

## Meet a Bike Ambassador

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*Tina is ready to fix your bike and get you exploring Helsinki on two wheels.*

Meet Tina. She is a bike ambassador for the City of Helsinki who operates a bike repair station right behind Helsinki's downtown train station. I met Tina during my 2019 Jennings Randolph study tour of Helsinki's mobility network. Tina's talent for connecting with people makes her a great ambassador. We hit it off right away when she shared her familiarity with Seattle – my home city. She has a fond memory of playing ice hockey in Seattle during her youth.

When it comes to mobility, one of the many things Helsinki gets right is giving out free information and small bike repairs to both novice and veteran bike riders. Need air for your tires? Got trouble with your bike chain? Need bike-friendly directions to the sauna? Get *the* to a bike station!

To set me up for a day of cycling in the city, Tina recommended that I download Helsinki's bike app called HSL which lets you plan trips and purchase tickets for the City's bikeshare program (City Bikes) as well as public transportation.

Always looking for ways to improve, Tina asked me for feedback about City Bikes. I suggest expanding the fleet to include kid-sized bikes as current City Bikes are built for adults. Tina's wheels immediately start turning. She says that you must be 16 or older to ride a City Bikes but perhaps there's an opportunity to add a seat or a wagon to the standard bike to accommodate family bike rides. That's the type of quick and innovative thinking that Helsinki is known for. I wouldn't be surprised if this idea is implemented by the next time I visit Helsinki.

Thank you, Tina for making my day!