

# Your Guide to BIKING & HIKING in greater MANKATO



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**Greater Mankato**  
BIKING & HIKING  
Guide



For biking enthusiasts, Mankato features some of the best trails and scenic roadways in the state, featuring wide shoulders and little to moderate traffic. The Greater Mankato Area Trail System offers spectacular views of areas that may not always be explored if you stick to the roads.

**Sakatah Singing Hills State Trail** runs from Mankato to Faribault, totaling 41 miles with an asphalt surface. This fairly flat trail provides riders with beautiful scenery as it wanders along pastures, farmland, lakes, a forested park and Sakatah Lake State Park, featuring six great cultural pit stops.

**Red Jacket Trail** runs from Mankato to Rapidan, totaling 5 miles of paved trail. As Mankato's most popular trail the Red Jacket Trail begins along the banks of the Minnesota River. The route utilizes three converted railroad trestles, including the Red Jacket Trestle which stands more than 80' high and 550' long.

**Minneopa State Park Trail** is a paved trail running from Mankato to Minneopa State Park. Once in Minneopa, there are numerous hiking trails to explore, highlighting the famous Minneopa waterfalls. Looking to extend your adventure check out the Minneopa State Park Bison Drive and hiking trails.

**Minnesota River Valley Trail** is a paved connector between the Sakatah and Minneopa Trails. It is a multi-use trail ideal for hikers and bikers alike. The trail runs along the beautiful Minnesota River, highlighting Mankato's prime location in the river valley.

**Rasmussen Woods** features a 150-acre tract perfect for hiking and observing wildlife throughout all seasons. There are over 5 miles of hiking trails inclusive with meadows, wetlands, floating trails, cliffs and a park overlook.

**Mountain biking** is growing in Mankato due to its geography in the river valley. There are three sustainable, environmentally friendly mountain bike trails: Kiwanis Recreation Area, Mount Kato, and Seven Mile Creek Park.

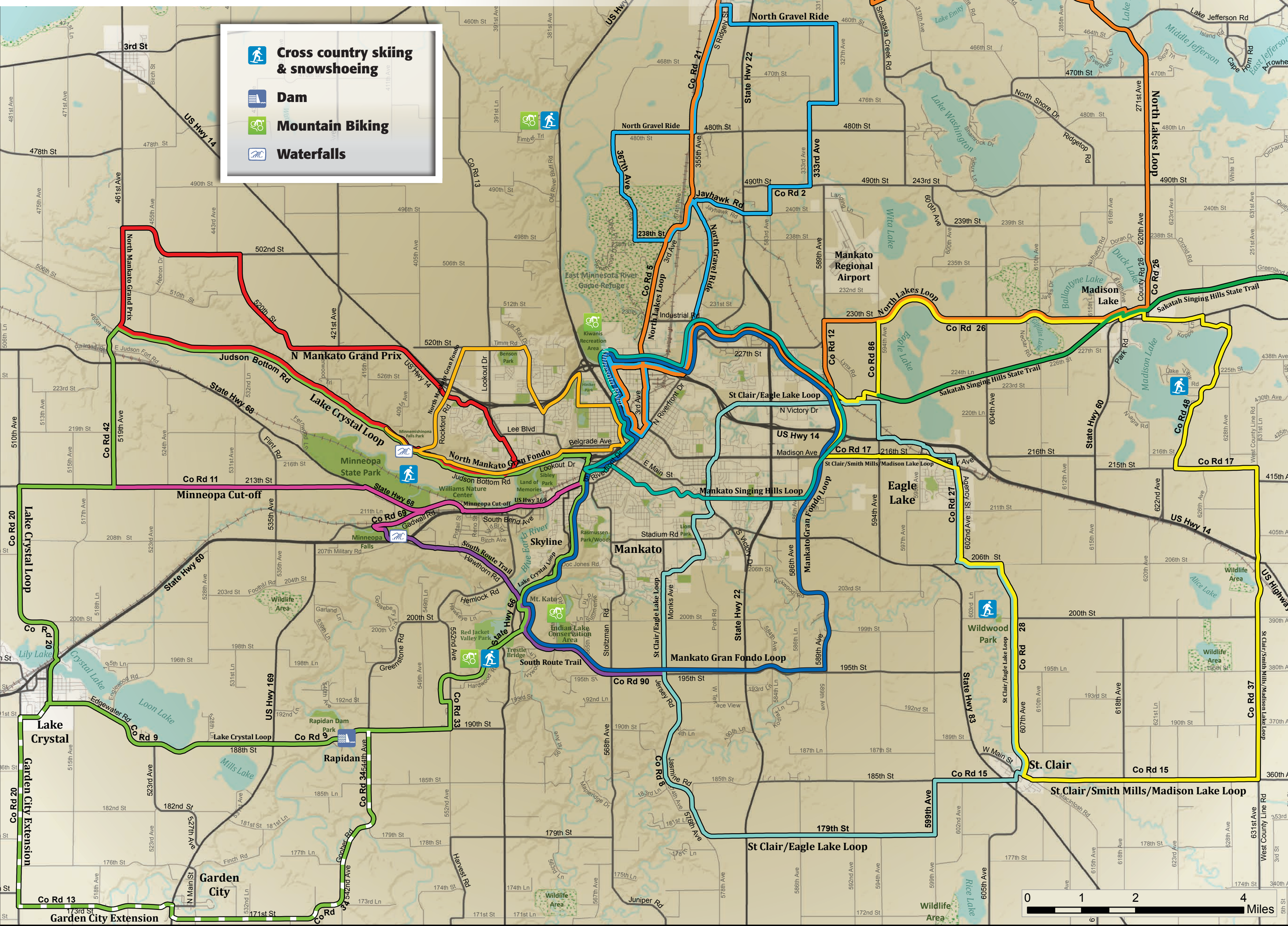


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# Suggested Biking Loops



## St. Clair/Eagle Lake Loop:

28 miles



Visit the nearby towns of Eagle Lake & St. Clair to get a taste of small-town charm while dining in or enjoying a picnic at the city park. Follow the Le Sueur River to visit Wildwood Park and take the nature trail across the river on a 140 ft. long swinging-foot bridge. Hike through the wooded river valley and keep an eye out for wildlife.

## North Gravel Ride:

29 miles



Ride along the bluffs of the Minnesota River toward the prairie land of Kasota. Stop at the Kasota Prairie for a picnic in the park or quick hike through the 45-acre prairie along the Minnesota River and off the beaten path.

## Lake Crystal Loop:

34 miles



A popular loop for bikers. Head out of town on the scenic Red Jacket Trail through the Minnesota River Valley, over the Trestle Bridge to the historic Rapidan Dam, where you'll find a park near a small diner with award winning pie. For a longer trip and more river valley to ride up and down, follow the Blue Earth River south to Garden City, where the view is endless. Grab lunch in Lake Crystal or cool down in one of the lakes. For a shortcut back, bike through Minneopa State Park where you'll find a 39 ft. waterfall, bison and several hiking trails to explore. For a longer ride, continue to Judson Bottom Road along the Minnesota River Valley and stop at Minnemishonona Falls where you'll see an even taller 42 ft. waterfall. Head back into town following the Minnesota River.

## North Mankato Grand Prix:

20 miles



Ride the same route as the North Star Grand Prix, finishing with a grueling climb! The riders will complete multiple laps of a 20.5-mile rural circuit which uses beautiful Nicollet County roads and returns to North Mankato up the extra challenging Valerie Lane hill.

## St. Clair, Smith's Mill, Madison Lake Loop:

35 miles



Get a taste of the vast landscape of the area on this loop through town, country, lakes and river valley. Along the way you can sample wine from a local winery, hike through wildlife management areas or stop in one of the quaint towns for a meal or cold beverage.

## North Lakes Loop:

39 miles



Tour our area lakes on quiet back country roads. Stop at one of the nine lakes you'll pass to get your feet wet or grab a bite to eat and cool beverage on the water. Extend your trip and visit another lake by taking the North Lakes Loop Extension.

## Mankato Singing Hills Loop:

15 miles



Tour the city of Mankato. Start at Riverfront Park and ride along the Minnesota River. Next head east up the Sakatah State Trail to explore Mankato's Hilltop. After experiencing the hilltop drop back into the river valley down the beautiful, wooded Glenwood Ave trail. Stop for some refreshments downtown before catching the Minnesota River Valley Trail back to Riverfront Park.

## North Mankato Gran Fondo:

13 miles



Take a tour of North Mankato circumnavigating the entire city. This loop will take you from the top of the bluff in Upper North to the valley floor in Lower North using a mix of trails and bicycle friendly roads. On this route you'll ride along the Minnesota River and next to the bluffs along the Judson Bottom Road. Stop for a rest at the Minnemishonona Waterfall and cool off with a swim at Hiniker Pond.

## Mankato Gran Fondo Loop:

25 miles



Sample some of the best trails in town with this route that takes you around Mankato. Start at Riverfront Park and ride along the river on the Minnesota River Valley Trail, gently climb out of the river valley on the Sakatah Singing Hills State Trail, tour the expanding East side of Mankato on new trails and low traffic roads, drop back into the River Valley with an optional stop at a local Winery. After a glass of wine, find your way to the South Route Trail taking you along the South edge of Mankato. Connect to the Red Jacket trail passing by Mount Kato and arrive back into town through the charming West Mankato neighborhood. You'll finish up this loop riding along the Minnesota River Trail back to where it all began at Riverfront Park.

## Minneopa Cut-Off:

9 miles



## South Route Trail:

7 miles



## Garden City Extension:

15 miles



## North Lakes Loop Extension:

17 miles



## Sakatah Singing Hills State Trails:

41 miles



For more things to do in Greater Mankato, visit:



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