Executive Summary

Where we are: Strong but vulnerable. Largest and most effective cycling organization in North America but weaknesses to address, opportunities to exploit. Market increasingly strong for experiential and bicycle travel.

Where we are going: Transformation from experts to community, moving from a primarily one-directional relationship to two-directional, from telling to listening. Still have expertise but cultivate a much broader, more connected community to develop and share that expertise.

Build on strengths: Current loyal membership, financial base and HQ, route networks (ACRN and USBRS), maps, magazine, unique tour types, advocacy.

Address weaknesses: Digital disruption (navigation and information), narrow demographic, overconcentration in Missoula/central HQ and on staff capacity, not community capacity.

Exploit new opportunities: Digital marketing tools, new demographics, new tour and outreach events, partnerships, volunteers, advocacy for safety.

Looking Back: A decade ago, we had 45 tours, 42,000 members, much lower income base, no financial reserve, antiquated HQ, essentially no advocacy program, rudimentary IT systems and 22 staff members.

Looking forward: Today, after two strategic plans, smart investment and hiring, cultivation of a growing member and volunteer corps, a spectacular 40th anniversary, we have dramatically improved all those metrics. But with the challenges and opportunities ahead of us, it is time for Adventure Cycling to undergo a shift: from bike travel experts to bike travel community. It’s time for a new north star, a transformative goal:

By 2023, Adventure Cycling will transform from being a relatively concentrated group of bike travel experts to an expansive and collaborative community, in the process connecting millions of new people to bicycle travel.

What is in this document?

Major new directions for Adventure Cycling: A summary of transformational pivots that the plan encapsulates

Adventure Cycling’s Mission, Vision and Values: Slight but important change in mission

Current Situation: Including our SWOT (strength, weaknesses, opportunity and threats) analysis

Strategic Plan: This section includes our five major goals for 2018-2023, objectives and tactics within those goals. We also begin to identify metrics for tactics and objectives, but these will be fleshed out in the two months before the September Board meeting. This is especially the case for Goal #5.
New Directions for Adventure Cycling

First, we propose a small but significant change in our mission statement:

*Adventure Cycling Association inspires, empowers and connects people to travel by bicycle.*

We will continue to provide inspiration and tools to help people travel by bicycle, but also create an expansive, interactive, and connected community -- online and in the field -- to catalyze bicycle travel discoveries and experiences.

Our overarching strategic goal also reflects this shift in emphasis:

*By 2023, Adventure Cycling will transform from a relatively concentrated group of bike travel experts into an expansive and collaborative community, in the process connecting millions of new people to bicycle travel.*

To fulfill this mission and achieve our overarching goal between 2018 and 2023, we propose the following transformational pivots and five strategic goals:

**Transformational Pivots: Big Changes for Adventure Cycling**

- We will move from expert to community in part by creating a [digital engagement platform](#). This platform will [transform our communication strategy](#) from providing all information at once (for example, a cluttered website home page) to providing simpler pathways to discovery and engagement for new visitors while maintaining a pathway to more detailed information and interaction for our devoted members and subscribers.
- We will [mobilize and engage a large network of volunteers](#) to help us create and deliver bike travel experiences, contribute to route and service information, connect with the public, and advocate for better bike travel conditions.
- We will offer a much larger palette of [bicycle travel experiences](#), partly through more guided tours but especially through more DIY events such as [Bike Overnights](#) created and delivered by volunteers. We will also offer major participation events such as [Bike Travel Weekend](#) and [Bike Your Park Day](#). These will be supplemented by larger “peak attendance” overnight events.
- We will [fully interconnect the Adventure Cycling Route Network and US Bicycle Route System](#).
- We will [transform the Routes and Mapping program into a “digital first” operation](#), with an emphasis on delivering routes and services through apps and web services, and will perform community-based service data collection and curation.
- We will [amplify our advocacy efforts to include an emphasis on safety](#), along with continuing to improve bicycle travel conditions, including improved access to parks, rail service and airlines.
Goal #1: Engage

Over five years, develop a top-to-bottom engagement funnel to draw in new visitors, more engaged subscribers, more members and a more diverse and connected bike travel community. Continue to fortify this community through better means of digital communication, existing tools (especially Adventure Cyclist magazine) and leveraged strategic partnerships.

A summary of specific Goal #1 objectives and metrics includes:

- Create a comprehensive, mobile friendly, digital engagement platform that will attract 12 million unique visitors, 1.2 million inquiries and 200,000 dedicated subscribers.
- Enable subscribers and members to connect and interact more easily through digital engagement, in the field and through bicycle travel experiences.
- Boost and diversify Adventure Cycling’s membership by sustaining our current membership at approximately 52,000 and adding 48,000 net new members, for a total of 100,000.
- Research and utilize communication and outreach tactics to connect with underrepresented communities. Such communities could include women, people of color, people under 50, people with disabilities.
- Make Adventure Cyclist magazine one of the top two circulation cycling magazines in the US, a key element of membership, and a major go-to resource in North America for bicycle travel. This would include creating a digital version of the magazine behind a paywall on the website as a membership value.
- Establish or expand on partnerships with organizations and businesses that have large, relevant constituencies that can be engaged in bike travel or have expertise that can be leveraged to enhance AC’s diversity, capacity and visibility.
Goal #2: Experience

Over five years, combine the Tours Program with the bike travel outreach program (which currently includes Bike Travel Weekend and Bike Your Park Day) into a new program area called Bike Travel Experiences. Our “pivots” include:

- Growing the existing guided tour program from 1,700 to 3,000 participants.
- Increasing the number and level of training of our members and volunteers who organize and deliver thousands of DIY bike-travel experiences throughout the year and across the country.
- Building on the success of our Bike Travel Weekend (BTW)/Bike Your Park Day (BYPD) format by expanding it two BTWs and one BYPD.

A summary of specific Goal #2 objectives and metrics includes:

- Grow the current guided tours program to 3,000 participants (from just under 1,700 currently). We will complement these tours with a series of up to 10 supported bike overnights all around the US, serving 75 to 200 individuals per event, bringing together bike travel newcomers and veterans.
- Expand volunteer-led bike travel experiences. To do this, we will (a) catalyze DIY volunteer-led events, by engaging 2,000 volunteers to create and deliver these mostly overnight events (testing a programmatic approach to Bike Overnights), serving up to 100,000 individuals; (b) reach out to underrepresented communities; (c) conduct an outreach and education program composed of clinics, gatherings and social functions; and (d) create an instruction class for volunteer leaders.
- Elevate bike travel awareness by increasing the national visibility of the Adventure Cycling Experience Program. We will do this by experimenting with field offices, which can serve as “chapter” and volunteer hubs and may also serve as welcome centers for traveling cyclists.
- We will focus in FY 2019 on reaching out to members and outside organizations on how to build this bike travel experience program, especially the outreach and field elements outside of Adventure Cycling headquarters.

Goal #3: Navigate

Over five years, shift our primary delivery vehicle from printed maps that are updated every three years to a highly interactive, community-driven database with frequent updates delivered to our own Bicycle Route Navigator app, as well as other distribution partners. Our “pivot” areas include:

- Completing our transition to “digital first” by reorganizing staff, systems and processes to merge and standardize all route and service data into a spatially-enabled database for both the Adventure Cycling Route Network and the US Bicycle Route System. This will allow our own Bicycle Route Navigator app to “consume” this data, and we will secure our position as the premier bicycle route developer by making this data available via open web standards.
- Exploring the idea of a paid monthly subscription to the Bicycle Route Navigator app that gives the subscriber access to every route we have, across the ACRN and USBRS. This allows a bicycle traveler to use any and all of our routes to easily plan and undertake their travel.
- Developing a community-driven data collection program (or partner with an existing one) to power a rating system for essential bike travel services such as bike shops, campgrounds, restaurants, laundromats, and grocery and convenience stores.

A summary of specific Goal #3 objectives and metrics includes:

- Refine and interconnect the Adventure Cycling Route Network and the US Bicycle Route System. We will do this by (a) interconnecting the two route systems where possible via junctions and spurs and (b) making two nearly adjacent routes the same where possible. We will refine the networks by (c) annually evaluating all routes and determining if we should continue to maintain them. These activities and resources (d) establish Adventure Cycling as the best custodian and source of route and service information. As we interconnect these systems, by 2023, we will (e) determine whether these systems should be a unified system with a single identity.

- Develop the route networks to connect major US metropolitan areas and major national park units, in part by utilizing new Adventure Cycling and US Bicycle Route System routes (starting in 2019 with the release of Arkansas High Country Route and research on new connectors).

- Speed up the delivery of new routes and updates to existing routes while maintaining high quality. We will do this by (a) releasing digital route updates very frequently, (b) shifting resources to prioritize digital data releases, (c) creating a new digital alert system to send out notifications, and (d) speeding up the delivery of new routes.

- Curate the best digital app experience for bicycle travel. To do this, we will (a) make BRN the hub for the display of multiple layers of external data, and (b) explore a paid map subscription product that will provide access to all ACRN and USBRS routes through the BRN app.

- Continue to provide Adventure Cycling’s high quality and specially designed paper maps, to meet demand for these reliable planning and navigation tools.

- Develop a broader, more engaging and more timely cycling-specific-service database that covers both route networks. To do this, we will (a) develop a more timely service update and correction system for the ACRN and USBRS and (b) create a community-driven data collection program or partner with an existing one to power a rating system for essential bike travel services.

- Reformat route and service data into a format that is readily edited and exported, and can be used by other services and apps. To do this, we will (a) merge the existing route geodatabases into a single spatially-enabled database, and (b) merge the existing service spreadsheets into a single spatially-enabled database.

**Goal #4: Advocate**

Over five years, broaden and deepen our current efforts to create the best possible bike travel conditions in the United States, through development of the US Bicycle Route System, partnerships with state and national parks, improved bicycle access to long-haul rail and airline systems, and collaboration to promote bicycle tourism. Our “pivot” is a greater investment in advocacy for safe rural and suburban cycling conditions.

A summary of specific Goal #4 objectives and metrics includes:
• Expand the U.S. Bicycle Route System (USBRS) to 25,000 miles, with 10,000 miles signed, in 40 states, and interconnect it with the Adventure Cycling Route Network to provide seamless routes for cyclists.
• Boost the public profile of the USBRS and provide user-friendly navigation tools and maps for US Bicycle Routes.
• Advance bicycle travel and tourism as a mainstay of economic prosperity in rural and other communities by ensuring bike-friendly facilities, amenities, services and hospitality for travelling cyclists.
• Advocate for safer bike travel conditions, especially on Adventure Cycling and U.S. Bicycle Routes, through policy changes and infrastructure improvements.
• Improve access and amenities for bicyclists and their bicycles on national and regional rail and airline systems.
• Work with national and state parks and gateway communities, especially along Adventure Cycling and U.S. Bicycle Routes, to provide improved accommodations, amenities, experiences and accessibility for cyclists.

Goal #5: Excel

Over five years, Adventure Cycling will maintain and magnify its role as the largest and most effective cycling organization in North America. We will continue to cultivate a growing and diversified financial base, a talented, well-trained and well-supported staff, and a culture dedicated to helping each other and achieving our mission. We will make special efforts to boost our organizational infrastructure systems, in particular information technology, and our volunteer corps and leadership.

A summary of specific Goal #5 objectives and metrics includes:
• Increase and diversify contributed revenue -- from membership, donations and grants -- to support our programs and services.
• Increase annual earned (and net earned) revenues from tours, sales, advertising, sponsorship and affiliate programs.
• Grow and manage long-term reserves for the organization -- operating reserve, Life Member Fund and endowment -- for the purpose of long-term investments, cash flow management and emergency needs.
• Attract, develop and retain a high quality workforce, with a voluntary retention rate of at least 85%.
• Sustain and improve an excellent work culture, environment and infrastructure.
• Develop and maintain an appropriate technology infrastructure to support Adventure Cycling and its continued growth.
• Attract and develop an engaged Board of Directors with diverse skills and backgrounds.
Adventure Cycling’s Mission, Vision and Values

Mission
Adventure Cycling Association inspires, empowers and connects people to travel by bicycle.

Long Range Vision
Adventure Cycling Association is the largest community for and premier resource for bicycle travel in North America. We envision a future in which:

- Everyone is aware of the amazing power of traveling by bicycle.
- People are inspired to explore landscapes and cultures by bicycle for fun, fitness, and self-discovery.
- There are national and global communities that inspire, empower and connect people to travel by bicycle.
- Everyone has easy access to a national network of bicycle routes.
- Barriers to bicycle travel are eliminated.
- Everyone has the information and tools necessary to travel successfully by bicycle.
- Bicycle tourism is a thriving part of the economy.

Adventure Cycling Values

- We are committed to and passionate about bicycle travel and recognize that it is a fun, worthwhile and transformative activity.
- We respect and value a committed partnership among the Board of Directors, staff, members, volunteers and others in the cycling community.
- We appreciate the creativity and diversity of talent the staff brings to the organization.
- We celebrate the broader community of people and places involved in bicycle travel and pledge to grow the community through collaboration and partnerships.
- We embrace the use of education and technology to achieve our organizational mission.
- We value bicycle travel as a key that fosters an ethic of environmental stewardship and cultural understanding.
- We honor the financial contributions that individuals, businesses and philanthropies invest in our work, and we pledge to use contributions in a fiscally responsible manner.
The Present: 2018

**SWOT Specifics:** At the outset of our strategic planning process, we conducted a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis. We based it on input from our staff, volunteers and members, and this is what we emerged with:

**Strengths (Internal)**
- Community/Member Support: Member base with 52,000+, modest annual growth, and additional “community circles” of 550,000+ which include members, lapsed, social media, e-contacts
- *Adventure Cyclist:* Excellent magazine with 3rd best bike magazine circulation in US
- Financially stable: no debt; diverse revenue streams
- Cycle route network expert: Adventure Cycling Route Network *and* US Bicycle Route System
- Inclusive of cycling ability: offer all types of bicycle travel opportunities to all kinds of people (meet you where you are)
- Advocacy program: Growing, relevant and aligned-with-mission

**Weaknesses (Internal)**
- Marketing: Much of our marketing is to existing members; weak marketing and brand projection externally. Intermittent visibility across the USA
- Lack of focus: AC has too many goals and projects and is not good at letting go of underperforming or outdated programs (fox vs. hedgehog)
- Limited “touchpoints” and in-person contact: Limited field presence outside Missoula, no chapters
- Two route networks: Public confusion over USBRS and Adventure Cycling Route Network
- Lack of member (and community?) diversity: Homogenous, aging, non-diverse membership
- Internal Management: Silos among departments and programs can lead to limits internally and externally

**Opportunities (External)**
- Active and experiential travel: Fast growing segment in travel market. Bike travel can be inexpensive and accessible; Bicycle travel is generally life-changing and leaves a lasting mark.
- Safer Conditions: Improved bike infrastructure; rumble strips
- Emerging Trends: Bikepacking and gravel/off-pavement; e-bikes
- Leveraging Member Involvement and External Partnerships: Much more potential for using and connecting with members and followers. Many ways to expand brand awareness and penetration through partnerships.
- Micro-adventures: Overnight micro-adventures are gaining popularity
- Active travel demographics: Interest across all demographics in active travel

**Threats (External)**
- Digital disruption: Digital technology changes affect information/magazine, maps/navigation, advertising, retail -- strike at core Adventure Cycling functions, strengths. Low barrier to entry creates challengers and competitors to Adventure Cycling’s identity of “bicycle travel expert.”
Younger demographics use tools and engagement models -- social media, video and podcasts -- that do not always line up well with Adventure Cycling’s traditional products

- Travel conditions: Cycling safety concerns (traffic volume, rumble strips), hostility to cycling and cyclists (non-acceptance), declining rural population and infrastructure limits camping and service opportunities
- Generation/economic shift: Smaller generations, less disposable income, working longer than boomers means we have to shift services, products, communications to stay relevant

**Overall, Adventure Cycling is in a strong but vulnerable position.** In the US, we are considered the experts on many facets of bicycle travel. We currently have a solid business model with diversified income streams and careful expense management. We have built a friendly organizational culture that focuses on the well-being of our staff and the generous contributions of our members, who provide nearly all the financial support for Adventure Cycling.

However, there are many serious challenges, three in particular. The first is digital disruption. The availability of free and alternate navigation services online are certain to erode our dominant position in providing routes and maps for long-distance bicycle travel. The second is our inclination to be the expert -- sending out services and communications from headquarters -- rather than a community or convenor, bringing together the expertise and enthusiasm of a broader network of people interested in bicycle travel. The third is the demographic profile of our membership, which is overwhelmingly male, white and older. Our members are fantastically loyal and generous supporters but there are millions of other people, of all backgrounds, who are and could be interested in the transformational joys and benefits of bicycle travel.

While these are serious challenges, they are also opportunities. There is no reason why Adventure Cycling cannot take advantage of new digital tools, develop new approaches to field engagement, and connect with new demographics. But there is no doubt that we will need to change and that we will need to change soon, lest we abandon our position as the go-to group and resource for bicycle travel in the United States.

Adventure Cycling was launched more than 40 years ago and helped spur a boom in American cycling and bicycle travel. It could be argued that we have helped catalyze a new wave of interest in bicycle travel and tourism, as part of a much larger global wave of interest in experiential and active travel.

**Our mission is to inspire, empower and connect people to travel by bicycle.** Annually, we have helped do that for hundreds of thousands of people. Given our strong foundation and the following plan, we have set for ourselves this ambitious overarching strategic goal:

**By 2023, Adventure Cycling will transform from a relatively concentrated group of bike travel experts into an expansive and collaborative community, in the process connecting millions of new people to bicycle travel.**
Goal 1: Engage

Engage a large, broad and diverse community of 200,000 “connected” bicycle travelers by 2023.

1. Create a comprehensive, mobile friendly, digital engagement platform for bicycle travel that will:
   a. Attract 12 million unique, diverse visitors
   b. Attract 1.2 million new subscribers and inquirers
   c. Secure 200,000 engaged new bicycle travelers over five years
   d. Maintain but streamline website for members and regular users
   e. Streamline and target e-communications (especially e-mails and blog posts) to members, subscribers and visitors

2. Enable subscribers to connect more easily through the digital engagement platform. Working down the funnel, after passing the visitor phase, subscribers will connect by:
   a. Setting up a My Adventure Cycling (MAC) account
   b. Establishing communication preferences, accessing order information, seeing rewards
   c. Participating in membership directory and communicating with other members
   d. Browsing how-to information, resources to nurture them in PLAN stage of their journey
   e. Browsing tours and products
   f. Accessing and interacting on forums
   g. Connecting in the field through Adventure Cycling bike travel experiences (DIY tours and rides, “peak” events, gatherings and clinics) and volunteer opportunities (Goal 2)
   h. Searching for services along routes and connecting with providers (Craigslist for bike travelers -- monetized via vendor fees)
3. Utilize the engagement funnel and incentivize subscriptions and memberships for new visitors, while continuing to cultivate and replenish our existing membership, in order to boost and diversify AC’s total membership. By 2023, we will:
   a. Maintain and cultivate AC’s existing membership base at 52,000
   b. Recruit 48,000 net new members through a nurturing process
      *Measure: Year 1: 800 net new members; Year 2: 4,848; Year 3: 12,214; Year 4: 22,010; Year 5: 35,038. Total yield will be 100,000 paid members.*

4. Generate new membership by offering a broad array of unique products and services. Unlike subscribers, members will be able to:
   a. Receive the hard copy *Adventure Cyclist* and access the digital magazine
   b. Browse route information and status updates
   c. Earn discounts on navigation products and free shipping on purchases

5. Research and utilize marketing and outreach tactics to connect with underrepresented communities. Such communities could include women, people of color, people under 50, people with disabilities. First year recommended focus will be women and younger sub-sets. Train staff on how to incorporate diversity, inclusion, equity.
   a. Utilize new digital engagement platform to focus on underrepresented communities, starting in late FY19 with women (currently about 30% of members). Also focus on under age 50 sub-sets, in part through partnership with AORE
   b. Convene advisory group on how Adventure Cycling can better connect with underrepresented communities
   c. Strategically use blog engagements, influencers, paid media to reach out to underrepresented communities
   d. Collaborate with organizations dedicated to outdoor diversity
   e. Train staff and Board members on how to incorporate diversity, inclusion and equity into the organization.
   f. Recruit for Board members and staff who come from underrepresented communities

6. Make *Adventure Cyclist* magazine one of the top two circulation cycling magazines, a key element of membership and a major go-to resource in North America for bicycle travel. This includes creating a digital version of the magazine behind a paywall on the website as a membership value.
   a. Retain 9-times a year *Adventure Cyclist* as member benefit.
   b. Develop digital *Adventure Cyclist* to be placed exclusively behind member paywall. Make some magazine content available in front of a member paywall as it has high value to search engines and non-members. Target FY20 for release.
   c. Re-structure advertising sales and management system (as part of corporate engagement) to reach more potential advertisers (print and digital) and to relieve administrative burden on *Adventure Cyclist* editorial staff.
   d. Project modest growth in ad sales, covering editorial and staff costs
7. Establish or expand on partnerships with organizations and businesses that have large, relevant constituencies that can be engaged in bike travel or have expertise that can be leveraged to enhance AC’s diversity, capacity and visibility. Focus on quality partnerships and not quantity, and develop very clear, comprehensive plans for mutually reinforcing benefits and activities.
   a. Primary new partner in FY19/20: REI. Could also add Bikeout to work on paid bike overnights (under Goal #2).
   b. Primary existing partners in FY 19/20: Bicycle Tour Network (go further than sponsor/conference), AORE (expand partnership -- this is contemplated in Goal #2)
   c. Identify and partner with other organizations in FY 21-23. Examples cited: Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, YMCA, YWCA, lifelong learning centers, Cycle Blaze, veterans organizations, outdoor activity organizations (FY19 metric: identify and reach out to best partner candidates over next five years).
   d. Identify and connect with smaller organizations that already have bike-travel experiences.

Goal #2: Experience

Expand Adventure Cycling’s bike travel experience program to engage more than 100,000 participants annually in the bike travel community by 2023.

Objectives and Tactics

1. Grow the existing Adventure Cycling Tours Program to 3,000 participants.
   a. Continue producing Adventure Cycling-staffed bicycle adventures -- multi-day, weekly or multi-week, including educational and instructional courses -- using current templates for tour types. Continue focusing our tours on providing an adventurous, immersive, collaborative experience.
      *Measure: Year 1: 1,900 participants; Year 2: 2,100; Year 3: 2,300; Year 4: 2,700; Year 5: 3,000 (advertising to non-members and running multiple departures)*
   b. Determine whether we should enable anyone to sign up for a tour; people who are non-members would receive a membership when they participate in a guided tour or instructional course.

2. Establish a paid bike overnight program that would introduce people, especially newcomers, in a convenient way to the joys and benefits of bicycle travel.
   a. Multiple “peak attendance” and high visibility weekend events. These events are spread throughout the year. These events would be similar to the Snoqualmie Valley Sojourn with a high level of support, a theme, and evening entertainment. 100-200 participants would attend, and by 2023, there would be up to 1,500 total participants. These events could be managed by a partner, such as Bikeout.
      *Measure: Year 1: 3 events; Year 2: 5; Year 3: 7; Year 4: 9; Year 5: 10 events*
3. Expand Adventure Cycling’s DIY bike travel experiences into a year-round program, reaching up to 100,000 people annually.
   a. Catalyze and coordinate DIY bike travel experiences throughout the year. (Model the management of this volunteer force on what has been accomplished with BYP/BTW with one staff member and 250-300 volunteer leaders. This is already a high-leverage activity with one staff member supporting 300 volunteers, and there are many written and video resources available.) Orchestrate volunteer-led DIY bike overnights and multi-day bike tours for up to 50,000 participants. (This is mainly a hands-off activity for us; we provide a website to post the activity, along with data collection of participants.)
   Measure: Year 1: “Listen and learn” outreach campaign to meet with members and others and develop Experience program; Year 2: Implement program, target enough DIY events to generate 5,000 participants; Year 3: 15,000 participants; Year 4: 30,000 participants; Year 5: average of 10 tours per week and 50,000 total participants)
   b. Continue to organize two and then three major “tent pole” DIY events each year -- Bike Travel Weekend (possibly two at different times of the year) and Bike Your Park Day. Purpose is to raise the visibility of bicycle travel at key points of the year throughout North America, and grow the bike travel community.
   Measure: Year 1: Two major events (BTW and BYP Day) and 25,000 participants. Year 5: three major events (two BTWs and one BYP Day) and 50,000 participants.

4. Develop a more complete outreach and education campaign -- composed of clinics, gatherings and social functions -- conveying in-person the bike travel experience to at least 5,000 attendees annually. (These are similar to regional gatherings, and we should partner with others to make them happen. Some of these could also focus on underrepresented communities.)

5. Pump up the current Ambassador program to make it both more effective and efficient. (It will take a staff person to organize this in concert with the volunteer program. We currently have about 25 ambassador programs each year now, each with about 30 people attending.)
   Measure: Year 1: no activity, Year 2: Revise ambassador program, Year 5: 300 programs
   a. Develop curriculum for a “bike travel clinic” and engage tour leaders or other volunteers to teach it at partner organizations (bike shops and co-ops, REI, college outdoor programs).
   Measure: Year 1: No activity, Year 3: prototype developed, 3 to 5 events, Year 5: 50 events, 20% in colleges, universities and high schools.

6. Expand Adventure Cycling’s volunteer leadership community.
   a. Develop network of 2,000 volunteer enthusiasts across North America to involve people in bicycle travel through DIY bike overnights, advocacy and education. (Model the management of this volunteer force on what has been accomplished with BYP/BTW with one staff member and 300 volunteer leaders. We should also tap into volunteers who have time to give and can take on special projects that include managing other volunteers. For BTW and BYPD, the volunteer program could include regional volunteers who would manage and recruit volunteers in their geographical area.
Measure: Year 1: Prototype; recruit “regional volunteers”, 300 volunteers; Year 5: 5-10 “regional volunteers”, 2,000 volunteers

b. Ensure that 20% of volunteer enthusiasts are from underrepresented communities.
Measure: Year 1: no activity, Year 5: 20% of volunteers are from underrepresented communities.

c. Create an instruction class for volunteer group leaders - similar to getting CPR/First Aid with opportunities for refreshers.
Measure: Years 1 and 2: no action, Year 3: create class to support volunteers, Year 4: Roll class out across all volunteers, Year 5: class is widely available

7. Elevate bicycle travel awareness and activity by increasing the national visibility of the Adventure Cycling Experience Program.
   a. Experiment with up to two bike travel friendly field offices. We will provide one staff person, who will focus on a regional program of community engagement and advocacy. We will explore potential to partner with local groups and develop mini-welcome centers for traveling cyclists. These offices will also serve as volunteer hubs for bike travel experiences and advocacy.
   b. Determine if “chapter” system would benefit Adventure Cycling outreach and presence outside of Missoula, what would be the best model and how it would be supported.
Measure: Year 1: “Listen and learn” outreach tour with members and other interested target groups; Year 2: develop field plan for field offices and potentially chapters; Year 3: prototype field office established, Year 4: additional center established, Year 5: determine need for additional offices and possible welcome centers.

Goal #3: Navigate

Be the premier provider of high-quality bicycle travel routes, service information and navigation tools in North America by 2023.

Objectives and Tactics

1. Refine and interconnect the Adventure Cycling Route Network (ACRN) and the US Bicycle Route System (USBRS) to provide complete bike-friendly routes in all 50 states.
   a. Interconnect the two networks where possible. This tactic is intended to create a relatively seamless network of bike routes to travel around the US and Canada.
Measure: Year 1: no change. Year 5: 50 connection points between the two networks.
   b. Where an ACR and USBR are within 20 miles of each other and share similar route characteristics, we should collaborate to make them the same and to our high standards Measure: Year 1: Identify all of these route segments. Year 5: Action has been taken on every one of these route segments.
   c. Annually evaluate all routes to identify non-strategic, infrequently used routes and determine if we should continue to maintain them.
Measure: Year 1: Rank all routes by sales and determine update priority. Year 5: Annual review of route update schedule is routine. 

d. As we interconnect the ACRN and USBRS, by no later than 2023, we determine whether these systems should be a unified system with a single identity.

2. Develop the networks of Adventure Cycling Route Network and US Bicycle Routes to connect major US metropolitan areas and major national parks.
   a. Connect major metropolitan areas via the interconnected networks.  
   Measure: Year 1: Identify the major metro areas and where the gaps exist; make plans. Year 5: The top 50 major metro areas are connected to the network either directly or through spurs. 
   b. Connect major national parks to the interconnected networks.  
   Measure: Year 1: Identify the top 20 visited or strategic national parks and where the gaps exist; make plans. Year 5: The top 20 visited or strategic national parks are connected to the network either directly or through spurs. 

3. Speed up delivery of new routes and updates to existing routes while maintaining high quality.
   a. Release digital route updates very frequently  
   Measure: Year 1: Digital and and paper map updates are simultaneous. Year 5: Digital data is released every two weeks. 
   b. Prioritize digital data releases; the paper map update cycle changes  
   Measure: Year 1: Develop geospatial database, determine next steps for accelerating digital releases; Year 2: Determine optimal paper map and digital data release cycles 
   c. Establish an expanded alert system to proactively send out notifications about map updates, road closures, wildfires, floods and other external events that affect ACRN or USBRS bike routes. 
   Measure: Year 1-2: Identify what events we want to trigger an alert, and determine techniques for us to know about those events. Year 2: Determine where this information lives in our system, research and assess methods of delivery. Year 5: Send out alerts as appropriate and make a routine part of our work. 
   d. Speed up delivery of new routes.  
   Measure: Year 1: 500 mile routes take 1.5 years to develop, cross-country routes take 4-5 years to develop. Year 5: 500 mile routes take 0.5 years to develop, cross-country routes take 2.5 years to develop. 

   a. Bicycle Route Navigator becomes the hub for the display of multiple layers of data, including the ACRN, USBRS and external data sources.  
   Measure: Year 1: Identify data sources that could be integrated (examples: Warm Showers hosts; DOT 511, construction and mountain pass status data; National Park alerts; Yelp service reviews; AC route alerts; Blog/Journal Entries; BikeOvernights.org routes/articles) Year 5: 10 different data sources are part of BRN.
b. Explore creation of a “map subscription” that would be a paid monthly subscription that would give access to all routes (ACRN and USBRS) through the BRN.
Measure: Year 1: No activity. Year 2: Work with membership, IT and BRN development to study feasibility, including impact on unit sales; Year 3: If approved, roll out subscription, develop and evaluate sales metrics

5. Add value to the USBRS and ACRN by developing a broader, more engaging and more timely cycling-specific service database that covers the interconnected route networks.
   a. Develop a more timely service updates and corrections system for the ACRN, and extend this to the USBRS.
   Measure: Year 1: Study existing systems and begin work on geospatial database (Phase 1). Year 2: Complete Phase 2 of geospatial database and applications, and provide up-to-the-minute updates and corrections on the AC website. Year 3: Feed updates and corrections to alert system and digital service files that are available through the BRN.
   b. Develop a community-driven data collection program or partner with an existing one to power a rating system for bike shops, campgrounds, restaurants, laundromats, grocery and convenience stores, and other essential bike travel services.
   Measure: Year 1: Study the feasibility; identify potential partners. Year 5: A vibrant community has formed to enter, rate and vet services, which are displayed in the BRN.

6. Reformat route and service data into a format that is readily edited, exported, and can be consumed by other services and apps.
   a. Merge the hundreds of section-specific route geodatabases into a single spatially-enabled database. Expose the database via open web-geo standards.
   Measure: Year 1: Identify all resources (human and financial) needed to accomplish this and secure funding. Begin development of geospatial database (phase 1 with phase 2 in 2020). Year 5: All of the route lines are housed in a single database and it is accessible to others via open standards.
   b. Merge the hundreds of service spreadsheets into a single spatially-enabled database. Expose the database via open web-geo standards and retain an export format supported by the current Routes & Services Database.
   Measure: Year 1: Identify all resources (human and financial) needed to accomplish this and secure funding. Begin development of geospatial database (phase 1 with phase 2 in 2020). Year 5: All service points for ACRN and USBRS are housed in a single database and it is accessible to others via open standards.

Goal 4: Advocate
Create the best possible bicycle travel conditions in the United States

Objectives and Tactics
1. Expand the U.S. Bicycle Route System and interconnect it with the Adventure Cycling Route Network and other North American route networks to provide seamless routes for cyclists.
1. Grow the USBRS to 25,000 miles, with 10,000 miles signed, in 40 states
   Measure: Year 5: 40 states have at least one designated USBRS. USBRS is 25,000 miles.
   USBRS has 10,000 miles signed (more than double the existing mileage). Complete three continuous U.S. Bicycle Routes across the country.

b. Develop and provide user-friendly navigation tools and maps
   Measure: Year 5: 100% of official U.S. Bicycle Routes are mapped

c. Develop and implement a cohesive brand and brand strategy that also make sense in concert with the ACRN and Adventure Cycling
   Measure: Implement by Year 5

d. Work with government entities and advocacy groups to formalize USBR designation by including them in local and state transportation plans and/or policies.
   Measure: Year 5: 20 states incorporate USBRS in their active transportation plans

e. Collaborate with tourism, recreation offices, economic development, and other relevant stakeholders to grow and promote the USBRS.
   Measure: Year 5: 25 state outdoor recreation programs and tourism agencies promote the USBRS. 15 advocacy groups promote the USBRS

2. Advance bicycle travel and tourism as a mainstay of economic prosperity in rural and other communities by ensuring bike-friendly facilities, amenities, services and hospitality for travelling cyclists.
   a. Create a collaborative and competitive Bike Tourism Transformation Program to achieve and fund the development of model communities, especially in rural areas
      Measure: Year 5: Promote program in 5 prioritized states annually; Program implemented in 10 chosen communities along priority routes. Grow program to initiate a consultant revenue stream.

   b. Develop bike travel destination development tools and resources for implementation of the Bike Tourism Transformation Program
      Measure: Year 5: Program toolkit of resources is actively utilized by 10 participating communities in the program; streamline a set of downloadable resources for at least 10 additional communities per year.

   c. Build support for research on bicycle tourism, particularly economic impacts and bicycle travel.
      Measure: Year 5: 10 new studies and 10 updated studies

3. Advocate for safer bike travel conditions, especially on Adventure Cycling and U.S. Bicycle Routes, through policy change and infrastructure improvements.
   a. **Infrastructure Goal 1**: Identify opportunities to fix or mitigate “trouble spots” on the ACRN and USBRS by working with agencies and advocates.
      Measure: Year 5: Implement 10 positive changes in “trouble spots.”

   b. **Infrastructure Goal 2**: Identify opportunities for bike infrastructure improvements along ACRN and USBRS and work with agencies/advocates to support projects.
      Measure: Year 5: Influence and support 10 bike infrastructure improvements.

   c. **Policy Goal 1**: Advocate for Complete Streets or similar policies at the state and local levels to leverage infrastructure improvements.
      Measure: Year 5: Partner with advocacy groups to successfully implement 5 state and 5 local Complete Streets or similar policies.
d. **Policy Goal 2:** Work with local and state transportation agencies to incorporate USBRs into active transportation plans to ensure they are formalized and recognized for infrastructure improvements.

*Measure: Year 5: 20 state and 20 local DOTs/MPOs incorporate USBRs in their active transportation plans*

e. **Policy Goal 3:** Rank and advocate for bike-friendly rumble strip policies/guidances.

*Measure: Year 5: 15 state rumble strip guidances meet or exceed ACA top ranking*

f. **Policy Goal 4:** Partner with advocates to pass distracted driving and safe passing laws and ordinances. *Measure: Year 5: 10 new or improved laws are approved or upgraded at the state level to significantly reduce distracted driving*

4. Improve bicycle access and amenities on national rail and airline systems.

a. **Amtrak Routes:** Work with Amtrak Bike Task Force to improve bike services and access.

*Measure: Year 5: 10 more Amtrak routes with carry-on bicycle service; Provide access for non-standard bikes (recumbents/tandems) and trikes;*

b. **Amtrak Stations:** Develop station outreach program and best practices for accommodating bicycles.

*Measure: Year 5: Bike access best practices implemented at 10 stations*

c. **Amtrak Trip Planning:** Assist in developing Amtrak bike services trip planning tools.

*Measure: Year 5: Video series on how-to take a train with your bike; Trip planning resources on ACA website and linked from Amtrak website*

d. **Airlines Trip Planning:** Develop airline bike service trip planning tool for cyclists.

*Measure: Year 5: Trip planning tool completed, implement rating system for bike service on airlines*

e. **Airline Bike Fees and Policies:** Establish partnerships with airline to pilot equitable bike fees and accommodations, similar to charges for skis, golf clubs

*Measure: Year 5: Successful bike service piloting improved accommodations and no-fee or reduced fees for bicycles*

5. Work with national and state parks, friends groups, and gateway communities, especially on Adventure Cycling and U.S. Bicycle Routes, for improved cyclists’ accommodations, amenities, experiences and access.

a. **Outreach and education:** to state and national parks about how to be bike travel friendly, especially along Adventure Cycling and U.S. Bicycle Routes.

*Measure: Year 5: Develop contacts at all 50 state park systems through outreach efforts; Bicycle assessment for 5 parks per year; 5 more national parks track bicycle visitation through automated counts; 10 parks use safety campaign communications materials created for national parks and gateway communities; participate in 10 webinars on the new Active Transportation Guidebook for national parks.*

b. **Accommodations/amenities:** Partner with interested parks and campgrounds to implement and promote bicycle camping and no-turn-away policies.

*Measure: Year 5: 15 state park systems implement bicycle camping sites in their campgrounds, 15 more state park systems adopt no-turn-away policies (total 23), 10 major national parks provide bike amenities*

c. **Experiences/Accessibility:** Work with parks and friends groups to encourage bicycling through implementing car-free opportunities, Bike Your Park Day engagement, and U.S. Bicycle Route designation.
Measures: Year 5: 5 more national parks offer car-free events, 25 parks promote Bike Your Park Day/ offer rides (w/Eva), 20 national parks designate U.S. Bicycle Routes (w/Laura)

Goal 5: Excel

Sustain Adventure Cycling Association as the largest and most effective cycling organization in North America

1. Grow a secure financial foundation for the organization on an annual and long-term basis.
   a. Increase and diversify contributed revenue -- memberships, donations and grants -- to support programs and services. See tables here.
      i. Individual donations
         Measure: Individual donations total: Year 1 increase by 16%, Year 2 increase 10%, Year 3 increase 10%, Year 4 increase 10%, Year 5 increase 10%.
         Measure: Average Donation: Year 1 increase by 8%, Year 2 increase by 8%, Year 3 increase by 8%, Year 4 increase by 8%, Year 5 increase by 8%.
         Measure: % of members who give beyond membership: Year 1 11%, Year 2 11%, Year 3 11%, Year 4 11%, Year 5 11%.
         Measure: Return on Investment: Year 1 increase to $3.63, Year 2 increase to $3.78, Year 3 increase to $3.94, Year 4 increase to $4.13, Year 5 increase to $4.32.
      ii. Foundation grants
         Measure 1: Foundation grants % of Development revenue: Year 1 to 7% of revenue, Year 2 9% of revenue, Year 3 11% of revenue, Year 4 11% of revenue, Year 5 11% of revenue.
      iii. Grow the number of members and membership revenue;
         1. Increase membership from 52,000 in FY 2018 to 100,000 in FY 2023
         2. Increase overall membership revenue from $1,615,000 in FY 2018 to a projected $3,580,000 in FY 2023
   b. Increase annual net earned revenues from tours, sales, advertising and affiliate programs.
      i. Increase ad revenue in Adventure Cyclist and on the website.
         Measure: Year 5 ad revenue covers all editorial and overhead cost of Adventure Cyclist magazine.
         Measure: Year 1 inventory analysis of ad space, add an additional ad rep to increase ads to tourism bureaus.
         Measure: Year 1 e-digest advertising increases 10%.
         Measure: Year 1 create stronger relationships with our advertisers to gain additional ways to work together.
      ii. Increase and improve Tours Department net revenue within five years to cover a larger percentage of total expenses of Adventure Cycling’s programs and services.
Measure: Year 5 at least 75% of the tours run make a net revenue of 50%.

iii. Increase and Sales Department net revenue
Measure: By Year 5 the sale of maps and products will be proportional to the increase in the size of the membership community.

iv. Within 5 years, an affiliate program will have been analyzed, created and will be up and running.

c. Manage long-term reserves for the organization, for the purpose of long-term investments, cash flow management and emergency needs.
   i. Operating reserve: Budget annually for net income to build the operating reserve to the equivalent of three months operating expenses.
   Measure: Year 1 at 3 months equivalent operating expenses, Year 5 at 4 months
   
   ii. Life Member Fund: Build the Life Member Fund to $1 million for long-term capital and planning investments in the organization. Invest additional Life Member income in the Adventure Cycling endowment.
   Measure: Year 1 Life Member Fund at $915,000, Year 5 at $1 million
   
   iii. Endowment and Legacy Society: Build the Endowment to $5M of pledged gifts
   Measure: Number of known planned gifts: Year 1 186 members, Year 2 98 members, Year 3 110 members, Year 4 125 members, Year 5 members 145 members
   Measure: Planned Gifts pledged: Year 1 $370,000, Year 2 $444,000 Year 3 $444,000, Year 4 $555,000, Year 5 $740,000

2. Attract, develop and retain a satisfied and high-quality workforce.
   a. Utilize the Work/Life Team and regular employee surveys to improve policies, systems and workplace environment for all employees.
   Measure: By Year 5 improvement in categories that are under 60% satisfied or very satisfied and implementation of appropriate new benefits, recognition programs or other changes that come from the survey.
   
   b. Develop and maintain a staff development program.
   Measure: Year 1: plan and create an internal staff development program; Year 2 80% of staff is taking part in internal staff development, Year 3 Evaluation of all external staff development opportunities and results, Year 5 Continuation of internal and external staff development. Increase and diversify contributed and membership revenue to Adventure Cycling to support programs and services.
   
   c. Annually review staff retention rate.
   Measure: Maintain industry standard for retention [85%]
   
   d. Annually review contract staff retention rate.
   Measure: Year 1: Review tour participant survey results of tour contractors and create standards for retention; Year 5: Retain those contractors with excellent survey ratings.
   
   e. Use outside group surveys such as Outside Magazine to compare staff benefits to other organizations.
f. Document department policies and procedures and have them easily available to staff. Measure: Year 2 inventory each department for existing documentation. Year 5 all departments have a set area of documented policies and procedures.

3. Sustain and improve an excellent work culture, environment and infrastructure.
   a. Overall satisfaction of staff. Measure: Year 2, percentage of staff responding to employee survey who are satisfied with ACA as an employer (“agree” or “strongly agree”). Year 5, continued high rating in the “agree” or “strongly agree” categories.
   b. Leadership and Planning. Measure: Year 2, percentage of staff responding to employee survey who are satisfied with the leadership and planning of the organization (“agree” or “strongly agree”). Year 5, continued high rating in the “agree” or “strongly agree” categories.
   c. Corporate Culture & Communication. Measure: Year 2, percentage of staff responding to employee survey who “agree” or “strongly agree” to questions in this category. Year 5, measure for improvement in the “agree” or “strongly agree” categories.
   d. Work Environment. Measure: Year 2 percent of “agree” or “strongly agree” responses to questions in this category of annual employee survey. Year 5, measure for improvement in the “agree” or “strongly agree” categories.
   e. Compensation. Measure: Year 2, percent of “agree” or “strongly agree” responses to questions in this category of annual employee survey. Year 5 maintain industry average in this category.
   f. Benefits. Measure: Year 2 percent of “agree” or “strongly agree” responses to questions in this category of annual employee survey. Year 5, continued high rating in the “agree” or “strongly agree” categories.

4. Develop and maintain an appropriate technology infrastructure to support Adventure Cycling and its continued growth. (Post 2019 planning under way.)

5. Attract and develop an engaged Board of Directors with diverse skills and backgrounds.
   a. Board Recruitment: Number of viable candidates identified per vacancy
   b. Board Engagement: Percent of Board members attending Board and assigned committee meetings
   c. Board Skills: Percent of identified subject matter expertise represented by Board members
   d. Board Diversity: Geography, gender, age, ethnic heritage
   e. Board Fundraising: Percent of Board giving a “stretch gift”, committing to an estate gift and engaged in fundraising for the organization