

Bicycle Alliance of Washington
Legislative Steering Committee Charter
Approved on September 15, 2000

I. Authority

From the Bylaws of the Bicycle Alliance of Washington: Section 1. The Chair and Board may delegate authority and tasks to committees as necessary to carry out the purposes of the Bicycle Alliance. Section 3. The Board may create permanent or ad hoc committees that shall develop and implement the Bicycle Alliances activities. All committees shall serve at the pleasure of the Board. All committee meetings shall be open to the public.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the Legislative Committee is to:

- a) Act in an advisory capacity to the Bicycle Alliance Board on advocacy matters of statewide significance, including legislation and matters of governmental policy;
- b) Develop and recommend long-term goals and methods for measuring the attainment of these goals to the Bicycle Alliance Board
- c) Develop and recommend a list of policy and legislative priorities to be approved by the Bicycle Alliance Board;
- d) Actively participate in the implementation of approved Action Items;
- e) Serve as a conduit for communication with bicycle clubs, bicycle and pedestrian planners and others in the state regarding legislative, policy and regulatory activities;
- f) Monitor bills introduced in the Legislature that might affect cycling – supporting or opposing bills as appropriate;
- g) Work with elected officials to draft and sponsor bills that advance that the above established priorities;
- h) Monitor governmental policy and regulatory issues that might affect cycling—supporting or opposing policies or actions as appropriate;
- i) Work with governmental agencies to advance policies and regulations that advance the above established priorities;
- j) Provide assistance to and interact with the lobbyist on Action Items as appropriate.

3. Chair

The Chair of the Legislative Committee shall be a member of the Bicycle Alliance Board and will be appointed annually by the Bicycle Alliance Board in consultation with the legislative committee members.

The Chair of the Legislative Committee will be a non-voting position.

The Chair of the Legislative Committee shall serve as the facilitator for the group and shall organize, notify, arrange, facilitate, ensure documentation, and provide communication on the meetings.

The Chair shall provide quarterly updates on the status of Action Items and other pertinent items to the Board.

4. Membership

Legislative issues typically require a commitment of time, energy, communication, organization, resources, involvement of key individuals or groups, and political support. The time between inception to enactment of a statute, program, or funding mechanism may take several years.

It is therefore desirable that the Bicycle Alliance Legislative Committee be comprised of members that will contribute to the cause of bicycling advocacy and have a combination of the following attributes:

- Actively participate
- Willing to lead or assist on issues
- Officially represent a bicycle club or other community group involved in bicycling issues, or otherwise have knowledge of or interest in transportation issues that affect bicycling
- Provide geographic balance and representation
- Communicate legislative issues with bicycle clubs, the community, governmental agencies and elected officials
- Can energize others to respond at critical times
- Have political skills, knowledge, or contacts
- Can work effectively and constructively with others
- The endurance to see an issue through to a successful conclusion
- Can communicate with others via the Internet

It is desirable for each bicycle club that financially contributes to the Bicycle Alliance to officially designate a representative to be on the Legislative Committee.

Additional individuals will be appointed as committee members by the Bicycle Alliance Board based upon their ability to contribute to the efforts of the committee because of their knowledge of or interest in transportation issues that affect bicycling.

In addition to the above committee members, the Bicycle Alliance Board shall designate a representative from the Board to be on the committee.

The number of voting committee members shall be limited to 15. Committee members should be willing to commit to a 2-year term. Committee members shall not be subject to term limits.

The Bicycle Alliance Board will annually approve the committee membership. However, if a bicycle club appoints a new committee representative between Board votes, then that person may participate as a voting member of the committee until the next scheduled Board vote or until otherwise removed. The intent of the annual approval by the Board is to ensure that the committee will be effective and constructive.

The Board may request that a bicycle club replace its representative if, in the Board's judgment, that club's representative is unable to work effectively and constructively as a committee member. The Board also has the authority to fill vacancies and remove and replace members that it directly appoints.

Participation in committee meetings and activities by additional individuals, from bicycle clubs or organizations with a member on the committee, is encouraged. However, these additional participants will not have a vote.

5. Meetings

Meetings will generally be held twice a year, but more often if needed. Meetings will be held in the Spring and Fall. Notice of the meetings will be made sufficiently in advance to provide an opportunity for members and others to attend. The Chair shall solicit agenda items in advance of meetings and distribute the agenda.

Spring: The primary focus of this meeting will be to develop a list of legislative and advocacy matters of statewide significance to be pursued in the subsequent year as a recommendation to the Bicycle Alliance Board.

Fall: The primary focus of this meeting will be to address legislative, initiatives, funding, and other issues that may occur in the following Legislative session. Planning for Bicycle Lobby Day may also occur.

At both the Spring and Fall meetings, ongoing Action Items, legislative issues, and related statewide advocacy issues will be discussed. Implementation methods, strategies, timelines, resources, and assignments will also be part of these discussions.

All persons attending meetings will be allowed to participate in discussions. Only members that have been approved by the Board or have otherwise been designated as a club representative under this Charter shall be allowed to vote. Proxy voting will be allowed provided the member has notified the Chair in advance of the meeting. To the extent practicable, committee members will be allowed to participate in and vote at meetings by telephone. After discussion and attempt to gain consensus, if possible, the majority vote will rule. Minority opinions may also be included for presentation to the Board.

In addition, the members of the committee shall act in an advisory capacity during the Legislative session and for emergent issues. In order to be flexible in addressing issues, sub committees or strike forces may also be formed as deemed appropriate.

Communication outside of these meetings may occur via email, phone, distribution of the minutes, and other appropriate means.

Meetings will be recorded through minutes. The minutes will be distributed shortly after each meeting and will be approved at the subsequent meeting.

6. Making Things Happen

The Bicycle Alliance Legislative Committee is unique in that it provides a statewide forum for the promotion, development, coordination, and implementation of bicycle advocacy issues. The energy, abilities, commitment, and leadership of bicycle advocates throughout the state combined with the resources of the Bicycle Alliance can make great things happen.

The steps in making things happen are to identify issues and opportunities, establish priorities, make recommendation to and obtain approval from the Board, and then implement. The committee shall act in an advisory capacity to the Board in establishing a legislative and statewide advocacy agenda. Each issue on the statewide advocacy agenda shall be deemed an Action Item.

Members of the committee shall actively participate in the implementation of Action Items that have been approved by the Board.

Each Action Item shall be sponsored by one or more members of the Legislative Committee. An Action Item Form shall be submitted through the Chair to the Bicycle Alliance Board for approval. The Action Item Form is used to clarify the issue and identify the scope of effort involved in its implementation. The submittal shall normally occur shortly after the spring meeting.

The Executive Director may, at his/her discretion, approve Action Items not requiring significant resources and which are a continuation of previously approved Action Items or otherwise further established Bicycle Alliance legislative or policy priorities. The Executive Director shall timely advise the Board of the approval of such Action Items.

The Action Item Form will include the following information as a minimum:

- summary of proposal
- sponsors
- key supporters and opponents
- action requirements
- individuals responsible for action
- time lines
- costs and other resource requirements
- proposed implementation strategies

Once approved, the sponsors shall act under the direction of the Executive Director for implementation of the Action Item. Successful implementation of Action Items is dependent upon the leadership, commitment, and stewardship of the sponsors. The Bicycle Alliance will assist in the implementation with its expertise, by coordination with others, facilitation, and the effective utilization of the resources of the Bicycle Alliance. The Executive Director may choose to utilize the Bicycle Alliance lobbyist as appropriate for the issue. The Executive Director will direct the activities of the lobbyist.

In addition, the Committee shall develop, for Board approval, a list of overall legislative and policy goals and priorities to help guide its actions. The Committee shall review those goals and priorities, as well as steps taken to achieve them. This review should take place annually, or more often as needed. The Committee chair shall apprise the Board of the results of this review

7. Charter Revisions

Participants of the legislative committee or members of the Bicycle Alliance may propose revisions to the charter. These proposals will be brought to Bicycle Alliance Board for consideration. All revisions will require Board approval and will be made at the Board's discretion.