

Phase I: Planning

During the planning process for U.S. Bicycle Routes, you will review guiding documents for developing U.S. Bicycle Routes, determine your team, stakeholders, and responsibilities, determine goals and choose which corridor to implement, and establish your timeline and team communications

Review Guiding Documents

Team leaders should familiarize themselves with the following documents early in the process:

- The [U.S. Bicycle Route Purpose and Policy Statement](#) (PDF/20k) provides the guiding principles for the U.S. Bicycle Route System. Originally adopted by AASHTO in 1979, the most recent version was adopted by the Special Committee on Route Numbering in May of 2009.
- [National Corridor Plan](#)
- [USBRS Corridor Criteria](#) (PDF)

Determine Team, Stakeholders, & Responsibilities

State departments of transportation (DOTs) may appoint a person to be in charge of the project, though that person may not have the resources to do the leg work required to define a route and gain support from local agencies, and may require collaborative support from organizations and volunteers.

State DOTs may also lead the process from beginning to end.

States Coordinating through Collaboration

For states that wish to have U.S. Bicycle Routes but do not have the DOT capacity to pursue them directly, partnerships and contracts with non-government organizations, or collaborative efforts with stakeholder organizations and volunteers, can support the planning process.

Consider collaborating with these types of organizations on route planning and outreach:

- Statewide coalitions or advocacy groups
- Governor-appointed or statewide bicycle and pedestrian advisory councils or boards
- Trail and greenway organizations
- Transportation consultants
- Bicycle touring or recreational bike clubs
- Parks and recreation agencies or organizations
- Other federal, state, or local agencies such as departments of natural resources, Federal Highway Administration, National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and others
- Tourism and economic development organizations
- A combination of appropriate NGOs that form a work team or committee

Appoint a coordinator and other stakeholders to roles in the development process. The [Community or Team Approach to Designation](#) document (PDF) may provide a model. (Thanks to Paul Vandenbosch and C. Davey for their ideas.)

States Leading the Process from Beginning to End

Collaboration is still recommended. Planning should involve a review of the corridor and the proposed route by appropriate groups (as suggested above). In addition, the following should also be involved during some part of the process, especially if they have jurisdiction over roads and trails:

- Local government, politicians, business leaders
- Area cyclists, advocacy groups and cycling clubs
- DOT districts, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), Regional Transportation Organizations, or councils of government (names vary), county road commissions, municipal transportation agencies.
- Other agencies as suggested above

Adventure Cycling Association provides training and technical assistance to help work through barriers with agency staff and partners as needed. Contact the Travel Initiatives Department at usbinfo@adventurecycling.org.

Determine Goals and which Corridor to Implement

The [National Corridor Plan](#) map provides a starting point for choosing which corridor you will implement as a U.S. Bicycle Route. On the plan, priority corridors have numbers. Faint brown-scaled corridors without a number (non-prioritized) may be prioritized by states as long as neighboring states agree.* Keep in mind that corridors can be adjusted within a state to take advantage of existing or emerging bicycle infrastructure or great cycling roads, trails, and other opportunities. If a corridor needs to be changed or a new corridor is identified, Adventure Cycling will coordinate with the AASHTO staff liaison and USBRS Task Force for comment, review, and approval. Contact us at usbinfo@adventurecycling.org.

In choosing which corridor to implement, you should determine the purpose of the corridor, and ultimately, the U.S. Bicycle Route. Here are some considerations:

- What are the priorities for this corridor? Attracting touring cyclists to scenic destinations and cultural attractions, or connecting cities and transportation hubs? Consider having both types of U.S. Bicycle Routes defined in your state. For example, in Oregon and California the coast route is intended for bike touring, and the central valley route for connecting cyclists to major cities.
- Does the corridor include scenic, cultural, or historic highlights?
- Are there in-state destinations or attributes not reflected in the National Corridor Plan?
- What are the regional connections and destinations beyond your state border that should be considered?
- Consider having at least one east-west and one north-south route in your state.

*You will need to coordinate with neighboring state(s) to determine priorities and which corridors to implement. Regional conference calls can be coordinated by Adventure Cycling Association. Contact the Adventure Cycling's Travel Initiatives Department for assistance at usbinfo@adventurecycling.org.

Establish a Timeline & Team Communications

- Establish a timeline that sets benchmarks and meets goals. For example, if you want to apply

at the AASHTO fall meeting, assign dates and responsibilities against that goal. AASHTO applications are due approximately 5-6 weeks prior to the May and October [meeting dates](#).

- Communication can be achieved through in-person meetings, conference calls, web conferences, emails, the Adventure Cycling [Forums](#), or Google Groups.
- Maps will need to be shared with outside agencies and organizations for comment. Google Maps offers a collaboration option and maps can be shared electronically. Other online maps may be just as useful. Once a route is finalized, it can go into a mapping program or GIS.

Next Steps

The actual [designation](#) process begins next, which includes:

- Determining how the route will be defined and evaluated.
- Drafting the route.
- Securing local agreements through resolutions of support.
- Documenting the route.
- Filling out and submitting the AASHTO application.