



Strategic Plan

2023 - 2025

Welcome!

Over the past year, the staff and boards of Cascade Bicycle Club and Washington Bikes have reflected on our priorities and our role in the statewide community of people who bike or want to. Three areas surfaced as most essential to our work in the coming three years: centering racial equity, expanding how we engage our community, and better communicating who we are and what we do. This strategic plan details our commitment to these focus areas through the framework of our core programs of advocacy, education, and community events, including signature programs like the Kaiser Permanente Seattle to Portland Bicycle Classic sponsored by Alaska Airlines (STP) and the Major Taylor Project. We know this work cannot be done in a silo but must be done by building and strengthening our relationships with local leaders and communities of color.

Bicycling in Washington state is at an inflection point. Thanks to a recent multi-year statewide investment of \$1.29 billion in biking, walking, and rolling through the Move Ahead Washington package, biking will become more accessible. Simultaneously, racial injustice, the climate crisis, and the COVID-19 pandemic have required a shift in how our nation and our community act on our values. At Cascade and WA Bikes, we aim to advance bicycles as a tool for transportation, independence, and public health as we pursue our vision of a safe and healthy future where bicycles bring people together, eliminate inequity, and create thriving communities.

I will know we have been successful if, by the end of this plan, people of all identities feel included in our programming, and we have deep relationships that make us more effective advocates for safer biking in low-income and systemically underserved communities. I welcome you to join us as a member, partner, or participant in our journey.

In Service,



Lee Lambert



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Plan Overview



1: Champion Racial Equity

- A.** Serve Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities and foster a sense of belonging for BIPOC people in our events, advocacy, and education.
- B.** Implement racial equity best practices in our internal culture and operations and continue to elevate the bar for racial equity work.
- C.** Build relationships with, follow the lead of, and be accountable to BIPOC-led and mission-aligned partner organizations statewide, leveraging our strengths and supporting their work in pursuit of shared goals.

2: Expand our Community

- A.** Expand participation in our advocacy, education, and events to include more families and a broader diversity of people.
- B.** Define our role and model serving as a backbone organization for bicycle-oriented and bicycle-supportive groups across the state.
- C.** Strengthen the statewide bicycle ecosystem and our external partnerships.



3: Hone our Storytelling and Branding

- A. Build our brand recognition by refining how we communicate about our purpose and work.
- B. Make the case for stakeholders to engage with Cascade and WA Bikes.



Our Foundations

Our Vision

We envision a safe and healthy future where bicycles bring people together, eliminate inequity, and create thriving communities.

Our Missions

Cascade: Cascade Bicycle Club brings people together to experience the joy of bicycling through transportation, recreation, and friendship. We collaborate with members, volunteers, and community partners to inspire people to advocate for a safe, equitable, and sustainable Washington state. We build confidence, leadership, knowledge, and community by teaching bicycle skills to all ages.

WA Bikes: Washington Bikes promotes the health, safety, environmental, and economic benefits of bicycling. We advocate for people who bike, endorse political candidates, and hold officials accountable. We collaborate with community members and public officials to shape policies and investments in active transportation that create equitable, sustainable, and thriving communities across Washington state.

Our Values

We ground our work in five core values. The three focus areas in this plan, and the supporting Goals and Strategies, reflect and support all five of our values. These values inform how we work, with whom we work, and the outcomes that we strive for through our work.

Equity: We lead with a racial equity lens to eliminate inequities in community health outcomes and in mobility and transportation access. Bicycles are a tool for liberation.

Climate Justice: Bicycles are a clean, healthy, and affordable solution to help solve the climate crisis, clean our air, reduce transportation pollution, and create sustainable communities.

Community: We create opportunities for people to come together by removing barriers and fostering a sense of belonging. Bicycles are an integral part of creating connected, equitable and thriving communities.

Safety: Safety is a right; we champion spaces that foster physical and emotional wellbeing.

Collaboration: We share power, resources, and knowledge as a means to enrich lives and form mutually beneficial partnerships. We celebrate the existing strengths of our partners and participants and seek to be an accessible asset for others.

Racial Equity North Star Outcomes

We strive to serve people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds throughout the state of Washington. To succeed in our missions, we must prioritize racial equity within our organization and around Washington State. In April of 2020, we established five long-term racial equity outcomes, our “north star outcomes,” that guide our work. The Goals and Strategies described in the three focus areas of this plan are informed by and in pursuit of these five north star outcomes.

1. Contribute to the shifting narrative around race and racism by sharing the stories of the communities of color whom we serve.
2. Create racial equity in bicycle ridership in the state of Washington in order to achieve racial equity in community health, mobility, and access to transportation.
3. Reconstruct Cascade’s policies, practices, and processes to transform patterns of racial inequity and achieve racial equity.
4. Center communities of color impacted by racism in our mission to improve lives through bicycling.
5. Educate our staff and board to create a culture of racial equity that can be integrated into our work with our volunteers, members, donors, contractors and partners.



Our Work

Cascade Bicycle Club and Washington Bikes work in close collaboration in pursuit of our shared vision.



Cascade Bicycle Club

Cascade Bicycle Club, the nation's largest statewide bicycle nonprofit, is 10,000-members and 30 full time-staff strong, and serves bike riders of all ages and abilities throughout the state of Washington. We teach the joys of bicycling, advocate for safe places to ride, and engage with the bicycle community through our world-class events and rides. Our signature programs include the Seattle to Portland, Free Group Rides, the Pedaling Relief Project, the Your Streets Your Say advocacy training, the Bike Walk Roll Summit, Let's Go, and the Major Taylor Project.

Advocacy

Cascade advocates to make biking safe and accessible for people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds. Our work is largely focused on improving bike infrastructure by advocating for safe and connected bike and trails networks in Seattle and other communities. Much of our focus and impact is within the Puget Sound region. We create change by working with city transportation experts and elected officials, partnering with other safe streets and active transportation advocacy groups, and organizing neighbors and local advocates. Our Your Streets Your Say grassroots advocacy training, Bike Walk Roll Summit, and Action Alerts educate and engage in service of building communities connected by bike.

Education

Our education department offers school and community-based programming to encourage and educate people of all ages and abilities to ride safely. Our youth programming includes and has included in-school bicycle safety taught to 20,000 students through Let's Go, after-school riding clubs, bike to school encouragement, and summer camps. Currently, we offer 12 after-school Major Taylor Project riding clubs to mentor Black and brown youth and teach leadership skills in South King and Pierce counties. Focused on fostering livable and connected communities, we also provide in-person Learn to Ride and Learn to Ride Further classes to people ages 10 to 70+, bike maintenance lessons, and online resources to promote healthy transportation.

Rides and Community Engagement

Cascade Bicycle Club strives to create exceptional opportunities to ride and connect with the community for people of all abilities. Cascade offers world-class biking events, including multi-day tours, in-town family friendly rides, and a long distance training series. Via the Pedaling Relief Project, we connect people on bikes with opportunities to deliver food to local food banks and deepen mutual aid networks. We offer social Free Group Rides every day of the year. Serving thousands of people on bikes annually, our flagship events include the Chilly Hilly, the Seattle to Portland (STP), and the Ride for Major Taylor.





Washington Bikes

Washington Bikes advocates for state level policies and investments that will improve biking for transportation and recreation across Washington state. We endorse candidates for office who commit to, or have a record of, making communities better for people on bikes. Our efforts – in partnership with elected bike champions and agency and advocacy partner – are responsible for billions of dollars of investments towards safe and connected bike networks in communities across Washington state. We have successfully advocated for laws that protect the safety, needs and rights of people on bikes, including the Vulnerable Road User law, regulations to allow e-bikes on streets and trails, and the Safety Stop to allow people biking to treat a stop sign as a yield. We are transforming how people on bikes can get around, and our policy priorities are among those being replicated in other bike-friendly states.

Our Areas of Focus

I: Champion Racial Equity

As one of our core values, racial equity is essential to our pursuit of our Vision and Mission. We continue to build our understanding of the historical and current ways that race impacts outcomes for individuals and communities, and we believe that bicycling can be a tool to facilitate racial equity and contributing to a more just world. Creating a sense of belonging for all is foundational to our ability to transform our organization so that it reflects and builds effective programs for the communities we serve. In pursuit of that goal, we will center racial equity in our internal culture, operations, and programming, while meaningfully involving BIPOC communities and following their lead in pursuit of authentic partnership that can bring about positive change.



Our Definition of Racial Equity

We define racial equity as both an outcome and a process. As an outcome, we achieve racial equity when race no longer determines one's socioeconomic outcomes or status in our society. As a process, we apply racial equity when those most impacted by structural racism are meaningfully involved in the creation and implementation of the institutional policies and practices that impact their lives.

Goals and Strategies

A. Serve BIPOC communities and foster a sense of belonging for BIPOC people in our events, advocacy, and education.

- Develop a decision-making framework to guide us in pursuing values-aligned opportunities and maintaining our focus.
- Follow the lead of BIPOC communities to eliminate the barriers to bicycling and advocate for investments that are most important to them. This may include improvements to bicycle infrastructure or other community improvements that support bicycling as part of a safe, healthy, and enjoyable transportation network.
- Prioritize work and partnerships in BIPOC communities.
- Share the joy and benefits of bicycling through our education programs with BIPOC youth.



B. Implement racial equity best practices in our internal culture and operations and continue to elevate the bar for racial equity work.

- Evaluate the roles of our Boards of Directors and diversify the perspectives represented on the Boards.
- Continue to conduct internal training, workshops, and opportunities for individual learning for staff and volunteers to improve our organizational culture and expand our team’s capacity to engage in work to address racial equity.
- Continue to pursue a staff composition that reflects the communities we serve.
- Develop a gift acceptance policy that aligns with our equity values.
- Update our recruitment processes to create more equitable access to staff and Board positions.
- Review compensation and benefits available to full-time and part-time staff.

C. Build relationships with, follow the lead of, and be accountable to BIPOC-led and mission-aligned partner organizations statewide, leveraging our strengths and supporting their work in pursuit of shared goals.

- Continuously improve our use of racial equity best practices in developing partnerships through ongoing professional development and systems improvement.
- Develop an intentional approach non-transactional relationships with all partners.
- Update our planning processes to include time for collaboration with partners and communities.

Our Areas of Focus

2: Expand our Community

We believe the strongest bicycle community is one that includes and engages everyone who bikes or wants to bike. To that end, we aim to expand representation and participation in bicycling to include riders of all types, people who ride bikes for all reasons, and people who may not ride bikes but support safe biking and the community benefits it brings. To do this, we must work to remove barriers and listen to and support people of all ages, abilities, financial means, identities, languages, races/ethnicities, transportation choices, and locations in Washington state.



Our Definition of Community

We define our community broadly, expanding beyond our membership and program participants to the greater bicycling community in Washington. This includes people who ride bikes—including e-bikes, hand cranks, and recumbent bicycles—for any reason, whether they choose to or need to, people who would like to ride bikes but currently face barriers, and anyone who wants to reduce their reliance on fossil fuel. Our community also includes our current and prospective partners, our current and alumni staff, our Board, and the communities in which we operate and host rides.

Goals and Strategies

A. Expand participation in our advocacy, education, and events to include more families and a broader diversity of people.

- Design opportunities for populations that are underrepresented in our existing community to engage in our programs.
- Support partner-led events.
- Work with communities of interest to identify additional barriers to participation and methods to address these barriers.





B. Define our role and model serving as a backbone organization for bicycle-oriented and bicycle-supportive groups across the state.

- Gather information from current and prospective partners statewide via a listening tour.
- Boldly experiment to identify models to support a statewide bicycle ecosystem through our statewide work, including advocacy, education, and events.
- Consider structural changes to our departments to support the increased collaboration and efficiency needed to effectively scale up.
- Identify funding opportunities to support statewide work.
- Explore models to provide staff and volunteer support for other regions.

C. Strengthen the statewide bicycle ecosystem and our external partnerships.

- Build relationships with current and potential partner organizations, such as advocacy groups, ride groups, bike shops, and other organizations, through regular communication and mutual support.
- Serve as a convener among bicycle-oriented and bicycle-supportive organizations statewide.



Our Areas of Focus

3: Hone our Branding and Storytelling

We strengthen our impact when our community—which includes people and organizations with a broad range of relationships to bicycling—understands our work, our impact, and the reasons behind our approach. We will communicate about Cascade and WA Bikes as a unified, complementary brand and share stories that highlight the diversity of our programs, our impact, and the people, members, and communities we reach.

Goals and Strategies

A. Build our brand recognition by refining how we communicate about our purpose and work.

- Strengthen and diversify the stories we tell about our existing and new work.
- Extend our messaging to a broader community, including through messaging in languages other than English.
- Clarify our messaging around the roles of and relationship between Cascade and WA Bikes.
- Use inclusive and cohesive branding and messaging throughout our programs, website, email marketing, and social media.
- Update the Cascade and WA Bikes websites to include accessible and up-to-date information about all of our programs.
- Clarify that our events serve to support our advocacy, education work, and local businesses.





B. Make the case for stakeholders to engage with Cascade and WA Bikes.

- Define the range of individuals' and organizations' relationships with Cascade and WA Bikes, including membership, engagement, and donorship, and communicate to our community how each of these three actions aligns with our Mission and Values.
- Develop a membership structure for WA Bikes to more effectively achieve its mission.
- Evaluate opportunities to move current members up the ladder of engagement as donors, supporters, and volunteers.
- Create new opportunities for engagement and for participation at a range of incomes.





Acknowledgements

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Cascade Bicycle Club and Washington Bikes
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