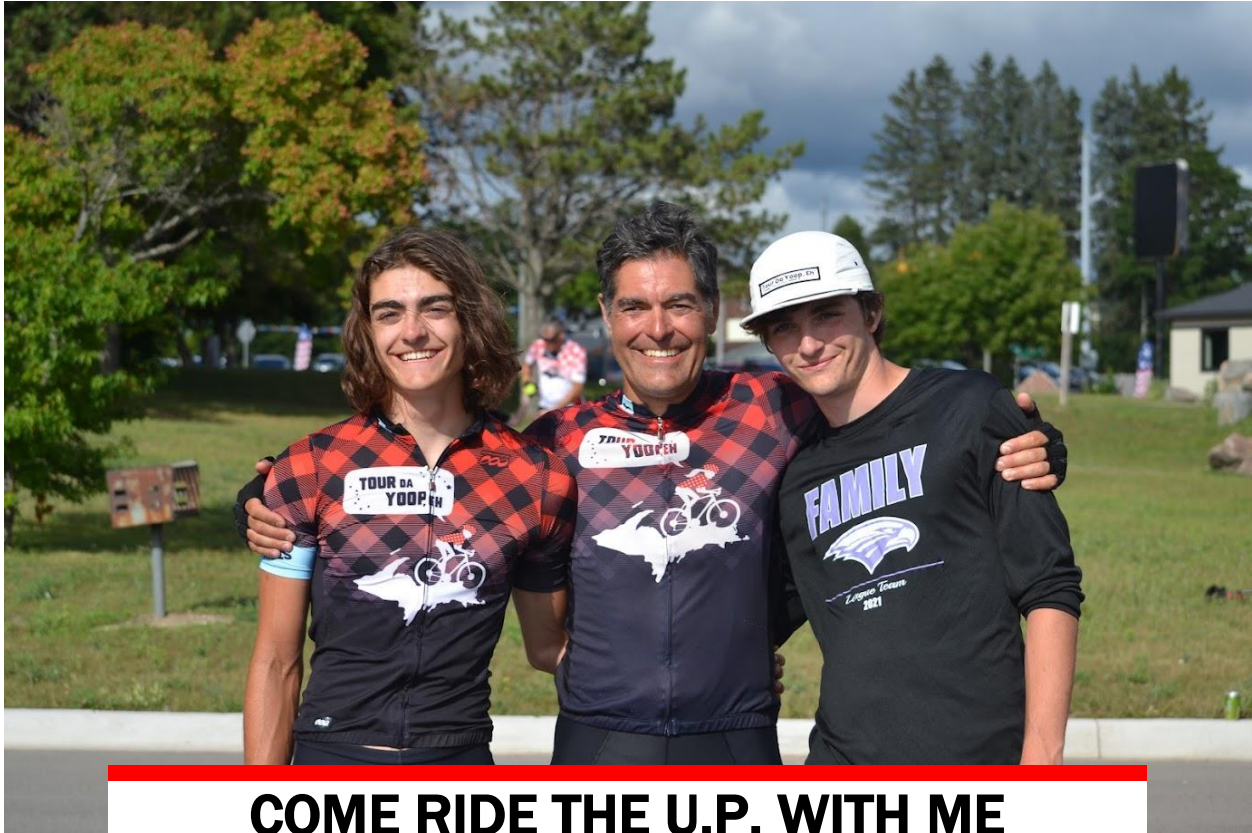
- **Good glasses = good vision** – When I started biking I would just throw on a pair of regular sunglasses. Frequently, especially during rain, my eyes would get irritated and sometimes it would be difficult to see. After riding TDY a couple of years, I noticed that the more experienced riders wore biking specific glasses. I now wear 100% bike glasses called Racetrax. Coupled with my POC helmet, they fit perfectly and completely shield from rain and debris. Don't underestimate the safety benefits of wearing good glasses. Try on different pairs and be sure they fit with your helmet for maximum effectiveness.

Be Kind

- **Help overcome biker resentment** – Years back we took a family vacation at a dude ranch in Montana. On a horse outing, the cowboys told us that we are training the horses for the people that ride them next. I often reflect on that analogy while biking and take an active role in helping to “train” vehicles of how to interact with bikers – in the friendliest manner possible. Some drivers built a resentment toward all bikers, even though they don't know us as individuals. This is one of the reasons the TDY jerseys are so important. People wearing the jerseys are seen as one collective group of bikers, no matter the time of the year or the specific event. We have become known as a friendly and adventurous group of people pulling off some pretty cool biking milestones.
- **Smile** – Make eye contact with drivers and give them a friendly smile. On a bike or not, a big smile can brighten a person's day.
- **Show appreciation** – Wave, give a head nod, show that you appreciate drivers' patience and space. We might have slowed their day down a bit and we have no idea what any person is going through at the moment. Don't take that for granted. Let them know you care about them and appreciate that they care about your safety.

Bikers and safety planners are a community of amazing people. Please continue your efforts and thank you for reading the 2022 Tour Da Yoop, Eh safety report.

James Studinger
 Founder - Tour Da Yoop, Eh



COME RIDE THE U.P. WITH ME

James with his sons, Owen, and Eller

I hope to see you riding a bike on the amazing rural quiet safe and scenic roads of the Upper Peninsula this coming summer. Join us during our annual event, or just grab your bike and explore on your own. There are thousands of miles of wonderful roads to enjoy.

I have an open invitation for any safety planner to ride with me along the best roads, as well as the areas that need some love. There is no better way to understand the gravity of the improvements than to experience them firsthand.

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The End

*All these photos and more are available for your use on the gallery page of <https://www.tourdayoopenh.com/gallery>