

A Future Full of Bicycles



CALIFORNIA BICYCLE COALITION | STRATEGIC PLAN 2030 | CALIFORNIA MOBILITY FUND



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ADOPTED MARCH 2026

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The California Bicycle Coalition, or CalBike as we are commonly known, was founded in 1994, and is the voice of the everyday bicyclist in the state capitol. We work to create equitable, inclusive, and prosperous communities where bicycling enables Californians to lead healthy and joyful lives. This Strategic Plan will guide the work of CalBike from 2026 through 2030, providing a path through uncertain times, towards a future full of bicycles.

CalBike advances its mission in three ways:

- We conduct legislative and administrative advocacy, developing new policies at the state level which turn into laws such as the “Three Feet to Pass” law, and advance policy adoption and implementation within state agencies, through participation in advisory committees and through outside advocacy.
- CalBike provides education primarily through content targeted to legislators, people who ride bikes, and the general public. We advance with adoption of a mindset that values bicycles as a transportation mode, and bicyclists as vulnerable road users worth protecting.
- We are a movement builder, serving as a convener for local and regional bicycle and bike/walk organizations, and provide technical guidance and support as needed.

The Strategic Priorities and Goals outlined in this Plan are as follows:

Priority 1: Create a built environment where biking and walking are safe and accessible choices in all communities

- Goal 1. Prioritize infrastructure improvements in historically disinvested and BIPOC communities
- Goal 2. Prioritize vulnerable road user (VRU) safety in street design and roadway policy
- Goal 3. Reduce reliance on enforcement as a safety strategy, and decriminalize bicycling and walking
- Goal 4. Promote quick build for faster improvements especially where safety issues have been identified
- Goal 5. Advance communications that focus on the need for safe and connected facilities for bicycling

Priority 2: Secure long-term active transportation funding to support the mode shift required to meet California's climate goals

- Goal 1. Win new funding programs, defend existing funding, and expand access to funding for active transportation in existing funding programs
- Goal 2. Establish and maintain explicit priority for low-income and BIPOC communities and communities burdened by historic disinvestment and investment patterns in transportation infrastructure

Priority 3. Strengthen the power of the active transportation movement in California

- Goal 1. Coordinate and build capacity of a network of local, regional, and state organizations dedicated to active transportation
- Goal 2. Expand partnerships with industry, aligned advocates, agency staff, and policy makers to advocate for safe streets
- Goal 3. Grow our base of highly-committed supporters and leverage in our work

Priority 4. Elect bike champions to public office and work in partnership with them to create a policy landscape that prioritizes bicycling

- Goal 1. Maintain strong relationships with elected bike champions to ensure they keep active transportation as a priority
- Goal 2. Maintain an energized supporter list and mobilize them to encourage bike-friendly policy decisions
- Goal 3. Provide resources to all legislators to support bike-friendly decision-making

Priority 5. Strengthen CalBike

- Goal 1. Build financial sustainability
- Goal 2. Increase donor revenue
- Goal 3. Support staff with optimal human resources practices
- Goal 4. Plan for longevity



MISSION STATEMENT

CalBike advocates for equitable, inclusive, and prosperous communities where bicycling helps to enable all Californians to lead healthy and joyful lives.



VISION

Safe, just, healthy communities where all Californians enjoy the benefits of the bicycle.

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VALUES

We envision a California where bicycling is loved and appreciated by everyone for its role in supporting prosperity, health, safety, and joy that all Californians benefit from, and our streets are full of bicycles;

Where our communities are prosperous, whether rural, urban, or suburban, and all Californians enjoy a high quality of life and freedom from poverty, violence, and oppression;

Where our communities invest in affordable housing safely connected on foot or by bike to the places we learn, work, play, and access healthcare; in convenient and affordable public transit; and in abundant green spaces to cool our streets and provide open space;

Where decisions about transportation in our state are made by those who are most impacted and burdened by our current system and where low-income communities and Black, indigenous, and communities of color no longer bear the greatest burdens of the environmental and public health and safety impacts of transportation;

Where our public spaces, especially our streets, are safe, appealing, and accessible for Californians of every economic status, race, gender, immigration status, age or ability.



STATEMENT ON MOBILITY JUSTICE

CalBike is committed to working to undo the structural racism and inequity built into California's transportation infrastructure and policymaking. Transportation planning and policies have historically discriminated against, segregated, and displaced immigrants, low-income people, and communities of color, bolstering racial and class inequalities. Current mobility planning processes and decisions often perpetuate these harms.

CalBike is committed to advancing equity through infrastructure, expanding decision-making processes bringing underrepresented communities to the table, working to end the over-policing of Black and brown Californians, and more. We recognize that it is only by addressing and redressing anti-Black violence and violence against Indigenous groups, women, and other marginalized peoples that we will be able to achieve the equity, inclusion, and prosperity that all California communities deserve.

We work to reframe and shift the dominant discourse on transportation planning and policies to relieve historical and current burdens on low-income communities of color and to provide affordable, reliable, and safe transportation options that improve neighborhoods and opportunities in marginalized communities. We collaborate with, learn from, and center marginalized peoples and intersectional allies on issues of mobility justice.

At CalBike, we advocate for bicycling not only because we love the bike as a machine but also because we love how bicycling can make our communities better: more equitable, prosperous, healthy, connected, and inclusive.



HISTORY AND CURRENT CONTEXT

FOUNDING AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The California Bicycle Coalition (CalBike) was founded in 1994 as a statewide advocacy organization dedicated to making bicycling safer, more accessible, and more equitable throughout California. For over three decades, CalBike has worked to transform California's transportation landscape by advocating for policies, infrastructure, and funding that support people who ride bikes.

CalBike has achieved significant legislative victories that have fundamentally improved bicycle safety and infrastructure across the state. The organization helped establish the nation's first Safe Routes to School program in 1998, and won passage of the Complete Streets Act of 2008 (AB 1358), which requires all cities and counties to consider all road users when updating the transportation elements of their general plans. In 2013, the "Three Feet for Safety Act," required motorists to provide at least three feet of clearance when passing cyclists. CalBike successfully advocated for the OmniBike Bill (AB 1909), signed in 2022, which requires drivers to move over a full lane when passing a person riding a bike where possible. Most recently, in 2024 Governor Newsom signed SB 960, the Complete Streets Bill, which improves safety for people biking, walking and taking transit by requiring Caltrans to incorporate complete streets elements on its roads.

On the funding front, CalBike wrote and sponsored Assembly Bill 1020 in 1997, which more than tripled funding allocated for bicycle infrastructure, and won expansion of the bike lane account for bicycle infrastructure, from \$360,000 per year to \$5 million per year. The organization played a key role in creating and defending California's Active Transportation Program (ATP), which was established in 2013 through Senate Bill 99 and Assembly Bill 101, with an additional \$100 million in annual funding added through Senate Bill 1 in 2017. The ATP provides approximately \$320 million annually in state and federal funds for bike and pedestrian projects across California.

Beyond policy work, CalBike has been instrumental in building a strong network of bicycle advocates across the state, providing training and



resources to local organizations and community members. The coalition has championed equity in transportation planning, working to ensure that low-income communities and communities of color have access to safe, affordable transportation options. Through education, advocacy, and coalition-building, CalBike continues to work toward a future where Californians of all ages and abilities can safely ride bicycles for transportation and recreation.

CURRENT CHALLENGES

In the 30 years since CalBike was founded, a lot has changed in the bike lane. Thankfully, bike lanes themselves have become much more common, with most local government agencies at least nominally planning for bicycle infrastructure. The State of California adopted – and is currently updating – its first statewide bicycle and pedestrian plan, and bicycle transportation enjoys increased popularity. Electric bicycles have joined traditional bicycles in the bike lane, as have other personal devices such as e-scooters, one wheels, and others. E-bikes provide possibilities for many to travel by bicycle who may have been constrained by distance, topography, or other issues. At the same time, new technology brings confusion, and the introduction of new devices has outpaced regulation. Many communities are grappling with how to appropriately manage the transportation landscape and keep all road users safe—including addressing conflicts between different types of micromobility users sharing limited bike lane space, establishing clear speed limits and age restrictions for e-bikes and e-scooters, and determining where high-powered devices should legally operate.

In the financial realm, despite years of progress where active transportation funding programs have been created and strengthened, the state still lacks an appropriate level of investment in safe infrastructure for people who bike. Currently, active transportation is the first mode to have funds slashed when budget deficits loom, and communities throughout California continue to wait years or even decades to implement necessary and life-saving infrastructure improvements due to supposed lack of funds. Critical safety projects like protected bike lanes, intersection redesigns, and safe crossing infrastructure remain on planning documents while cyclists continue to face dangerous conditions on high-speed arterials and highways with inadequate or non-existent protection. The funds are there; what is not there is the political will to prioritize vulnerable road users over automotive infrastructure when making budget decisions.



REAFFIRMING THE NEED FOR CALBIKE

In the coming years, leaders in California will be choosing how to transform the state into a more resilient, sustainable place. Within the broader conversation on combating climate change, bicycling is a key strategy to supporting resilient communities where people at all income levels can get from here to there safely, but only if we invest in high-quality infrastructure to create a safe transportation system.

As the voice of the bicyclist, CalBike understands how to develop the impactful infrastructure changes needed to get more people on bikes. We know what is needed to build a culture where bicycling is accepted as a travel mode, one that is an option for everyone from a small child to an older adult. And we can work with our partners in a variety of fields to develop solutions that uplift the needs of California's diverse population, to create a future full of bicycles.

ABOUT CALBIKE

BY THE NUMBERS

Founded: 1994, California Bicycle Coalition; 2004, California Mobility Fund

Staff: 4 Full Time and 1 Part Time

Annual Budget: \$900,000

Members: 1,500

CURRENT PROGRAMS

Legislative and Administrative Advocacy: CalBike works with coalition partners to develop policy concepts to advance through legislative or administrative channels. We maintain relationships with legislators and staff, sponsor, co-sponsor, and support or oppose bills. Additionally, we advance policy adoption and implementation in administrative settings, such as within state agencies, through participation in advisory committees as well as outside advocacy.

Education: CalBike develops and publishes robust content targeted to people who ride bikes as well as the general public with a focus on advancing a cultural shift toward greater adoption of a mindset which values bicycles as a transportation mode, and bicyclists as vulnerable road users worth protecting. Additionally, we serve as a thought leader on active transportation planning and design and related policy in earned media as well as original content development. We are also an educational resource to elected officials and staff at the local to the state level.

Our largest educational impact is through our biennial California Bicycle Summit, the premier gathering for bicycle advocacy—and one of the nation’s leading conferences dedicated to bringing active transportation to the fore. The event brings together close to 300 people from local agencies, private sector planning and design firms, advocacy groups and other community based organizations, as well as individuals who are passionate about bicycling. The Summit typically includes two full days of keynotes, plenaries, panels, bike rides, and social events.

Movement Building: CalBike serves as a convener for local and regional bicycle and bike/walk organizations, and provides technical guidance and support as needed. Through the California Mobility Fund, we also incubate fledgling active transportation organizations through fiscal sponsorship and technical assistance in organizational administration.



CORE FUTURE STRATEGIES

1 ADVANCE BICYCLING AS A VIABLE FORM OF TRANSPORTATION

The primary focus of CalBike's body of programmatic work is to make it safer, more convenient, and more accessible for people to choose to ride a bicycle for any purpose in communities throughout California. From advancing better planning and design, to increasing funding for safe and comfortable infrastructure, to creating culture change, CalBike is creating a future full of bicycles in all the work that we do.

BACKGROUND TO THIS STRATEGY

From our founding, creating opportunities for every Californian to bicycle has been at the core of our mission and our work. The Goals and Objectives in the 2030 Strategic Plan recommit to this longstanding focus.

HIGHLIGHTS IN THE STRATEGIC PLAN

- Create a built environment where biking and walking are safe and accessible choices in all communities through policy, design, and infrastructure implementation
- Secure long-term active transportation funding to support the mode shift required to meet California's climate goals
- Shift the general public discourse about bicycling in a positive way through education and engagement with public figures and partner organizations



CORE FUTURE STRATEGIES

2 BUILD THE MOVEMENT

CalBike serves as the voice of the everyday bicyclist in the state capitol, but our work would not be possible without our coalition, the local advocates we partner with. CalBike helps build the capacity of our local partners by fostering connections and information-sharing, amplifying local concerns to state leaders, and sharing information and technical expertise where possible. We also work in partnership with allied causes such as climate, environmental, environmental justice, and mobility justice advocates.

BACKGROUND TO THIS STRATEGY

CalBike has long worked in partnership with local advocates, bringing their concerns to the state capitol. We have also served as an incubator for fledgling local organizations as a fiscal sponsor.

HIGHLIGHTS IN THE STRATEGIC PLAN

- Coordinate and build capacity of local organizations
- Expand partnerships with allied causes and businesses
- Grow our network of supporters and activate in support of advocacy goals
- Expand our work with bike-friendly elected officials



CORE FUTURE STRATEGIES

3 STRENGTHEN OUR OPERATIONS

CalBike has a long history, and has weathered three decades of economic fluctuations and changes in philanthropy. Funding made possible during the global pandemic as well as an influx of micromobility and shared mobility funding assisted CalBike in our work following the adoption of our prior strategic plan (2017-2022). Unfortunately, the departure of the long-time Executive Director and Development Director in close succession in 2022, and a year under interim leadership, brought a downward trend to individual donations from small to major donors. Accordingly, CalBike spent down its' reserve fund, and is now working to build back long-term financial sustainability.

At the same time, CalBike enjoys low levels of staff turnover, with an average tenure of 4.5 years at present. Staff retention requires consideration of professional development, excellent benefits and human resource practices, and clear shared expectations.

BACKGROUND TO THIS STRATEGY

Financial strategy is an important component of organization's long- and short-term planning, and should be revisited regularly to ensure sustainability. Retaining qualified staff is an important strategy to supporting a successful organization, and involves careful planning.

HIGHLIGHTS IN THE STRATEGIC PLAN

- Build financial sustainability through diversification of revenue streams, increased board participation in fundraising, and building long-term relationships with funders.
- Increase revenue across categories.
- Support staff through professional development, clear shared expectations, and quality benefits and human resource practices.

