



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DECRIMINALIZING TRANSPORTATION AND MOVEMENT

A Vision For Antiracist Approaches To Safety

May 2024

Transportation Equity Caucus

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The [Transportation Equity Caucus](#) (TEC) seeks to create a transportation system that is antiracist, noncarceral, accessible, equitable, and safe for all. Transportation equity is fundamental to thriving and safe communities. To make sure Black and Brown people, Indigenous people, and other marginalized communities thrive, transportation safety approaches must demonstrate tangible and intentional progress toward dismantling the structures that perpetuate racism.

The TEC articulates its vision for antiracist approaches to traffic safety through strategies, policies, and actions that already exist to minimize interactions with law enforcement and reduce harm, and suggests specific changes and legislation that should be considered at the federal, state, and local levels. The vision can also be used by advocates and policymakers to determine if new legislation should be endorsed or opposed; or to review existing transportation programs and policies to identify recommendations for how to improve or transform them.

Transformational Outcomes for Community Safety

Our goal in addressing the role of law enforcement in creating safe places to walk, bike, and roll is to ensure that the infrastructure in all places is safe, accessible, and readily available for everyone to use, especially historically disenfranchised groups who have often faced police violence and harassment. To this end, transportation safety approaches must demonstrate tangible progress toward dismantling structural racism and move us toward the following outcomes:

1

Acknowledgment of historical problems and harms including systemic and structural racism.

2

A complete elimination of police violence and criminalization of users of public and active transportation modes, and elimination of fines and fees that create financial harm to community members.

3

Removal of enforcement as a strategy from safety programs such as Vision Zero.

4

Addressing racial inequities such as a lack of investment in and a lack of focus on fair and just distribution of resources for safe places for walking, biking, and rolling in communities where Black and Indigenous people, people of color overall, and people with limited incomes live or travel.

5

Improved life outcomes such as increased access to jobs and education, decreased rates of injuries and fatalities, and equitable health outcomes among Black and Indigenous people, people of color overall, and low-income communities.

6

Community-created programs and performance measurements to evaluate contributions to dismantling systems of racism that have caused harm.

Meaningful Strategies to Advance Transportation Equity

The TEC recommends the following strategies to achieve the aforementioned outcomes:

1 Acknowledge systemic racism and repair harm by enacting transportation justice frameworks.	2 Expand the definition of safety to be more inclusive of historically marginalized groups.	3 Divest from enforcement as the primary traffic safety strategy.	4 Eliminate punitive enforcement and decriminalize sustainable and healthy transportation modes.
5 Prevent speeding through roadway design and intelligent speed assistance technologies, not through enforcement.	6 Build community power and ownership by ensuring access to resources and capacity for culturally relevant and contextual solutions.	7 Invest and distribute resources equitably to achieve racially just outcomes and create efficient and safe transportation systems.	8 Promote transparency and accountability through policies and practices.

Actions by the Transportation Equity Caucus

The Transportation Equity Caucus has taken the following actions to advance transportation safety and justice for Black and Brown people, Indigenous people, and marginalized groups:

- Sought acknowledgment and removal of federal programs that promote traffic stops for purposes other than traffic safety by working with the US Department of Transportation and the US Department of Labor, and has reviewed other federal programs for similar opportunities.
- Called on the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and other federal programs that perpetuate punitive enforcement as a strategy to expand their definition of safety, and invest in building community power.
- Hosted a series of webinars to address the equity implications and challenges of enforcement in transportation safety strategies, including the use of automated enforcement mechanisms:
 - Part I: [History of Enforcement in Transportation](#) (December 10, 2020)
 - Part II: [Currently What Enforcement Is Now and How It Intersects with Transportation](#) (March 8, 2021)

- Part III: [Redefining Safety: A Vision for the Future of Transportation](#) (April 20, 2021)
- Add-on webinar: [How Automated Enforcement Can Perpetuate Inequities in Transportation](#) (May 3, 2023)
- Developed a [fact sheet](#) to share with advocates and decision makers to caution against the use of automated enforcement strategies in transportation.
- Lifted up examples and supported initiatives across the country where progressive policies are passed so other localities and government agencies can learn from successful campaigns.
- Advocated for and submitted names of candidates for the Advisory Committee on Transportation Equity, which we hope will further advance transportation equity priorities at the US Department of Transportation and across all programs.

More detailed information, contextual strategies, and case examples can be found in the full report, *Actions for Decriminalizing Transportation and Movement: A Vision for Antiracist Approaches to Safety*.

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The [Transportation Equity Caucus](#) is a diverse coalition of organizations promoting policies that ensure access, mobility, and opportunity for all. It is coordinated by [PolicyLink](#). Please reach out to Ken McLeod, ken@bikeleague.org to learn more about this work.

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