

BIKE.BUILD.HOME 500

2026 RIDER HANDBOOK

PART ONE: INITIAL INFORMATION

OUR MISSION is to raise funds for affordable housing organizations

While building community and camaraderie

And while sharing an annual multi-day bicycle ride

MOST OF THE MONEY RAISED is directed to local Habitat for Humanity affiliates, but some of our riders do raise money for other affordable housing organizations.

HOST ORGANIZATION: Habitat for Humanity, South Central MN, Mankato, is our host organization for this event.

THE LOCAL HOST PLANNING COMMITTEE of the HFH, South Central MN, in conjunction with the Steering Committee of the Bike.Build.Home 500, is making the 2026 event possible.

HOST SITE: Bethany Lutheran College, 700 Luther Drive, Mankato, is the site where we will be staying and from which we will be riding.

OUR GOALS FOR THE 2026 RIDE: 85 riders and \$200,000 plus raised

Note: The first BBH 500 ride in 2023 raised \$39,000 for the Habitat for Humanity of the Greater LaCrosse Area, our host affiliate, and \$180,000 in total (given to 23 organizations).

Note: Our second BBH 500 ride in 2024 raised \$43,000 for Habitat for Humanity Serving Winona County, MN, our host affiliate, and \$178,000 in total (given to 20 organizations).

Note: Our third BBH 500 ride in 2025 raised \$44,000 for the North Central MN Habitat for Humanity affiliate and \$175,000 in total.

You choose what affordable housing organization/s to support.

A WELCOME: We welcome your involvement in our event, and we encourage you to recruit other riders to join the 2026 ride, especially younger riders, whom we need to help secure the event's future.

INITIAL ITEMS OF IMPORTANCE

RECRUITING other riders is an immediate way to increase the money raised for affordable housing. Ask your riding partners to consider registering for the ride;

share the event through your local Habitat for Humanity affiliate; share the event through your local church, service club, etc.

RIDING FITNESS/PREPARATION:

It will be necessary to start preparing for the event about 3 months prior, so start riding mid-April, if not before.

Start by riding 3 times a week, perhaps at a distance of 15 miles on each ride.

Increase your mileage weekly. Realize that it takes time for the body to adjust.

Get stronger by riding two kinds of rides after your initial week or two, shorter and harder; longer and easier.

Do stretching and strength work if at all possible, both for your core and your legs.

Make sure that you take rest days in your preparation, as the body needs time to recover.

Work to be aware of your needs re: hydration and fueling your ride.

Do your hardest preparation 2 and 3 weeks before the ride, and rest a good bit in the week before the ride.

E-BIKE POLICY:

E-Bikes are welcome, but only those that are ridden without a throttle and limited to 28 mph of maximum assistance. Riders are responsible for their own bikes' charging; they must be able to lift their bike into/onto the rack of a support vehicle; there are no mid-ride charging sites available.

NON-RIDERS:

Non-riders are welcome to join our BBH 500 community, but we do ask that non-riders donate enough money to cover the costs of their involvement in the event (food and lodging). A non-rider is defined as a family member or friend of a rider. Non-riders are not allowed to follow their family member or friend on the daily bike routes, but they are welcome to see their family member or friend rider at a rest stop. Additionally, no RVs are allowed to be on the daily routes.

MINORS:

Riders must be 16 or older to ride on the BBH 500. Those riders who are 16 or 17 must have a parent or other authorized adult with them on the ride. The 16 or 17 year-old rider must have a signed medical release form with them on the ride for the entire event.

PETS:

Pets are allowed at the event, but the pets are not allowed in Bethany Lutheran College. An unruly pet will require the non-rider responsible for the pet to leave the event with the pet.

IMPORTANT TO KNOW:

AIR QUALITY AWARENESS:

We will follow federal, state, and local laws and guidelines concerning air quality, and the Steering Committee of the event may cancel a day or days of the ride if the air quality is deemed unhealthy or very unhealthy.

PUBLIC HEALTH:

The BBH 500 will abide by any federal, state, or local laws or guidelines relating to public health. We ask any participants to notify the Steering Committee if they are sick. We ask any registered participants to stay home if they have COVID-19, the flu, RSV, etc.

ORIENTATION:

Check in is on Tuesday, July 14th. It begins at 5:00 at Bethany Lutheran College, and our orientation meeting will be at 7:00. Note: There is no dinner served on the 14th: You need to provide that for yourself.

HOUSING:

Note: Those in dorms will need to bring their own linens and towels.

NORMAL DAILY SCHEDULE:

Breakfast will be served by 6:30; the road will be open at 7:00; a daily route alternative will provide a shorter route for those who prefer that option; rest stops will be provided at approximately 20-25 mile increments; dinner will be at 6:00 or 6:30; the evening program will start at about 7:00.

YOU WILL RECEIVE:

“Rider Handbook: Part II: Event Details,” to be sent to you on or before May 1st. It will provide you with all of the nitty-gritty detail that you will need to have a wonderful five days in the St. Cloud area.