

Public Policy PRINCIPLES



>> >> INTRODUCTION

Public policies are the laws, regulations, guidelines, and funding priorities that governments adopt to solve societal problems. Thoughtful public policies enhance safety, health, and economic well-being.

Bicycle Colorado's public policy work includes the following activities:

- > Reviewing research to identify effective public policies
- > Writing and providing feedback on public policies
- > Engaging with government officials to facilitate the adoption of public policies
- > Supporting the implementation of newly adopted public policies.

Our policy principles guide us in deciding which policies to **champion**, support, monitor, or oppose. The policies we champion typically require a significant investment of resources and involve the four activities described above.



Advocating for Bicycle-Friendly Federal, State, Regional & Local Policies

Policies are adopted at all levels of government: federal, state, regional, and local. Ideally, these policies reinforce each other to maximize impact.

Our top priority is advocating for **state and regional policies**. Bicycle Colorado has led state and regional policy advocacy since 1992 and will continue to do so.

Our next priority is supporting local advocates and government leaders in Colorado's 64 counties, 198 towns, and 73 cities to adopt **local policies** (See our strategic plan to learn more about our approach to supporting local advocates).

Finally, Bicycle Colorado will support national-level advocacy organizations that are leading efforts to pass **federal policies**, especially when they align with our state, regional, and local policy priorities.

OUR VISION

We envision a Colorado where all people and communities benefit from safe and accessible bicycling.

CORE BELIEF

We believe that people of all ages and abilities, no matter where they are in Colorado, have the right to bike, walk, and roll without fear for their safety.



WHY We Advocate for Pedestrian, Public Transportation & Land Use Policies



As Colorado grapples with rising greenhouse gas emissions from a motor vehicle-dependent transportation system, policymakers have prioritized multimodal over mode-specific (e.g., bike-only) solutions. Additionally, communities where it is safe to walk and with robust public transportation services are often safer to bike; in other words, walking and transit advocacy benefit people on bikes and vice-versa. Finally, land use policies and transportation are tightly interconnected. Land use can support or hinder access to safe biking and walking.

Our top priority is championing policies that have the most **direct impact** on bicyclists and pedestrians. The table below reflects our policy priorities across the different levels of government.

	CHAMPION	SUPPORT
Bike Only	X (State, Regional)	X (Federal, Local)
Bike/Pedestrian	X (State, Regional)	X (Federal, Local)
Bike/Pedestrian/Transit (Multi-Modal)	X (State, Regional)	X (Federal, Local)
Pedestrian Only		X
Public Transit Only		X
Land Use Only		X



Evidence-based solutions that improve road safety and expand access to safe biking and walking have informed our public policy principles. Our principles align with our core values, commitment to equity, and strategic plan.

PUBLIC POLICY PRINCIPLES WE WILL CHAMPION

CHANGE the Built Environment

Bicycle Colorado's **top policy priority** is changing the built environment to prioritize safety, especially for people who bike, walk, and roll.

The design of roads and access to biking and walking infrastructure have the **most significant direct impact on safety**. Existing infrastructure often prioritizes vehicle speed over safety, resulting in high injury and fatality rates. Additionally, a lack of quality bike and pedestrian infrastructure discourages people from biking and walking.

Below are examples of changes to the built environment that Bicycle Colorado supports and sometimes champions:

- > Adding shoulders when repaving a road
- > Replacing a vehicle lane or street parking with a protected bike lane
- > Building multi-use paths

OUR IMPACT

Bicycle Colorado helped pass Senate Bill 2021 - 110 and Senate Bill 2021-260, which collectively allocated \$115 million to the Revitalize Main Streets grant program, which encourages physical activity and enhances local economic vitality in towns and cities across Colorado by funding infrastructure improvements to make walking and biking easy.

Bicycle Colorado helped pass Senate Bill 2024-195, which generates \$7 million annually from the Colorado Department of Transportation budget for bike and pedestrian infrastructure and requires the agency to adopt policies prioritizing safety over vehicle speed.

- > Adding curb bump-outs and raised crosswalks at intersections
- > Reducing vehicle speeds by narrowing lanes and adding speed bumps

Additionally, Bicycle Colorado supports policies that result in governments:

Adopting bike, active transportation, and multi-modal transportation plans with clear goals, action steps, and funding strategies. These plans should be an integral part of broader transportation plans.

Updating street design guides to prioritize safety by focusing on “complete streets.” Complete streets reinforce safe vehicle speeds and reallocate public street space to put people first by prioritizing biking, walking, rolling, and public transit.

Investing financial capital to quickly implement the plans and apply the design guides. All revenue-generating strategies should be considered, including reallocating existing funds (e.g., shift funding from highway widening to multimodal transportation) to generating new revenue from taxes (e.g., sales tax), service fees (e.g., parking or tolls), and penalties (e.g., speeding and parking violations). When conditions are suitable, governments should also consider issuing debt.



EDUCATE Bicyclists, Pedestrians & Drivers

Education is essential to building people's knowledge and skills to navigate the public right of way safely. Examples of education include:

- > Learning to ride a bike for the first time
- > Learning to commute by bike safely
- > Learning to drive a vehicle safely, particularly around bicyclists and pedestrians

Unfortunately, there is little funding or inconsistent standards for this type of education across the state, even with driver training. Bicycle Colorado supports and sometimes champions policies that will:

Increase funding to create and implement high-quality education programs in all communities, especially under-resourced ones.

Strengthen education standards to ensure consistent quality across the state.

Integrate education into existing systems (e.g., public education, judicial). For example, Fort Collins has integrated Safe Routes to Schools into the daily operations of the city, school districts, and non-profit organizations such that 5,000 to 6,000 K-12 students participate in hands-on bicycle and pedestrian safety training each year.



OUR IMPACT

Bicycle Colorado helped pass House Bill 2024-1021, strengthening driver training and youth testing standards.

In 2004, Bicycle Colorado helped pass the Safe Routes to Schools law, which created a permanent program within the Colorado Department of Transportation that would receive \$2.5 million in funding annually.

ADOPT & ENFORCE Laws

Codifying public norms and values into law, consistently enforcing laws, and quickly applying just consequences is a proven way to curb unsafe behaviors on the public right-of-way. Bicycle Colorado supports and sometimes champions policies that:

Reduce dangerous driving behaviors such as speeding, distracted driving, running stop signs and traffic signals, driving under the influence of substances, and driving and parking in bike lanes.

Reduce crashes at intersections, where 56% of bicyclists' injuries from crashes occur.

Expand the use of automated traffic enforcement, which is now possible with Senate Bill 2023 - 200, which Bicycle Colorado helped pass. Automated traffic enforcement is a proven approach to improving the consistent enforcement of laws that reduce speeding and running traffic signals. It also reduces interactions between law enforcement officers and the public and allows police departments to reallocate staff to tasks that require officers' attention.



OUR IMPACT

Bicycle Colorado helped pass Senate Bill 2019-175, which increased punishment for drivers who hit and seriously injure vulnerable road users.

Bicycle Colorado helped pass House Bill 2022-1028, which made it legal for bicyclists to treat most stop signs and yield signs and most stop lights and stop signs.

Bicycle Colorado helped pass Senate Bill 2023-200, which removed barriers preventing local municipalities from expanding the use of speed cameras.

EXPAND Access to Bikes

The cost of bikes is a barrier that prevents some people from riding, especially e-bikes, which typically are more expensive than traditional bikes. With the introduction of e-bikes, the bicycle is increasingly used for transportation, benefiting riders and their communities in many ways. Bicycle Colorado supports and sometimes champions policies that expand access to quality bikes, such as:

Subsidies and tax rebates to reduce the costs of bikes.

The expansion of shared micro-mobility, especially bike share systems. A priority is ensuring affordable and high-quality shared micro-mobility near transit hubs and lower-income communities where car ownership is lower.



OUR IMPACT

Bicycle Colorado helped pass House Bill 2023-1272, which funds nearly \$90 million in \$450 tax rebates for all Colorado residents over nine years. This will result in over 125,000 new e-bikes in Colorado by 2033, displacing 3 million car miles each week.

PUBLIC POLICY PRINCIPLES WE WILL >> >> **SUPPORT**



EXPAND Access to Quality Public Transit

Public transit is a core function of a thriving community. Public transit reduces the number of vehicles on the road and improves air quality, thus benefiting people biking and walking. Bicycle Colorado supports policies that will create public transit systems that are safe, accessible, affordable, reliable, and equitable. We also support policies that make public transit bicycle-friendly by ensuring secure bike storage at transit hubs and ample space to safely secure bikes on buses and trains.



ADOPT Land Use Policies that Support Active & Public Transportation

Land use policies and transportation are tightly interconnected. Land use policies either help or hinder efforts to create a transportation system that is safe for all users, improves air quality, improves physical and mental health, supports economic resiliency, and is more equitable. Bicycle Colorado supports land use policies that expand access to safe biking and walking and reduce dependency on vehicles and vehicle miles traveled.



OUR IMPACT

Bicycle Colorado helped pass Senate Bill 2024-230, which will generate more than \$100 million a year in funding for transit services across the state.

Bicycle Colorado helped pass House Bill 2024-1313, which will increase housing affordability in transit-oriented communities and create an infrastructure fund grant program to assist local governments in upgrading infrastructure within transit centers.

>> >> **ABOUT BICYCLE COLORADO**

Bicycle Colorado is a member-supported nonprofit organization established in 1992 that advocates for safe biking and walking for people of all ages and abilities in Colorado.

Bicycle Colorado expands access to safe riding and walking by securing funding for bike and pedestrian infrastructure, passing laws and policies that keep bicyclists and pedestrians safe, and equipping people with the knowledge and skills to use roads, bike lanes, and paths safely.

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