



RECONNECTING TO The New Majority





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Reconnecting to The New Majority

In 2013, the League of American Bicyclists and the Sierra Club published “The New Majority: Pedaling Towards Equity,” a report highlighting the changing demographics within the bicycling movement: in short, more youth, women, and people of color were biking.

In its conclusion, the 2013 report stated, “the time to prioritize equity is now – or risk marginalizing the new majority.” In 2021, the League of American Bicyclists is still working to prioritize equity and this report serves as an update to the New Majority Report. In updating the data in the New Majority Report, the League has found that the societal and systemic issues identified in 2013 continue to exist, have not been well addressed broadly or within the bicycling community, and reflect racialized policies that persist in our society and communities.



FEATURES INTERACTIVE CONTENT

Click this symbol to launch an interactive web version of charts or graphs to dig deeper on the data.



Executive Summary

Since 2013, the League and the bicycling movement have made progress to identify, define, and engage with the need for equity in bicycling and continued actions are needed. The League hopes that this report will articulate the assets the League has for engaging in a racial equity action plan and for forming authentic partnerships with groups focused on equity.¹

Further, this report re-examines the data points from 2013 to find how demographics have shifted:

We have seen shifts in the demographics of people biking, including an increase in Latinx and Hispanic ridership and a sharp decline in the number of Black people bicycling.

We have seen significant increases in bicyclist deaths due to drivers of motor vehicles between 2013 and 2019 — and as documented in 2013, the people who are experiencing traffic violence continue to be disproportionately people of color.

Since the 5-year period ending in 2013, the only racial or ethnic group to improve its premature mortality rate has been the white, Hispanic population. Premature mortality measures the years of expected life lost based on the age of a person when they die compared to an expected life length, with the standard expected life length set at 65 years of age.

New for 2021 research conducted through a survey and focus group shows:

A demand for safe, equitable infrastructure, including easily accessible and secure bike parking, planned with community participation; diverse and representative people and groups to ride with and receive bicycling education through; and reducing interactions with the police.

People across all demographic groups believe their community would be a better place to live if bicycling were safer and more comfortable.

People in most demographic groups believe better bicycling infrastructure, like bike lanes and trails, will lead to them biking more often.

More bike lanes and trails alone are not enough to encourage all people to bike more often.

Only 47% of Black respondents, 47% of respondents with incomes between \$50,000-74,999, and 28% of respondents aged 65+ agreed with that sentiment.

Secure bike parking is highly valued — most demographic groups identified it as the second most important intervention for better biking.

A need to recognize the lack of safe, high-quality infrastructure is part of systemic under-investment in Black and brown neighborhoods, which is also reflected in high-speed roads that have been built to prioritize driving through neighborhoods rather than serving neighborhoods.

A desire for more opportunities to ride with others.

All demographic groups indicated that more opportunities to bike with others would increase their participation in bicycling, and it's important for those groups to be representative, diverse, and appropriate for different ability levels.

People are more likely to bike more often if they can access and attend a skill-building bicycling education class, which is best led through a diverse and representative network of educators.

Potential interactions with police are a deterrent to riding more for Black, Hispanic and young people.

People of all races, incomes, and ages want safer bicycling — that comes across clearly in our research and data. New and continued investments — starting with a Safe System approach to the built environment, increasing opportunities for people to bike with others and receive hands-on bicycling education, and reducing the interactions between bicyclists and the police — are critical to making bicycling safe, comfortable, and accessible to all, particularly in Black and brown communities where underinvestment has inhibited the development of a transportation system that serves all people. We, together as a national organization and movement, must be more diverse and representative of the people and communities we are serving as we take action on these priorities.

¹ Throughout this report, unless stated otherwise, if we use the word “equity” in this report we mean racial equity, addressing the conditions necessary for people of all races and ethnicities to be able to participate and prosper in a Bicycle Friendly America. As previously defined in our Equity Initiative, “Equity” is the “Just and fair inclusion into a society in which everyone can participate and prosper. The goals of equity must be to create conditions that allow all to reach their full potential, erasing disparities in race, income, ability, geography, age, gender and sexual orientation.” <https://bikeleague.org/content/equity-initiative>

Benchmarking Changing Demographics

Rates of Bicycling

In 2013, the League of American Bicyclists highlighted the growth of bicycling among people of color. In the near decade since that report, we find that while bicycling continues to have changing demographics, there are large differences in the adoption of bicycling by a diversifying America. Notably, Black Americans experienced a decrease in their share of bicycling trips from 2009 to 2017 and other data that is available on bicycle use, such as data on bike commuting, shows a persistently low rate of bicycle use among Black Americans.

At data.bikeleague.org, the League has more than a dozen data tables on commuting data at the [national](#), [state](#), and [community](#) level showing how people of color are over- or under-represented among people who bike and walk to work. Since many fewer people bike to work than walk to work, data on walking to work is more readily available and presented for states and communities. Interestingly, at both the state and city level, larger populations of people of color are correlated with an under-representation of people of color walking to work. Overall, walking for commuting and for all trips is more likely to reflect overall demographics than bicycling.

Racial disparities in mobility and modes of travel should make people question whether racist policies have contributed to those disparities. “To be an anti-racist, [Kendi and others say](#), requires an understanding of history — an understanding that racial disparities in America have their roots, not in some failing by people of color but in policies that serve to prop up white supremacy.” The disparity between Black people participating in bicycling and other racial groups in federal data is the most prominent racial disparity for active transportation modes.

One issue for understanding disparities in Black people participating in bicycling is that the only nationwide annual data on bicycle use that is available comes from the American Community Survey’s Journey to Work estimates. Given that there is a [persistent gap](#) in unemployment rates for Black and white people, a lack of work is likely to contribute to an undercounting when that counting only occurs in the context of the journey to work. People who identify as “Black alone” in ACS data tended to be more under-represented than other racial and ethnic groups in ACS data.²

Change in Percent of Bike Trips by Racial/Ethnic Identification

National Household Travel Survey data from 2009 and 2017 shows several changes in the racial and ethnic makeup of people taking bicycle trips. While overall trips decreased slightly during this period, people who identified as Hispanic, multiracial, and Asian increased their share of bike trips.

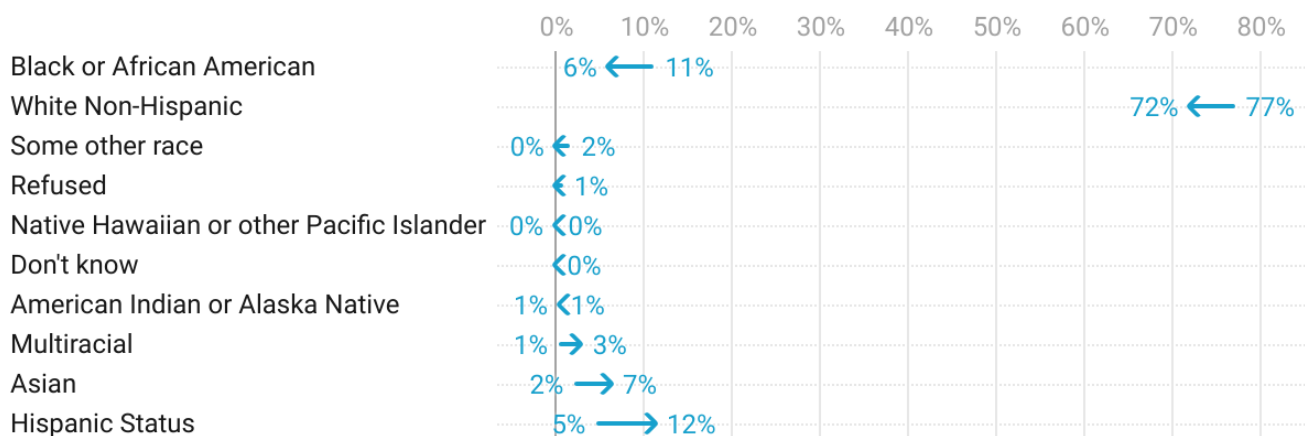


Chart: The League of American Bicyclists • Source: FHWA National Household Travel Survey • Created with Datawrapper

² For information on how race and ethnicity and Hispanic or Latino origin questions are answered see: <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/technical-documentation/questionnaires/2020/response-guidance.html>

Black people make up a smaller than expected proportion of bike commuters. If bicycling to work was done at the same rate by all racial and ethnic groups, then we would expect to see the percentage of workers who identify as part of a racial and ethnic group would be similar to the percentage of people who bike to work who identify as part of a racial and ethnic group. Instead, we found that Black people are under-represented among bike commuters in most states.

Under-representation of Black bike commuters was most prominent east of the Mississippi River. Mississippi and Maryland have the highest rates of under-representation. In Mississippi, Black people make up 37.7% of the workforce, but only 15.9% of bicycle commuters, creating an under-representation of 21.8%. Thirteen states have an under-representation of 5% or more among Black people, but for all other racial and ethnic groups there is only one state with that level of under-representation. People who identify as “Asian alone” and “Two or more races” are both under-represented among bicycle commuters in Hawaii, by nearly 16% and 10% respectively.

Southern states tend to have both low rates of bicycling to work and lower than expected proportions of Black people bicycling to work. When thinking about increasing the persistently low rate of bicycle commuting among Black people nationwide, it is hard to not see Southern states with high under-representation and low overall rates of bicycle commuting as a key place for action.

Percent of Trips by Race/Ethnicity

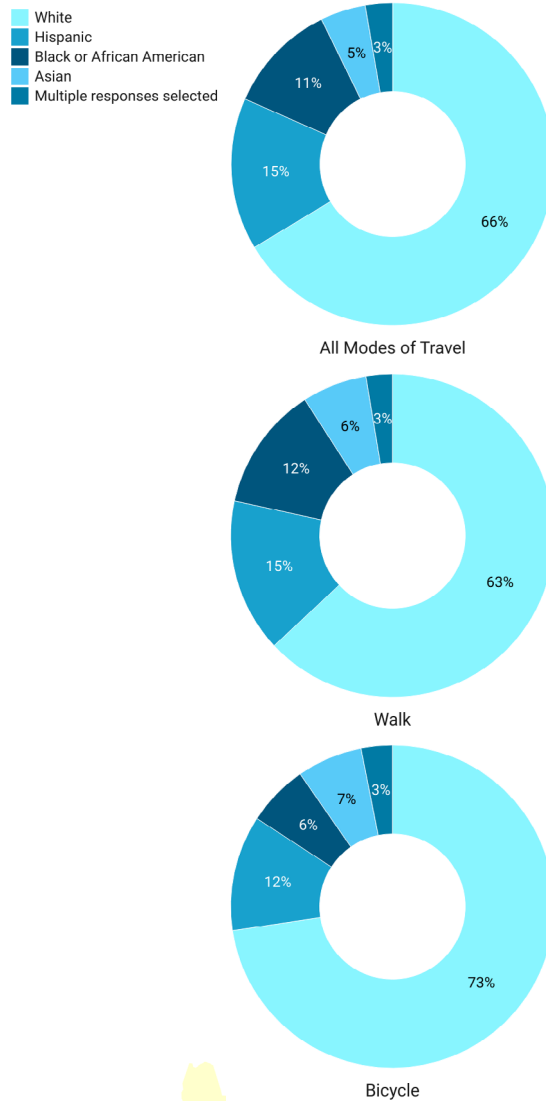
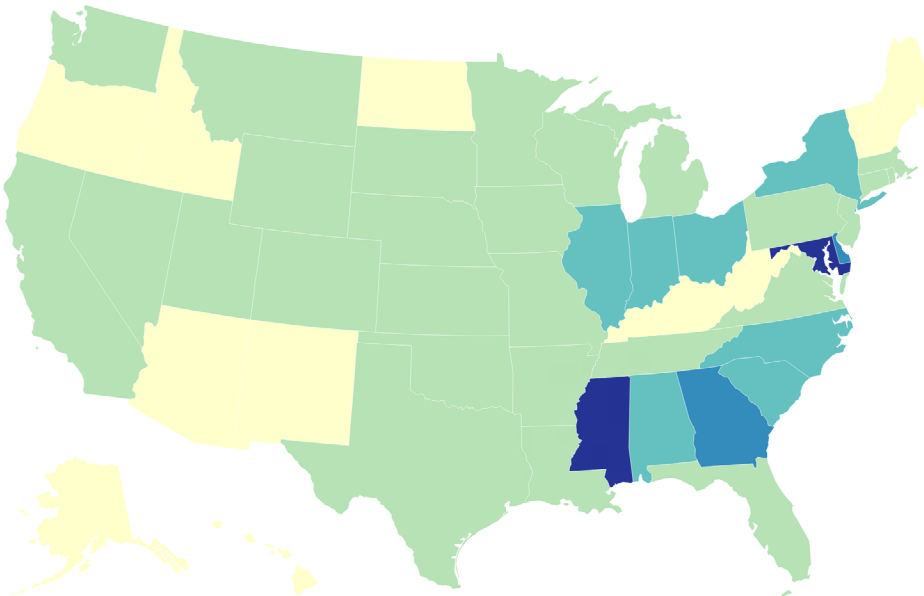
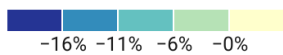


Chart: The League of American Bicyclists Source: FHWA 2017 National Household Travel Survey Created with Datawrapper



Over- and Under-Representation of Black People Among Bike Commuters

People who identify as “Black alone” are under-represented among people who primarily use a bicycle to commute to work in 39 states. Under-representation appears most prominent in states east of the Mississippi River. *Created with Datawrapper*

Traffic Safety

Since the 2013 New Majority report, both bicycling and walking have seen significant increases in deaths due to drivers of motor vehicles, increasing 13.5% and 29.4% between 2013 and 2019 respectively.

As documented in 2013, the people experiencing traffic violence are disproportionately people of color. While nearly 7% of bicyclist fatalities in data from the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#) are identified as “unknown race” the available data show that non-Hispanic white bicyclists are under-represented relative to their share of the overall population among bicyclist fatalities despite being more likely to take more bicycle trips, log more miles, and commute to work at higher rates.

Data from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) show that the burden of premature mortality³ was 12% percent higher for Hispanic and Black populations and 73% higher for American Indian populations compared to white populations between 2015 and 2019. Premature mortality measures the [expected years of life](#) lost due to people being killed in traffic while riding a bike.

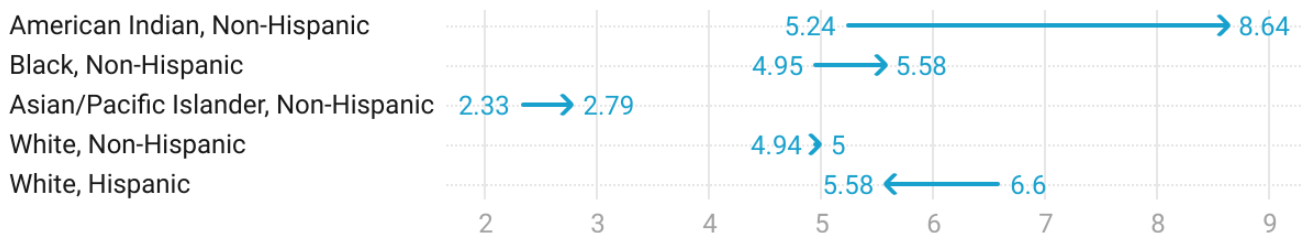
Since the 5-year period ending in 2013, the only racial or ethnic group to improve its burden of premature mortality rate has been the white Hispanic population. The largest increase in the burden of premature mortality occurred among the American Indian and non-Hispanic Black populations.



“Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show that the burden of premature mortality was 12% percent higher for Hispanic and Black populations and 73% higher for American Indian populations compared to white populations between 2015 and 2019.”

Years of Premature Life Lost by Race/Ethnicity in Bicycle Crashes

Difference in Years of Potential Life Lost by Race/Ethnicity in Bicycle Crashes



Data shown is for Age-Adjusted Years of Potential Life Lost per 100,000 people, which is based on years of life lost before age 65: https://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/fatal_help/index.html#ypll

Chart: The League of American Bicyclists Source: CDC WISQARS Created with Datawrapper



³ Data is from CDC's WISQARS tool on fatal injuries using age-adjusted years of potential life lost. Demographic groups with unstable values as indicated by the WISQARS data were excluded. All demographic groups that are not identified as Hispanic are represented by the non-Hispanic values for that demographic group.

Equity at the League of American Bicyclists

The League of American Bicyclists traces itself back to the founding of the League of American Wheelmen in 1880. Historically, the League of American Wheelmen was an exclusive membership organization that reflected the high socioeconomic class of bicyclists in the late 1800s. Through the exclusion of bicyclists such as Kittie Knox and the ratification of a color bar in 1894, the League reflected the male-dominated white supremacy prevalent throughout the United States of America at the time, and arguably still prevalent.

In its [early incarnation](#), leaders of the League were often commercial industrialists, whose passion for economic growth and capitalism rivaled their passion for bicycling, with many eventually becoming early auto industry leaders. This led to the League formally dissolving in 1902, although the work of the League was continued through its Secretary, Abbott Bassett, who published materials for bicyclists until 1924. The League has been revived several times: the first time was in 1934, which lasted until 1955. The current iteration of the League was created in 1965.

In 1994, the League of American Wheelmen changed its name to the League of American Bicyclists to be more inclusive of women. The modern League rounded into shape in the late 1990s as the League moved to Washington, DC, to be more involved in federal advocacy and began hosting the National Bike Summit in the year 2000. In 1999, the League of American Bicyclists' then-President Earl Jones, a Black man, signed a [resolution](#) revoking the 1894 decision to ban people of color and issued an apology on behalf of the League, as well as granting a posthumous membership to [Major Taylor](#). Jones, upon passing the resolution, stated: "Finally, I hope that the League, by taking this step, can lead cycling into more diverse and representative participation."

Equity Reports from the League

[The New Majority](#)

May 2013

[Engaging Youth in Bicycle Advocacy](#)

November 2013

[United Spokes: Together in American Streets](#)

March 2014

[Integrating Equity in Bike Advocacy](#)

June 2014

[How Ciclovias can Unfreeze Streets](#)

July 2014

[Seeing & Believing](#)

Fall 2014

[The New Movement](#)

February 2015

[Who Participates in What Processes?](#)

March 2015

[Equity of Access to Bicycle Infrastructure](#)

September 2015

[Benchmarking Report](#)

December 2018

[Equity Statement](#)

August 2020

[Removing Enforcement "E"](#)

October 2020



Efforts to lead cycling into more diverse and representative participation have been a part of the League since President Jones' effort. Most notably, after the 2013 New Majority Report, the League undertook an [Equity Initiative](#) and [Women Bike](#) program to significantly address underlying issues of racism and inequity within the transportation sector and bicycling movement. Many current members of the League staff consider ourselves lucky to share the experience of working with incredible people and advocates through staff members such as Hamzat Sani, Adonia Lugo, Carolyn Szczepanski, and Liz Cornish who animated and defined those initiatives. In addition, there were invaluable contributions from members of the Equity Advisory Committee; contractors such as Naomi Doerner, Queta Gonzalez, and Race Forward; and members of the Alliance for Biking and Walking who worked with the League to make events like the National Bike Summit platforms of diverse and representative participation, concerned with equity for groups that have been economically and socially marginalized.

In 2015, both the Equity Initiative and Women Bike were wound down and momentum slowed with grant completion. In the six years since those programs were folded into other programs, staff have continued to inform our work with the experiences gained from working with our incredible former coworkers and collaborators and have sought to bring their recommendations into our ongoing programmatic work. These efforts have included integrating questions about equity into Bicycle Friendly America programs, an emphasis on diversity within National Bike Summit speakers and attendees, efforts to increase representation of all riders diversity within our Smart Cycling program, translations of Smart Cycling materials into eight languages⁴, and continued engagement with the [Transportation Equity Caucus](#) on federal policy.

The League has chosen to make history a part of its brand in claiming “since 1880” despite its several lapses in continued existence. Addressing racism, sexism, ableism, or other exclusionary elements that may have informed the League's programs or principles is an important part of creating an inclusive future. Knowing the history of the bicycling movement, including its history of structural racism and exclusion, is a reminder to do better and that bicycling, for all its merits, is not a cure-all to broader social issues and cannot be detached from addressing broader social issues. [United Spokes: Together in American Streets](#) is a great history of bicycling and American society produced by Adonia Lugo and Naomi Doerner that looks beyond just the League's history to the history of bicycling as a movement.

Focus Group to Inform Our Work

In addition to a survey, the League worked with Charles T. Brown of [Equitable Cities](#) to convene a focus group about the survey results and League equity efforts. The focus group convened six people who identify as Black and/or African American. The focus group reviewed the survey results and provided feedback on what the survey might be missing, while providing their perspectives on the survey language and interpretation of results.

⁴ The League's Quick Guide has been translated for publication in eight languages: Spanish, French, Thai, Vietnamese, Korean, Russian, Khmer, and Ukrainian. The League's entire Smart Cycling curriculum has been translated into Spanish.

Surveys show consistent support and continuing issues

Survey results about what would help people ride more

In 2012 and 2020 the League commissioned a representative national survey to gauge support for bicycling in the United States, including among several demographic groups. In the 2013 New Majority report, those surveys showed that the “new majority” was one that supported bicycling improvements but faced several issues that made it less likely that they would regularly ride bicycles. In 2020, we found that support for bicycling has improved across most demographics, but that barriers to bicycling for Black, Hispanic, and young people continue to be more prevalent and differ from those indicated by white and older survey respondents.

Overall, the “new majority” of younger people and people of color more strongly believe that interventions will help them ride more. Infrastructure changes – in the form of more bike lanes and trails and secure bike parking – are the interventions that people most believe in.

Agreed - “Would make me ride my bike more often”

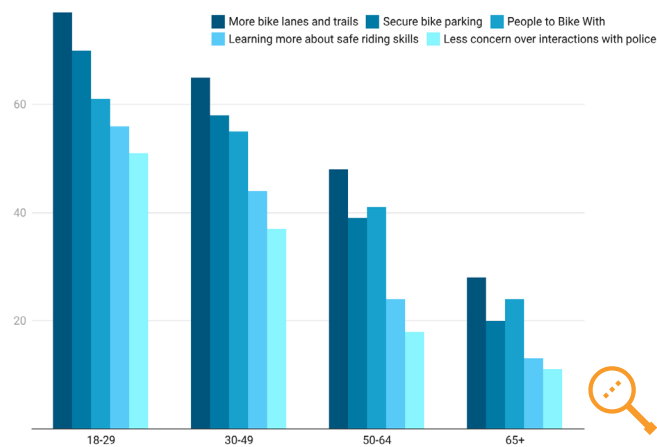


Chart: The League of American Bicyclists Source: The League of American Bicyclists Created with Datawrapper

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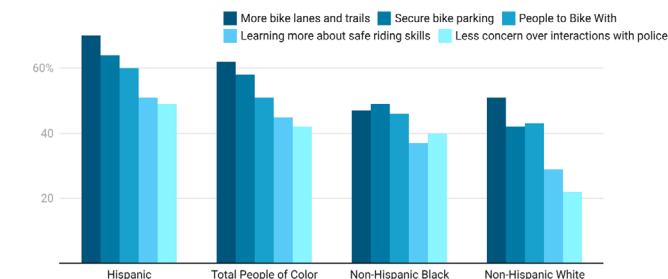


Chart: The League of American Bicyclists Source: The League of American Bicyclists Created with Datawrapper

Support for bicycling improving communities

In both 2012 and 2020, survey data shows that Black people are some of the strongest supporters of bicycling. Support for the idea that bicycling makes communities better places to live increased for both non-Hispanic white respondents and non-Hispanic Black respondents.

However, it is important to note that this support is not universal among respondents of any race or ethnicity. The 2020 survey responses show that there is considerable disagreement with the idea that bicycling improves communities, with Black and white respondents more likely to disagree than Hispanic respondents.

The League of American Bicyclists is dedicated to building a Bicycle Friendly America for everyone. It is a core belief of the League that “When more people ride bikes communities are safer, stronger and better connected.” It is great to see such high levels of agreement from the public on this issue.

“Overall, the “new majority” of younger people and people of color more strongly believe that interventions will help them ride more. Infrastructure changes - in the form of more bike lanes and trails and secure bike parking - are the interventions that people most believe in.”

It should be acknowledged that Non-Hispanic white respondents were the least likely to agree with this sentiment, but make up the majority of the League’s membership. This highlights one of the opportunities identified in 2013 which still exists today - people of color strongly support improving the safety and accessibility of bicycling and are currently underserved by bicycle advocacy organizations. Better serving people of color, for the League and other bicycle advocacy organizations, has the potential to increase the size, strength, and scope of the bicycling movement. Based on feedback from our focus group, it is clear that the existence of support for bicycling improvements in communities of color does not guarantee support for organizations like the League, especially given a historic legacy of racial exclusion. Gaining the trust of individuals and communities of color is therefore imperative for the League and the bicycling movement, and will take more consistent engagement.

Need for safe infrastructure

Studies show⁵ that Black and brown communities often lack safe infrastructure for biking and walking, and often are impacted by higher speed roadways that serve predominantly white car commuters. Where infrastructure exists, Black, Latino, and mixed race individuals have [reported less positive assessments](#) of the quality and accessibility of bicycle paths, bicycle lanes, and bicycle racks compared to white respondents.

The League's 2020 survey shows that most demographic groups believe more bike lanes and trails will make them ride their bike more often, with 77% of respondents age 18-29, 70% of Hispanic respondents, 65% of respondents age 30-49, 62% of respondents of color, and 58% of respondents in the South agreeing with that statement.

However, more bike lanes and trails are not sufficient to help all people bike more often, with only 47% of Black respondents, 47% of respondents with incomes between \$50,000-74,999, and 28% of respondents age 65+ agreeing with that statement. Researchers like [Charles Brown](#)⁶ and [Jesus Barajas](#) have identified some of the cultural and other barriers that go beyond infrastructure for people of color bicycling.

One of the takeaways from the 2013 New Majority report was ["IT'S NOT INFRASTRUCTURE FIRST"](#) because what should come first is being "part of a solution for something the community wants for itself." This was echoed in our focus group, which consistently agreed with our survey results ranking infrastructure as the most important investment for helping more people bike, but stressed the need to be specific about infrastructure being for existing communities, driven by community engagement, and not limited to bicycle infrastructure or transportation infrastructure if the community has broader needs.



High speed roadways without bicycle infrastructure are often found in Black and brown communities.

Strong Agreement With "My community would be a better place to live if bicycling were safer and more comfortable"

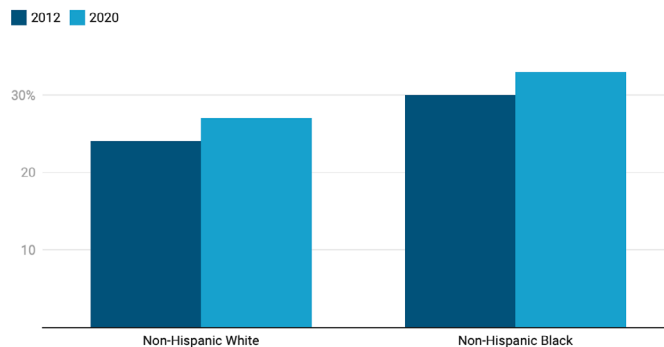


Chart: The League of American Bicyclists Source: The League of American Bicyclists Created with Datawrapper

Agree With "My community would be a better place to live if bicycling were safer and more comfortable."

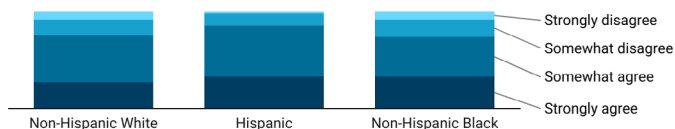


Chart: The League of American Bicyclists Source: The League of American Bicyclists Created with Datawrapper

More Bike Lanes and Trails Would Make Me Ride My Bike More Often

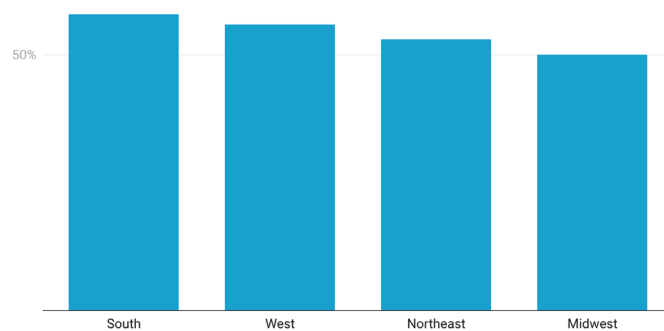


Chart: The League of American Bicyclists Source: The League of American Bicyclists Created with Datawrapper

⁵ See e.g. this resource list on transportation, race, and equity: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1nLbMbp2s4ISJYJVroAMwFFAoiJPoHxToRVCMMWTaOzg/edit>; and research and resources from Equiticity: <https://www.equiticity.org/research>

⁶ See also <http://njbikeped.org/portfolio/barriers-to-bicycle-access-use-in-black-and-hispanic-communities-2016/>

Our focus group was also clear about what investing in bicycle infrastructure should mean - it should mean building safe, separated, high-quality infrastructure that also recognizes the multimodal nature of people who will bike, walk, take transit, and drive in their communities. Lack of safe, high-quality infrastructure was identified by members of the focus group as part of systemic under-investment in Black and brown neighborhoods, also seen in high-speed roads that prioritize going through neighborhoods rather than in serving neighborhoods. Many members of the focus group remarked on how conditions in Black and brown neighborhoods are the result of political choices over time, and any evaluation of prior or future investments in those communities needs to take a longer, broader, view that considers needs created by past political choices. A prominent example of considering history in federal transportation law is the proposed [Reconnecting Communities Act](#), which would provide \$3 billion per year to “improve community connectivity by identifying and removing or mitigating infrastructural barriers that create obstacles to mobility or economic development or expose the community to pollution and other health and safety risks” in communities of color or low-income communities.

Our survey did not ask about views about bicycling and gentrification, but it was a topic of the focus group’s discussion of what investing in safe bicycle infrastructure should mean. Empirical studies of bike lane development paint a mixed picture, with [well-documented clashes](#) over changing neighborhoods related to bike lanes and research showing a lack of [correlation](#) or that there is “[a bias towards increased cycling infrastructure investment in areas of existing or increasing privilege.](#)” One member of the focus group remarked that “at this point [having safe bike lanes] is like having waterfront property because it is so rare to see quality bike infrastructure” reflecting the privileged and scarce status of safe bicycling infrastructure. Another remarked about wanting to see research showing high-quality bicycle infrastructure in a Black community and its effects on that community over 5-10 years, to account both for potential displacement and community adaptation to the infrastructure. Research on historical investments in bicycle infrastructure in white vs. Black or brown neighborhoods were also identified as an area of interest.

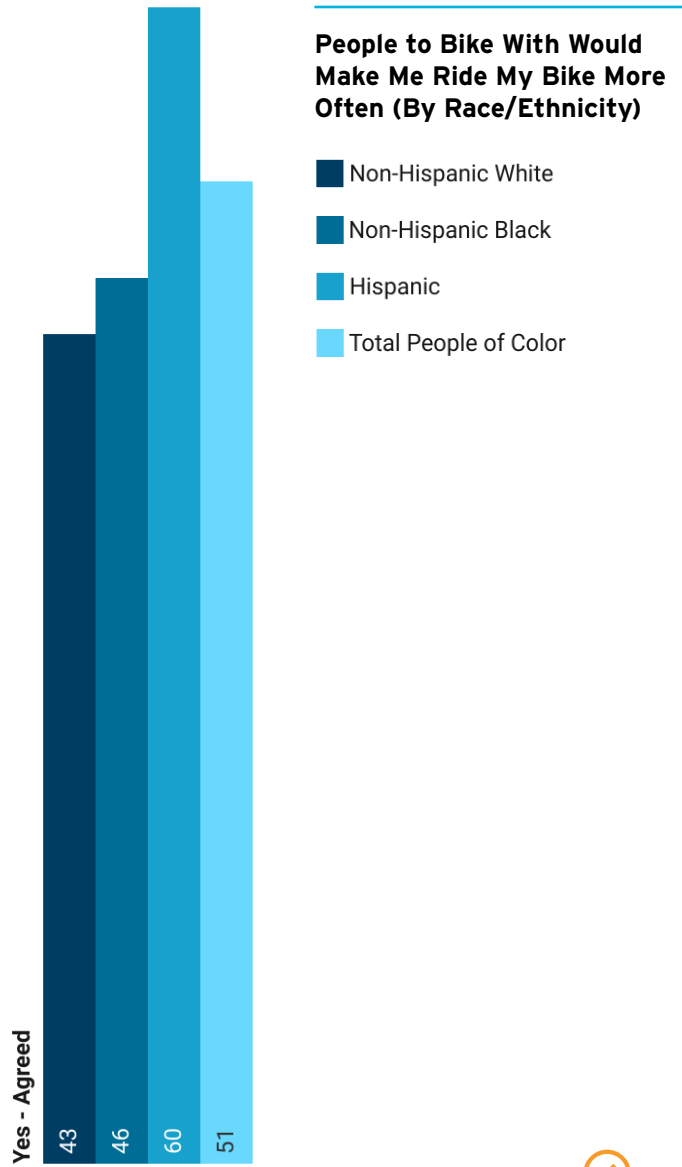


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Need for people to ride with

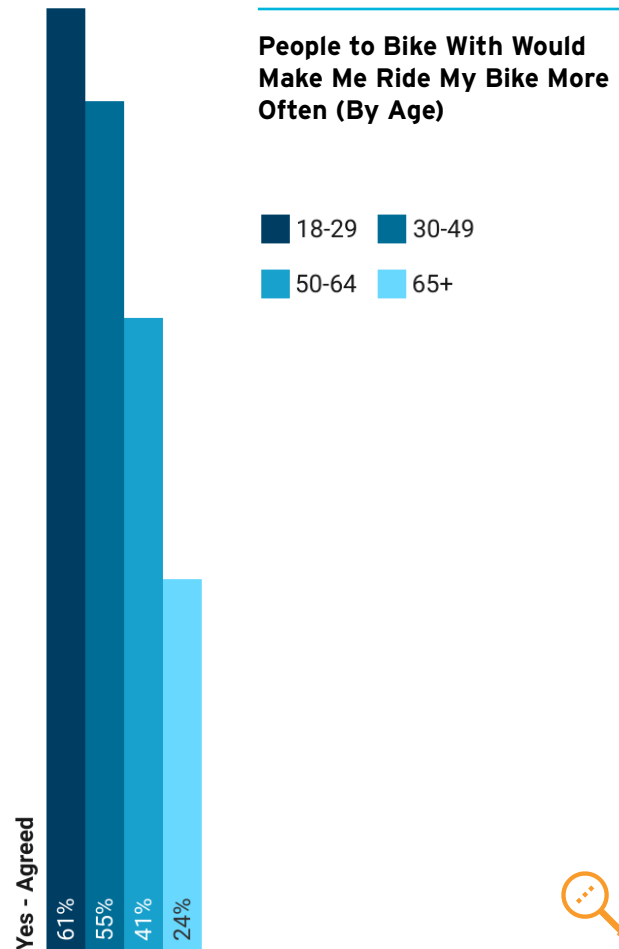
The 2013 New Majority report found that having people to ride with was more likely to be an issue for people of color. In this update, we find that this issue continues to exist. Younger people and people of color continue to say that having people to ride with would make them likely to bike more often at higher rates than older and white respondents.

According to data from the [Outdoor Industry](#), bicycling is the second most popular outdoor activity for Hispanic and Black Americans and the third most popular outdoor activity for Asian Americans. During the Covid-19 pandemic, 26% of new participants in outdoor activities reported that they started or resumed bicycling outside during the pandemic and 65% reported that they are likely to continue to participate in bicycling outside. New participants were more likely to be Black or African American or Asian or Asian American. In 2018, the number one reason to not participate in bicycling outside [reported](#) by Black Americans was “I do not have anyone to participate with.”

This data supports the need for improving outreach and inclusion efforts so that younger people and people of color find people to ride with. Bicycle clubs and bicycle shops that provide regular opportunities for riding together are natural places to focus on so that more people are able to connect with other bike riders.

The focus group generally ranked “people to ride with” lower than our survey results. Their feedback focused on uncertainty about what investing in “people to ride with” might mean. They highlighted issues with white-led organizations targeting Black and brown communities for outreach as a potential form of colonialism, with established organizations receiving funding at the expense of nascent or informal community groups within those communities. A common suggestion was to partner more with community groups and invest in Black and brown leadership development in communities.

The focus group feedback is helpful as the League engages in strategic planning and the best way to contribute to helping people connect with others to ride with. The League of American Bicyclists has many member groups that are bicycle clubs. We have not yet embarked on an effort to understand their demographics and their approaches to creating diverse, inclusive, opportunities for more people to ride bicycles. The focus group feedback suggests that any such effort should be done in a partnership with Black and brown groups or leaders.



Riders from a group ride organized by the Whitneyville United Church of Christ and the New Haven Coalition for Active Transportation.



The policing of communities of color has always had a large impact on

HOW
we get around our communities.

Miguel Ramos

Policing is a significant concern for some people and may prevent them from biking more often

In the 2013 New Majority report, the League did not engage with the role of law enforcement in traffic safety or its effect on demographic groups that are part of the new majority. In 2014, one year into the League's equity initiative and in the wake of a Missouri grand jury's decision not to indict Darren Wilson in the killing of unarmed teenager Michael Brown, [Adonia Lugo challenged the League](#) and the bicycling movement to ask itself questions about the role of law enforcement in traffic safety and bicycling advocacy. In 2017, the Untokening's [Principles of Mobility Justice](#) said it was necessary to "reject policing as a street traffic safety solution" in order to pursue mobility justice.

While the League began to recognize the concerns of communities that have been marginalized with the role of law enforcement in traffic safety, law enforcement continues to be central to traffic safety approaches. In 2018, the Benchmarking Report on Bicycling and Walking in the United States included "Embracing Equity" topics in the Make Your Case chapter. Under the "[Laws & Enforcement to Promote Bicycling & Walking](#)" section the "Embracing Equity" topic was "Reasons to be Concerned about Enforcement-related Approaches to Traffic Safety." In that topic, the League noted a lack of good data related to traffic law enforcement, the Department of Justice's report on disproportionate enforcement against Black bicyclists in Tampa, and the difference between law enforcement messaging around data-driven enforcement and enforcement practices targeting people biking.

In 2020, in the wake of the killing of George Floyd, the League [removed the "E" of "Enforcement" from the "5 E" framework](#) for the Bicycle Friendly America programs. Removing the "E" of "Enforcement" has also strengthened the League's work in traffic safety with the [Transportation Equity Caucus](#) to push for greater changes in National Highway Traffic Safety Administration funding that provides hundreds of millions of dollars each year to traffic law enforcement. And in updating the New Majority report, we added a question to our survey to better understand how concern for interactions with police affects peoples' choices to ride.

Our survey data shows that many people agree with the statement "less concern over interactions with police would make me ride my bike more often" and that less concern over interactions with police is of similar importance as issues like learning safe riding skills for some demographic groups. On this topic, there was a wide difference between non-Hispanic white respondents and older respondents vs. all types of people of color and younger respondents. The greatest difference was between younger respondents and older respondents, with more than 50% of people aged 18-29 saying that less concern over interactions with police would make them likely to ride more often, but only 11% of people 65 or older agreeing with that statement.

"...the League is concerned with police violence, and that police violence is associated with armed traffic law enforcement. Traffic stops are the most common form of police officer initiated interaction with the public and traffic stops are a common precedent to police violence, with one report finding more than a quarter of police shootings of unarmed Black people occurred during traffic stops. It is important to recognize that relying on armed traffic law enforcement for traffic safety means that violence carried out during that enforcement should be considered part of traffic violence and we cannot reach Zero Traffic Deaths without addressing both sources of violence."

Less Concern Over Interactions With Police Would Make Me Ride My Bike More Often (By Ethnicity)

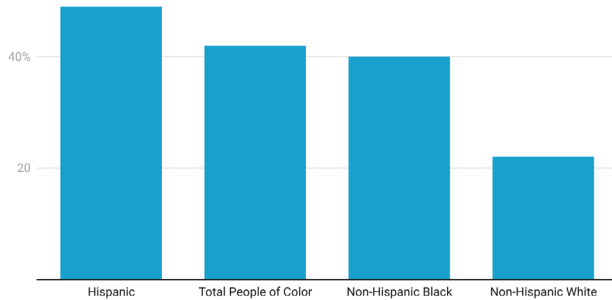


Chart: The League of American Bicyclists Source: The League of American Bicyclists Created with Datawrapper



Less Concern Over Interactions With Police Would Make Me Ride My Bike More Often (By Age)

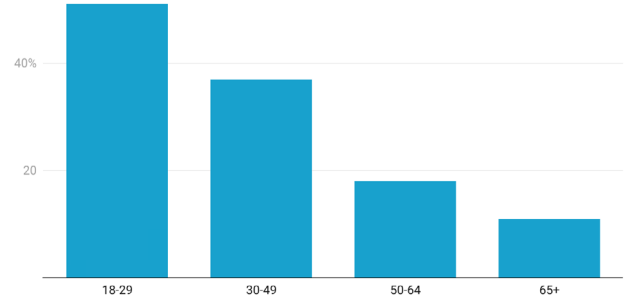


Chart: The League of American Bicyclists Source: The League of American Bicyclists Created with Datawrapper



Our focus group generally placed a greater importance on addressing concerns over interactions with police than our survey results did. All members of the focus group ranked reducing concerns with police interaction lower than investing in infrastructure, and several explained that infrastructure is more important for traffic safety due to more threats from vehicles, that the threat of police violence affects all modes of travel, or that infrastructure can address police interactions by mitigating unlawful behavior. [Recent research](#) by Dr. Jesus Barajas found that in Chicago “infrastructure inequities compound the effects of racially-biased policing in the context of transportation safety strategies” as people biking in majority Black or Latino census tracts were more likely to be ticketed and more likely to lack bicycle facilities.

An important point of feedback was that the League’s framing could be interpreted to be saying that *concern* for police interaction is the problem rather than police violence being the problem. It is important to clarify that the League is concerned with police violence, and that police violence is associated with armed traffic law enforcement. Traffic stops are the [most common form of police officer initiated interaction](#) with the public and traffic stops are a common precedent to police violence, with [one report](#) finding more than a quarter of police shootings of unarmed Black people occurred during traffic stops. It is important to recognize that relying on armed traffic law enforcement for traffic safety means that violence carried out during that enforcement should be considered part of traffic violence and we cannot reach Zero Traffic Deaths without addressing both sources of violence.

One of the League’s goals in its [Strategic Plan](#) has been “to ensure people of all ages and abilities can use our streets and highways safely regardless of mode or purpose.” A promising way to address traffic safety without relying on enforcement is the [Safe System Approach](#). The Safe System Approach notably shifts from emphasizing the responsibility of individuals to emphasizing the responsibility of institutions, such as agencies that design, build, and maintain roadways. This works well with the goal of prioritizing investment in safer infrastructure and reducing [low-level enforcement](#) that is often associated with racial disparities and [ineffective at improving traffic safety](#).

Addressing concerns with police interaction by either reducing police violence or reliance on armed police enforcement is a difficult issue. Our focus group expressed interest in data improvements such as demographic data collection about who is stopped and the proposed Center for Fair and Equitable Policing from the [Invest in America Act](#), but were skeptical that better data would translate to changes in police practices. Notably, most focus group participants favored engaging with law enforcement and traffic safety groups as part of advocating for changes in police practices and safer street designs. Focus group participants also stressed that the League’s engagement should be driven by supporting community needs, improving street design, changing outdated traffic laws, and reducing racial disparities.

For the most part, focus group participants supported the League’s choice to remove the Enforcement “E,” but keep enforcement-related questions as part of the Evaluation “E.” There was strong support for the idea that more ticketing should not positively affect Bicycle Friendly Community award decisions, and that racial disparities in ticketing should negatively affect Bicycle Friendly Community award decisions.

Secure bike parking is critical infrastructure

Secure bike parking was the second most important intervention for most demographic groups in our polling. This often overlooked infrastructure improvement also has significantly more agreement for its support among people of color and younger respondents.

Research on bicycle parking, and specifically equitable distribution and provision of bicycle parking, appears to be limited. Prominent examples of best practices for bicycle parking include the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals' [Guidelines for Bicycle Parking](#) and the Safe Routes National Partnership's [School Bicycle Parking Assessment](#) report. In trying to identify resources on bicycle parking equity, the majority of resources found were local parking assessments⁷, transit-related assessments⁸, or bike share-related assessments⁹. This suggests that encouraging research into bicycle parking provision and citizen bicycle parking needs may be needed, and beneficial to advancing the League's goal of helping more people bike.



Hoboken, NJ is a Bronze Bicycle Friendly Community and provides bike parking at Hoboken Terminal, a public transit hub.

The League's current work related to bicycle parking primarily is carried out through our Bicycle Friendly America programs. Bicycle parking is a prominent feature of Bicycle Friendly Community, Bicycle Friendly Business, and Bicycle Friendly University applications. Examples from the Bicycle Friendly Community application include:

- B7.** What policies or programs increase the amount of end-of-trip facilities for bicyclists?
- B11.** Is there a program (e.g. publicly funded, public-private partnership, or development regulation) that provides or increases bike parking at any of the following locations?
- B12c.** What percentage of transit stops are equipped with secure and convenient bike parking, including bus stops?

There are currently no demographic or geographic considerations related to answers to those questions. Question B7 includes options to indicate ordinances that require bicycle parking and programs that provide or subsidize bicycle parking. Everyday destinations such as housing, office buildings, grocery stores, libraries, and schools are included in options for Question B11.

Our focus group also rated safe and secure bicycle parking highly. Some participants discussed it as extremely important and as important as part of investment in infrastructure and enabling multi-modal trips, such as bicycling to a transit stop or station. A promising development for the provision of safe and secure bicycle parking is the [Oonee Pod](#), which aims to deliver safe and secure bicycle parking through a modular automated structure.

Agree with "Secure bike parking would make me ride my bike more often"

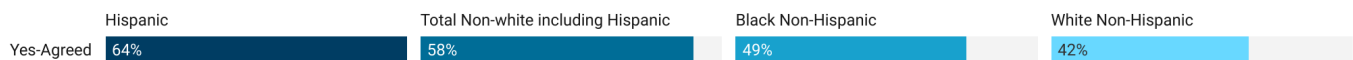


Chart: The League of American Bicyclists • Created with Datawrapper



⁷ E.g. <https://www.blacksburg.gov/residents/getting-around/biking/downtown-bicycle-rack-study>, <https://www.phila.gov/experiencephila/pdfs/BicycleInfrastructureSurvey.pdf>, and http://hcaog.net/sites/default/files/bike_parking_sourcebook_final.pdf

⁸ E.g. https://www.caltrain.com/Assets/_Planning/Bicycle+Access+and+Parking+Plan/Bike+Parking+Management+Plan++Public+Review+Draft.pdf and https://commutingsolutions.org/wp-content/uploads/RTD_Bike_Parking_Accessibility_Plan.pdf

⁹ E.g. https://trec.pdx.edu/sites/default/files/PSU_BikeShareEquity.pdf and <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1361920921002133>

Bicycling education

Bicycle safety education has been a core component of League activities for decades. Our survey found that people of color were more likely to agree with the statement that “Learning more about safe riding skills would make me ride my bike more often.”

The League has trained over 6,000 League Cycling Instructors (LCIs) and thousands are actively teaching people to ride their bicycles safely. In recent years, the League has intentionally sought to ensure that more women and Black and brown people are trained as LCIs and have a larger role as Coaches who train LCIs. During 2020 and 2021, with the support of the Be Good Foundation and Quality Bicycle Products, the League has held [four](#) training sessions for BIPOC persons with fees for training covered by sponsorship.

Bicycle education is one of the most common ways that people become familiar with the League and deepen their involvement with the League. Our focus group included people who were first introduced to the League through bicycle education classes, and specifically local efforts to diversify cycling instructors. When thinking about focusing educational resources on Black and brown people, our focus group stressed the need for Black and brown leadership, educators, and partners so that classes meant for an identity or affinity group are organized and delivered by people tied to that identity or affinity group. Members of the focus group also reminded us to ensure that all classes are welcoming, aware of the vulnerability so many feel while learning, and empowering to people so that they can experience the joy of bicycling.

Agree with “Learning more about safe riding skills would make me ride my bike more often”



Chart: The League of American Bicyclists • Created with Datawrapper



New League Cycling Instructors from a BIPOC LCI Seminar in Lancaster, PA celebrate their certification. The seminar was led by League Cycling Coach Neil Walker with host Common Wheel and was supported by the generosity of Quality Bike Products.

Conclusion

Since the League's 2013 New Majority Report there has been a larger recognition of Black and brown people facing distinct mobility challenges due to policies and practices that restrict their mobility.

1. People of all races, incomes, and ages want safer bicycle infrastructure. Black and brown people, young people, and people with lower incomes often support bicycling improvements more than other demographic groups.
2. For the League to credibly improve bicycling in Black and brown communities requires serious ongoing engagement and partnership with Black and brown people, and organizations.
3. Concerns about racial disparities in policing should be taken seriously and that should include considering police violence arising from traffic stops as part of traffic violence.
4. Some League activities are easier to change than others and no policy statement, report, or other singular event will address equity—it is an ongoing effort reflected in our work and who we work with.

Our focus group stressed the need for engagement by the League of American Bicyclists with Black and brown people who bike, Black and brown-led organizations, and Black and brown people who want investments to build better communities, including better bicycle infrastructure. Another theme was the League's role in speaking to white people as a white-led organization about the need to care about and work with Black and brown people and organizations.

Leading the movement to create a Bicycle Friendly America for everyone is our mission. The League recognizes our responsibility as a white-led organization with a significant national platform to continue doing this work and having this conversation, especially with white people. This report has helped us take stock of our ability to perform that role. With the data from this report and the focus group's insight, the League will continue to build on this work and expand efforts and outreach to communities of color in our mission to build a Bicycle Friendly America for everyone.

Much of the League's work is accomplished through ongoing programs that have a momentum that makes change difficult due to their ongoing nature. We can't be complacent due to that momentum and have to push to do better for all people. Big changes, like removing the Enforcement "E" or taking the Bicycle Friendly Community application offline for a cycle in order to update it, are steps in our commitment to improving. But to do this work well will require speaking to our universal values more—and why those values make it all the more important to address the challenges and disparities faced by Black and brown people, and other groups that have been economically and socially marginalized.

Where the League Fits In

The League of American Bicyclists is well positioned to act and implement helpful interventions that promote bicycling and respond to the needs of Black and brown people who want to bike. The following are examples of programmatic questions that we hope address racial equity issues, or highlight recent activities to improve equity.

Infrastructure

Our Bicycle Friendly America programs and policy work have strong infrastructure components.

The Bicycle Friendly Community program addresses equitable infrastructure in questions F6, F7e/F7g, and F11.

F6. Does your local government have an internal equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) initiative, committee, or position?

F7e. How have community planning staff reached out to BIPOC, non-English speaking, and/or low-income communities to ensure that they are included in the decision-making process?

F11. Is bicycle-related funding specifically allocated to underrepresented areas of your community? (e.g. low-income neighborhoods, etc.)

Federal policy asks include “[Priority for high-need communities](#)”

People to Ride With

Our member organizations, bicycle clubs, and League Cycling Instructors can play important roles in helping people find people to ride with.

BFC question D7. Are any bicycle events specifically marketed to any of the following traditionally underrepresented groups?

Reducing Concerns about Police Interactions

Our Bicycle Friendly America program has removed the Enforcement “E” from its framework and our policy team is working with the Transportation Equity Caucus to create accountability for federally funded traffic law enforcement, provide non-enforcement options, and reduce the role of punishment in traffic safety.

Bicycle Friendly Community questions relevant to this issue include:

F22. Please describe any efforts in place to evaluate how equitably and effectively these laws or ordinances are currently applied in the community

F23. How does your community ensure transparency and accountability regarding traffic law enforcement?

F24. What, if any, policies or practices does your community have in place to measure and eliminate racial bias in traffic law enforcement, including in-person and automated enforcement practices?

Federal policy asks related to Section 1906 program prohibiting racial profiling and pushing for more community-centered use of NHTSA funds

Bike Parking

Bicycle Friendly America participants – Communities, Universities, and Businesses – are important partners for the creation of safe and secure bike parking.

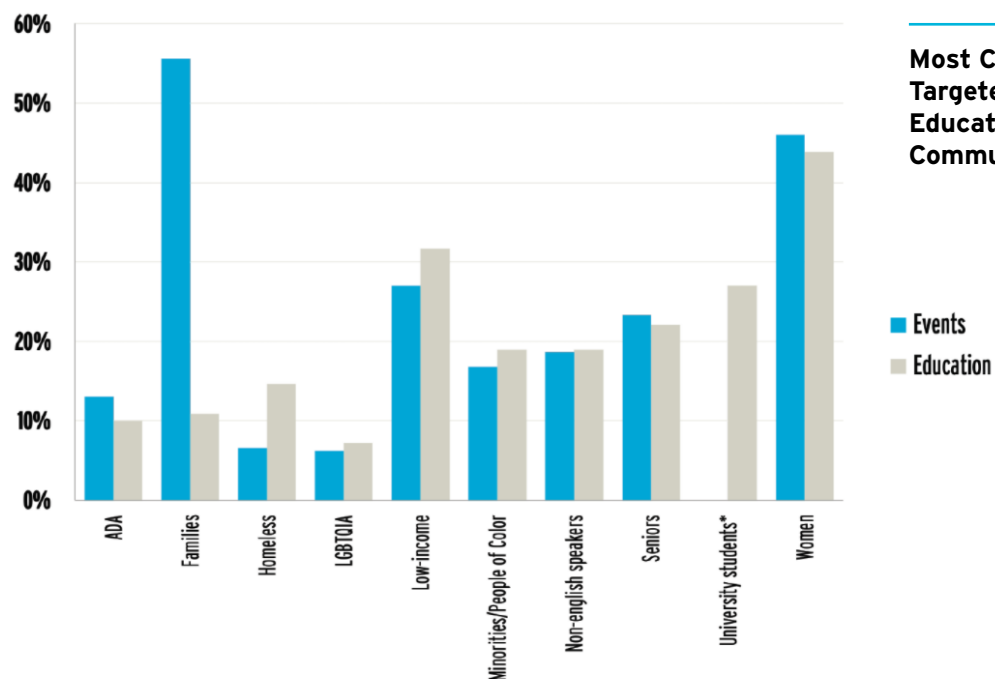
B7, B11, B12 from BFC application featured earlier

Bike Education

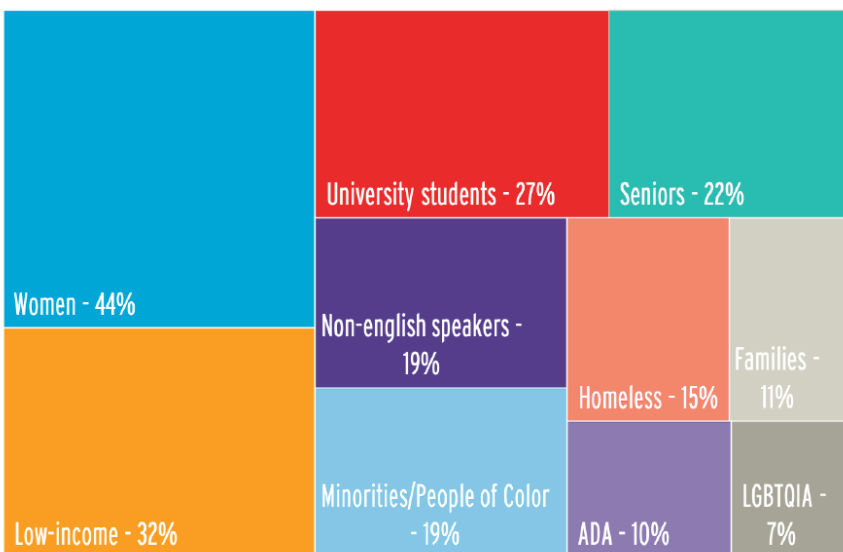
League Cycling Instructors are leaders in bike education. We have improved our diversity and inclusion (in translated materials and in demographics of instructors), and have taken steps to address inequities through QBP-sponsored workshops for BIPOC instructors.

BFC question C8. Do any of the above educational classes, resources, or programs for adults specifically target any of the following traditionally-underrepresented groups?

Data from C8 featured in 2018 Benchmarking Report (below)



Most Common Types Of Groups Targeted For Adult Bicyclist Education In Bicycle Friendly Communities.



Prevalence Of Targeted Bicyclist Education & Targeted Bicycle Event Marketing In Bicycle Friendly Communities.



ABOUT THE LEAGUE

For generations past and to come, THE LEAGUE represents bicyclists in the movement to create safer roads, stronger communities, and a Bicycle Friendly America. Through education, advocacy and promotion, we work to celebrate and preserve the freedom cycling brings to our members everywhere.

WE BELIEVE

- Bicycling brings people together.
- When more people ride bikes:
 - Life is better for everyone;
 - Communities are safer, stronger and better connected;
 - Our nation is healthier, economically stronger, environmentally cleaner and more energy independent.

OUR VISION

is a nation where everyone recognizes and enjoys the many benefits and opportunities of bicycling.

OUR MISSION

is to lead the movement to create a Bicycle Friendly America for everyone. As leaders, our commitment is to listen and learn, define standards and share best practices to engage diverse communities and build a powerful, unified voice for change.



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity provided support for the development of this report. These efforts are part of the [Active People, Healthy Nation InitiativeSM](#) that is working to help 27 million Americans become more physically active by 2027. The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.