



Safe streets
Healthy city
Vibrant voice

Anti-Oppression and Anti-Racism Commitment from Cycle Toronto

March 26, 2021

Background

In June 2020, Cycle Toronto [posted a series of tweets](#) in response to recent anti-Black racism: the murder of Ahmaud Arbery and George Floyd and Amy Cooper's harassment of Chris Cooper in the United States of America as well as Regis Korchinski-Paquet's death in Toronto. This was the first time we had explicitly shared concerns about systemic racism. Shortly thereafter, a former contract employee [shared with us the ways in which](#) we have perpetuated white supremacy and upheld anti-Black racist actions and how we could improve. We also heard concerns from Board, staff, members, and non-members about the ways in which Cycle Toronto has engaged and not engaged with issues of racism and equity. Thereafter, we released a [Statement and Reflection on Anti-Black Racism, Oppression and Equity at Cycle Toronto](#).

To the Black, Indigenous, people of colour (BIPOC), LGBTQ2S+ and other individuals that we have harmed, both directly and indirectly, with our actions and inaction: we apologize. We also recognize that a commitment to change does not take back the suffering you have endured through systemic discrimination and racism. We will try to contribute to positive, meaningful, systemic change going forward.

In the months that have since passed, staff, board members, committees members, and volunteers have brought forward ideas and feedback on how we can improve our internal and external practices to pursue our mission in a way that fights white supremacy and opposes anti-Black racism and the oppression of equity-seeking groups. Today, we are bringing forward the work we have done to date and the work we will continue to do. While this is not an exhaustive list, it's our commitment to continue the work. We will continue to listen and learn, but the work cannot stop at reflection; the next steps must include action. We have committed to the following actions within our operations.

Anti-Oppression actions Cycle Toronto will take:

a) Relationship to the Police

We will push for safer road design as the critical component of Vision Zero. We formally apologize for supporting Vision Zero enforcement policies that disproportionately impact and harm racialized communities, and acknowledge the role we played in supporting a system that perpetuates racism. We will engage racialized communities in city road safety decisions, including those involving policing.



Safe streets
Healthy city
Vibrant voice

Anti-Oppression and Anti-Racism Commitment from Cycle Toronto

We formally retract [our position](#) regarding on-the-ground enforcement through the STEM program as a necessary part of achieving Vision Zero. We will [push for road design solutions and not on-the-ground policing to address road safety concerns](#). We will continue to support automated speed enforcement (ASE) which has shown to reduce racial bias where implemented, if distributed in ways that do not disproportionately punish low-income and racialized communities. We will continue to follow the latest research and analysis on ASE.

We will continue to explore legal alternative models for mass bike rides which do not involve a police escort. We will clearly communicate the ride protocol to participants in advance of events.

We will explore and suggest alternative models for major road closures to provide for active transportation such as ActiveTO that do not require a large police presence. We will promote the use of infrastructure like curbs, and road design solutions to address road safety concerns.

We will provide information and work on policies that support alternatives to policing as a means to create a safer cycling city. These can include:

- Re-issuing our [Position Statement endorsing the Idaho Stop](#) as an alternative to ticketing
- Releasing a position statement on Infrastructure Enforcement
- Supporting community-led responses to bike theft that do not require police intervention for their success, by exploring the costs and implementation of systems that allow the reporting and tracking of stolen bicycles
- Publicly acknowledging the inequitable treatment that racialized people may face when interacting with police during our safe cycling workshops and in our external communications (e.g. presenting ID, traffic collisions, being pulled over when cycling)

b) External Partnerships

Cycle Toronto partners with a range of organizations to support their advocacy, education, and encouragement efforts, elevate local voices, and centre community needs. We seek to work collaboratively and offer resources and assistance without claiming ownership over their efforts. Cycle Toronto seeks to maintain partnerships with organizations that have strong relationships of respect with the communities that they serve.

We will increase our work with suburban bike hubs to deliver programming. Bike hubs outside the downtown core are well-positioned to increase access to bicycles, share cycling knowledge and build community around cycling in their neighbourhoods. They provide access to bikes and



Safe streets
Healthy city
Vibrant voice

Anti-Oppression and Anti-Racism Commitment from Cycle Toronto

resources and help build new capacity through external partnerships with shared interests. Bike Hub programming partners may include: the CultureLink Tobermory Bike Hub (near Jane & Finch), the Gateway Bike Hub (Flemingdon-Thorncliffe), Scarborough Cycles, and other interested partners.

We will support and promote external groups whose focus is on supporting equity-seeking groups such as Transportation Equity T.O., the Women's Cycling Network, ManDem Cycling Club, Gyaldem Cycling Collective, the students for a safer Overlea Bridge campaign, as well as groups supporting equity, such as the Toronto Bike Brigade, Charlie's Freewheels, and other emerging equity-seeking cycling groups. We will use our communication channels to share their message with our audience to do our part to mainstream discussions of equity and anti-oppression.

We will continue to work with our founding partner, CultureLink Settlement and Community Services, to incorporate equity and inclusion as a central focus of Cycle Toronto's work. We will create opportunities for more children and youth to experience the benefits of cycling through the Bike to School Project; we will engage with newcomers to Canada through Bike Host; we will co-power community leaders through our Move365 work in Etobicoke, North York and Scarborough.

We will offer free educational cycling supports across the entire city and in different languages where possible, such as safe cycling courses, and the Toronto Cyclists Handbook. We will offer bike maintenance, cycling maps, bike lights, and other cycling resources where possible. We will pursue funding opportunities that will allow us to offer these resources in as many neighbourhoods as possible.

We will pursue funding opportunities with partners to provide greater access to bicycles and cycling supports for people who reside in places with fewer supports. We will codesign programming with our partners to reflect their community needs, and collaboratively determine how resources are allocated.

We will ensure that the speaking engagements we host, such as our Advocacy Forum, include presenters from equity-seeking groups and include an equity and anti-oppression lens. We will ensure that all panels have at least a 50% representation of BIPOC presenters. We will offer fair compensation to people speaking as panelists if outside of their professional work capacity (e.g. would not include City of Toronto staff).

We will reach out to local community leaders and when there are city projects for new cycling infrastructure proposed, connect them with the City. In the course of our outreach, we will share the process and steps involved so that community leaders, community organizations, and



Safe streets
Healthy city
Vibrant voice

Anti-Oppression and Anti-Racism Commitment from Cycle Toronto

residents can provide their feedback and lived experiences to the City. We will strive to provide resources and information to help residents and organizations to understand the process, but will be clear that as an advocacy organization, we are not consulting on behalf of the City.

We will evaluate new and existing relationships with cycling advocacy groups, individuals, and external partners that may be contributing to oppression of equity-seeking groups. If we identify or are notified of an incident or initiative that is oppressive to an equity-seeking group, we will share those concerns with that organization or individual and request that they develop and share actions to improve. We will decline partnership with groups who refuse to engage in these actions.

c) Internal Practices

We will ensure that we have advocacy campaigns in areas outside the downtown core and that collaboration with the local community is built into the campaign planning process. We will seek to elevate the voices of equity-seeking groups and their community needs as it pertains to safe mobility and safe public spaces.

We have instituted term limits to our Advocacy Committee with the goals of creating space for people from equity seeking groups including, but not limited to, individuals that identify as BIPOC, women, people with diverse gender identities and sexual orientations, people with different accessibility needs, and people who live in areas of the city with less access to safe cycling infrastructure. We will follow through on ensuring a diversity of voices and perspectives on all of our committees.

We will continue to develop policies and procedures that articulate Cycle Toronto's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion for the Board, staff, all committees and working groups. We will ensure that our anti-oppression work is a standing item on our Board's Governance Committee.

We will provide anti-oppression training for all staff, contractors, board members, and ward group captains as a prerequisite for representing Cycle Toronto in a public-facing capacity. We will offer anti-oppression training to outreach volunteers. We will confront and work to resolve any oppressive behaviour from a volunteer, in accordance with our anti-violence and discrimination policy, and will cease volunteer opportunities for individuals if we cannot reach a mutually acceptable resolution.



Safe streets
Healthy city
Vibrant voice

Anti-Oppression and Anti-Racism Commitment from Cycle Toronto

We will develop a Code of Conduct to guide respectful behaviour on all communications platforms, including social media, email, and discussion platforms, to counter the hostile communications on social media to racialized people, women, and other equity-seeking groups.

We will pursue professional development for staff that strengthens our understanding of anti-oppression and how it relates to public space and mobility.

We will seek to elevate media outlets that promote diverse voices, and reach out to a variety of media representatives, including equity-seeking groups, with the goal of discussing cycling issues in the city from different perspectives. We will promote images of racialized people, women, and other equity-seeking groups in our communications.

We will draft and ensure the use of hiring and recruitment processes for staff and volunteer committees of the Board that place value on perspectives of people from diverse backgrounds, lived experiences, and geographic areas of Toronto.

We will continue to offer a bartered membership in exchange for volunteered time, such as for potential or current board members, committee, and working group volunteers, and in other contexts as appropriate where cost is a barrier to membership. We will make our low-income, senior, and student membership pricing easier to locate on the Cycle Toronto website.

We commit to revising our steps as we learn. We acknowledge our role in furthering white supremacy and patriarchy within the cycling community, and will update this document and our practices and policies as we move forward.

We commit to redefining what a “safe cycling city for all” means at Cycle Toronto. We need to consider who is not afforded safe streets in our city, what safety means, and who has not been at the table to make these decisions. We stepped back to reflect on how the organization’s contributions have furthered systemic racism, how to set ourselves on a different path, and how we can reconcile our actions with our vision statement. Now we must step forward. We must build a bigger tent and talk about what safety means with a broader lens than lines and curbs on a road. We must re-examine how we position enforcement within our programming and within the conversation of safety. While there is much more work we need to do, we will work with our existing networks and unite with new communities to help us build a more inclusive organization, inside and out. We will work to build a healthy, safe, and vibrant cycling city for all.