

# WORKFORCE DIVERSITY toolkit

FOR THE BIKESHARE &  
SHARED MICROMOBILITY  
INDUSTRY



**N A B S A**

NORTH AMERICAN BIKESHARE ASSOCIATION

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SHARED MICROMOBILITY  
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## ABOUT NABSA

The North American Bikeshare Association (NABSA) connects the biggest minds in bikeshare and shared micromobility to support, promote and enhance shared alternatives to traditional transportation across North America. NABSA is the industry's membership organization with representation from system owners, operators, host cities, equipment manufacturers and technology providers. [nabsa.net](https://nabsa.net)

## ABOUT BETTER BIKE SHARE PARTNERSHIP

The Better Bike Share Partnership is a collaboration funded by The JPB Foundation to build equitable and replicable bike share systems. The partners include The City of Philadelphia, Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia, the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) and the PeopleForBikes Foundation. [betterbikeshare.org](https://betterbikeshare.org)

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Concluding the toolkit is a summary document that can be printed and shared with the self assessment guide, and a resource list and list of contributors.

# Introduction

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Formed in 2014 as the industry association for bikeshare, equity has been a core value of the North American Bikeshare Association (NABSA) and its members from the beginning. NABSA has maintained through its Code of Conduct that “member systems should make good-faith efforts to engage diverse communities that need low-cost, healthy transportation.” Our goal has been to assist our members in providing bikeshare equitably to riders regardless of race, gender, income, age or immigration status. Through knowledge-sharing efforts and a partnership with the Better Bike Share Partnership, NABSA has worked to serve our members in this way over the past five years.

As the industry has grown to include more devices - like scooters - and the broader shared micromobility industry has taken shape, so too has NABSA. In 2018, NABSA widened its scope to include all of shared micromobility. Today, if it fits in a bike lane, it fits in NABSA. No matter the device, NABSA continues to be committed to seeing equitable access carried out among all shared micromobility systems.

But more has changed than the devices in the last five years. What once was a small group of people from about 30 cities, non-profits, and for-profit organizations, has become a global industry of hundreds of companies and organizations, and thousands of workers. We have a workforce, and that workforce must also be diverse and reflect the communities and ridership that we serve.

At our 2018 Annual Conference, we looked around the room and understood that we still had a ways to go toward reaching this goal. We arrived at a new realization: NABSA's role could not only be to support our systems in providing equitable access to riders, but we must also help the industry to diversify its workforce. And even further, to help do this, NABSA also needed to match that challenge with a more diverse Board of Directors.

Thus, this toolkit was born.

With this toolkit, NABSA has hoped to call attention to the issue of workforce diversity, feature the leading work that organizations in our industry are already doing to meet this goal, and most of all help organizations take the necessary first steps toward building a more diverse industry at all levels of leadership and operations.

This year, NABSA has worked to incorporate diverse hiring and inclusive practices within our own organization. We researched and implemented diversity practices in the process of hiring new staff, soliciting RFPs and awarding contracts, and selecting speakers for our Annual Conference.

The NABSA Board of Directors has also expanded the language in NABSA's core values, as stated in the Code of Conduct, to reflect this extension of our focus.

The NABSA Code of Conduct now states:

**DIVERSITY AND EQUITY:** In every area, NABSA will promote an inclusive culture that encourages, supports, and celebrates the diverse voices of its staff, members and the communities they serve. NABSA expects its members to provide bikeshare and shared micromobility services to riders regardless of race, gender, income, age or immigration status. Member systems should make good-faith efforts to engage diverse communities that need low-cost, healthy transportation options.

Through NABSA's own effort to incorporate diversity hiring and workplace practices, we have experienced first-hand the lack of resources available to our industry to help us toward our goal. There is much work that needs to be done. Our hope is that this toolkit will offer direction for getting there together.

# Why Prioritize Workforce Diversity?

Research shows that diverse teams are more innovative. A research team from Boston Consulting Group (BCG) surveyed employees at more than 1,700 companies in the US, Austria, Brazil, China, France, Germany, India, and Switzerland. They assessed company diversity by gender, age, employee's nation of origin, career path, industry background, and university focus of study, and measured that against percentage of revenue from new products and services to indicate the company's innovation. They found a statistically significant correlation between diverse management and innovation. Companies that reported above-average diversity on their management teams also reported innovation revenue that was 19 percentage points higher than that of companies with below-average leadership diversity - 45% of total revenue versus just 26%. For the companies with more diverse leadership, that means almost half of revenue came from products and services launched in the previous three years.

UPS's Executive Communications Manager, Janet Stovall, says that "Ethnically diverse companies perform 33 percent better than the norm. Forbes' best workplaces for diversity enjoy 24 percent higher revenue growth." But as we'll see in our case examples, diversity goals should not end with hiring. For maximum positive impact, the workplace culture needs to be one that cultivates everyone, across all cultures. Stovall says, "Let's be clear: diversity and inclusion are not the same thing. Diversity is a numbers game. Inclusion is about impact. Companies can mandate diversity, but they have to cultivate inclusion."

To reach the benefits described above, all levels of a team should be diverse, including leadership, decision-makers, and those making financial decisions. In order to achieve this in our industry, we need intentional hiring practices and programs that promote diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

The bikeshare and shared micromobility industry has made great strides in making mobility options more accessible to diverse communities, including those often overlooked by traditional transportation investments. Now that we're seeing more equitable systems, it's time to begin the next steps for inclusivity in the industry itself, by addressing the equity of our workforce.



Photo: Darren Burton Photography

## Utilizing this Toolkit

As an industry, we do not collectively have many resources or examples of workforce diversity efforts. This toolkit is a beginning, and a hope. The hope is that it will be a tool to carry the message of diversity and inclusion, and provide a jumping off point for industry leaders to take action to make their organizations more diverse and inclusive. In turn, we will broaden our impact and success as an industry by providing communities with necessary, accessible and innovative mobility options.

This toolkit is broken up into three sections: Diversity Hiring, Diversity in the Workplace, and Impact in Community. They will feature a few examples of organizations in the industry that are making strides to address diversity in the workforce, as well as provide some questions for self-evaluation.

1. Diversity Hiring will highlight tips for creating diversity hiring standards and intentional hiring practices that serve to reach those standards.
2. Diversity in the Workplace will look at how some organizations are creating workplace cultures that support all team members, including ideas for employee retention and advancement.
3. Impact in Community will explore how a diverse team can positively impact both the organization as well as the communities it serves.



## Diversity Hiring

To achieve a more diverse workplace, we need intentional hiring practices in place that consider how job descriptions, educational requirements, outreach, and interviews have an impact on who is selected to fill a position. In its Diversity and Inclusion in Recruitment, Hiring and Retention Fact Sheet, the Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN) outlines a few key recruitment practices that can be reformulated to address goals in diverse hiring.

### USDN TIPS:

- Create job descriptions with diversity goals in mind. Ask questions like:
  - Do the minimum qualifications include experiences that can be learned on the job?
  - Are educational requirements being used as a proxy for specific skills that could be attained through some other means?
  - Does the language incorporate communication and management styles that are culturally and gender inclusive?
- Expand forms of outreach from website listings and job boards to methods that may reach a more diverse applicant base, for example:
  - Community newspapers, news websites run by communities of color
  - Multicultural centers or cultural studies departments at local colleges and universities
  - Historically Black College and Universities, community colleges and schools with a large number of students of color, either graduate or undergrad, alumni associations or current job boards

## REACHING DIVERSITY GOALS THROUGH CONTRACTING

### PORTLAND BIKETOWN

To address diversity goals at BIKETOWN, the Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) has specific hiring standards outlined in the contract with BIKETOWN operator Motivate.

PBOT's Steve Hoyt-McBeth says "The Coalition of Communities of Color advised us on the development of the High Road Standards. At a high level, it addresses our three-pronged approach to equity:  
1) training and hiring staff from underserved communities;  
2) affordable pricing and an accessible approach; and  
3) expanding the system coverage."

According to the High Road Standards, historically underrepresented and economically disadvantaged people will make up 50% or more of total employment hours. In order to meet these thresholds, the contract requires that Motivate exclusively utilize training providers and job source programs aimed at the recruitment of underrepresented or underutilized people for entry level and bike mechanic positions until these groups reach the minimum employment hours. In addition, at least 30% of job hours must be represented by people of color, low income residents, veterans, disabled individuals, immigrants and refugees, and formerly incarcerated people. They send all open postings to a roster of over a dozen community organizations that work with diverse or disenfranchised populations, and summer interns are hired through a Portland program that gives opportunities to low-income and youth of color. Some of these youth have gone on to become part-time employees after the summer. They also offer referral bonuses to employees, and see applicants that come from those employees' communities.

These standards currently apply only to entry-level and mechanic positions, but BIKETOWN marketing manager Dorothy Mitchell says they also work to ensure career development opportunities for these staff. "We provide opportunities throughout the year for employees to learn new skills, whether it's moving bikes by



# HIGH ROAD STANDARDS

from Portland Biketown



cargo trike, learning more complicated mechanical fixes, or being designated with a special area of focus such as managing tools or inventory.” Employees then have the opportunity to give a workshop teaching peers the skills they’ve developed. Managers have yearly conversations with staff to discuss their professional goals, and a tuition reimbursement program is in place to cover classes or part of graduate school.

PBOT will also be looking to add plans for promotion opportunities within the company as part of a new RFP.

To ensure equitable hiring practices:

- Look to job source programs that recruit underrepresented groups
- Send job postings to community organizations that work with diverse populations
- Ask existing employees to refer potential applicants from their communities
- Seek out youth programs that work with low-income groups and people of color for intern positions

## SELF-EVALUATION

- **Is our staff representative of the diversity of those we are serving?**
- **Is diversity a part of the conversation when hiring for every position?**
- **Do we have staff that are fluent speakers of common languages of the community?**
- **Are women and people of color represented at all levels of the team, from seasonal employees to management?**

# Diversity in the Workplace

Diversity in the workplace can create a more innovative organization, aid in membership outreach efforts to diverse communities, and provide opportunities for advancement that will result in more diverse leadership in the industry.

Well-designed hiring protocols are a great start, but employee development and retention strategies are also necessary to help maintain a diverse staff and move employees from seasonal or part-time work to full-time opportunities. UPS's Janet Stovall pointed out, "Companies can mandate diversity, but they have to cultivate inclusion." In order to really prioritize diversity and inclusion, Bicycle Transit Systems (BTS) and TransForm have encouraged a workplace culture that supports and represents the unique voices of each team member.

## BRIDGE. OBSERVE. ORGANIZE. STRENGTHEN. TEACH. BICYCLE TRANSIT SYSTEMS

In 2016, the Bicycle Transit Systems (BTS) team proactively created a company-wide Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee called BOOST (Bridge. Observe. Organize. Strengthen. Teach.) The committee's goals are to broaden the networks used to find candidates, implement programming to increase cultural awareness and understanding, advise senior leadership on company policies and procedures with regard to Diversity & Inclusion, and collect data for Diversity & Inclusion efforts.

BOOST organizes annual and monthly all-staff trainings and events like a group ride to learn about the Oaxaqueño heritage of Los Angeles, or a movie night to see Black Panther with discussion groups afterwards. Monthly staff newsletters include a section on BOOST programming, and notable holidays like Juneteenth and Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day are shared in staff communications as well.

President and CEO Alison Cohen says, "The impact has been deep and wide. Every conversation, leadership on

out, includes thought about equity and inclusion. From revisions to the employee handbook to what a 5-year employee anniversary gift should be." The company's leadership group represents all employee levels, and the General Managers represent the voices of on-street employees to ensure company leadership is hearing issues from employees of all income levels.

To build and foster a diverse and inclusive workforce, BTS recommends:

- Be vocal and intentional about hiring a diverse workforce. There are times when you have to actively go out and directly recruit individuals for specific roles.
- Wait until you get diverse resumes so you have a cross-section of people to interview.
- Talk about the priority for a diverse and inclusive culture.
- Acknowledge where the organization is currently falling short.
- Prioritize diversity and inclusion education and training, especially of leadership.
- Keep diversity goals on everyone's mind, at all levels.





# CULTIVATING A CULTURE FOR PEOPLE TO THRIVE

## TRANSFORM

TransForm is a California-based nonprofit that promotes walkable communities connecting people of all incomes to excellent transportation choices, and builds diverse partnerships to engage communities in planning and policy. Among their innovative programming, TransForm provides free and low-cost bikeshare and shared micromobility rides to underserved populations in partnership with Lyft.

Clarrissa Cabansagan, New Mobility Policy Director with California sustainability and transportation equity organization TransForm, says, “It’s not just about getting people in the door, it’s about cultivating a culture for people to thrive, no matter what their background.” TransForm doesn’t have a specific quota for diversity hiring, but maintains an internal goal that the staff be reflective of the communities they serve.

TransForm’s strategy is to be intentional about who and how they hire, and attract diverse applicants with their workplace culture. Cabansagan explains, “We’re trying to dismantle the idea that there’s one way to do work, to do a meeting, for people to receive information, and it cultivates an environment that encourages people to be their unique selves and bring their experiences to their work. It’s a different way of doing the work, and we’re learning as we go.”

She advises that “when you have a person of color enter into a company that’s not cultivating them, they feel like they’re not represented in the way that the work happens, and they have no control over it.” TransForm ensures their work environment is open and inclusive by:

- Knowing where you are flexible: Work schedules, autonomy, etc.
- Making processes open and transparent where all levels of staff can offer input and feedback
- Recognizing that the people you’ve hired are the people you need in the work
- Instead of the common pressure to prove yourself, letting people dictate their own trajectory
- Making sure the work aligns with people’s interests and strengths
- Working with people to cultivate their vision of their own professional growth



## SELF-EVALUATION

- **Are communications and work protocols supportive of cultural differences?**
- **Are there opportunities for staff to provide productive feedback on how company culture can support all members of the team?**
- **Is there a clear path for upward mobility for entry-level staff?**
- **Is inclusion a shared responsibility at all levels of staff?**
- **Has staff completed training for cultural competency and are there ongoing efforts to maintain knowledge and principles learned in diversity trainings?**

# Impact in the Community

While we strive to cultivate a more diverse workforce, it's important that this goal support existing objectives for equitable systems, not replace them. If we want to create the greatest community impact from industry inclusion programs, we will need to see hires that have experience with the communities being served, and the opportunity for all team voices to be heard.

We anticipate that if diversity is a part of every conversation during hiring processes, and we're cultivating truly inclusive workplaces, we will in turn see more ideas being shared for furthering system equity goals.

## ENSURING INDUSTRY EQUITY

### BETTER BIKE SHARE PARTNERSHIP

The Better Bike Share Partnership (BBSP) is a collaboration funded by The JPB Foundation to build equitable and replicable bikeshare systems. Partners include the City of Philadelphia, the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia, the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) and the PeopleForBikes Foundation. BBSP advances its work by testing pilot strategies in the Philadelphia Indego system, providing resources and technical assistance to cities and operators, supporting meetings and convening those engaged in this work, funding equity strategies in cities across the U.S. and sharing all of these stories widely through the BBSP website and blog.

Since the Better Bike Share Partnership was formed in 2014, the landscape for shared micromobility has changed dramatically. In fact, five years ago the term "shared micromobility" did not even exist, and would have meant little if it had. To station-based systems with traditional bikes, cities have added dockless systems, electric bicycles, electric scooters and adaptive bikes like tricycles, recumbents and tandems. For-profit

players with their own branded vehicles have joined cities and non-profits as the owners and/or managers of new systems. What has not changed is the need to integrate equity strategies and priorities at every level of shared micromobility. The goals of BBSP are still to ensure that every resident of a city has access to mobility options, that barriers like vehicle availability, price, payment options, personal and physical safety on the streets, language, information and education on how to access and use the bikes, e-bikes and scooters are reduced or removed, and that the employees of these systems reflect the communities they serve.

BBSP will continue to fund and share best practices advanced by collaborations of cities, operators and community-based organizations, as we have for five years. We also plan to fund several Living Lab cities – places where local partners are working intensively on one or two challenges at the intersection of shared mobility and equity. As always, we will share widely the lessons learned through our blog, other media, webinars and conferences.

The Atlanta Bicycle Coalition's Champions program hired 10 Westside Atlanta residents to become local advocates for community engagement with the Relay bike share system. Champions have gone through 40 hours of training for community outreach and professional development. The program affects ridership in the community, as well as the Champions' own relationships with bicycling.

Chicago's Divvy program employs a team of 14 community outreach employees to focus on the city's traditionally underserved South and West Side neighborhoods. These positions are dedicated to growing the Divvy for Everyone (D4E) program, which provides an annual bike share membership for just \$5 to qualifying residents, as well as a cash payment option.



Looking toward the future, BBSP is building a program more specifically focused on reaching, supporting and elevating people of color working in or closely with the shared mobility field. This BBSP Fellowship will provide professional development and training to selected applicants. The goal is to build a cohort dedicated to the advancement of access and mobility in marginalized communities, increase the visibility of the transportation planning profession in communities of color, and create an employment pipeline that moves beyond entry level and/or manual careers to management roles in the mobility and transportation field. We hope that our Fellows Program will influence and inform this and other NABSA resources, and that NABSA members will in turn benefit from BBSP programs.

BBSP and NABSA have partnered from the beginning to disseminate information and opportunities, contribute to shared and individual conferences and events, and advance equity priorities and goals. We look forward to continuing this great collaboration!

## A LIVING LABORATORY FOR EQUITY IN BIKESHARE

### INDEGO BIKESHARE

At Indego in Philadelphia, the Better Bike Share Partnership works on programming to ensure equity in the system. Better Bike Share Partnership Program Manager Waffiyyah Murray says, “Indego is a living laboratory to identify barriers to the use of bikeshare in low income and communities of color. Once those barriers are identified, we work to develop and disseminate strategies to address those barriers and institutionalize successful approaches.”

Indego ensures diversity of its workplace and of its ridership by focusing more on candidates that understand equity and community engagement, rather than traditional cycling experience. Murray explains, “A lot of times, people talk about bikeshare and bikes, but the day-to-day job has less to do with being on a bike. We’re looking for people that have community connections



and are able to build and nurture those relationships. We’re highlighting the goals of the program, not just the biking.” Murray also recommends keeping existing relationships in mind when new positions come up. For example, their hire for a new community coordinator at Indego was formerly one of their community ambassadors.

Murray says that workplace diversity has a positive impact on both community outreach as well as team dynamics. “It’s important when you’re doing outreach and working with communities to have that representation in your leadership, whether women, people of color, or different ages. It’s not just about the community outreach aspect, but having that diversity because you need diverse perspectives on your team as well.” Having a diverse team means they’re getting a wider range of perspectives at the table that can share their experiences and provide valuable ideas and feedback.



# Conclusion

Now that we have begun to see a shift towards more equitable systems, it's time for the industry to expand diversity goals to include its own workforce. Leading the industry in this direction is an essential priority for NABSA's mission, and our hope is that this toolkit is a helpful launching point for more intentional discussions around how the industry can cultivate diversity and inclusion on its teams.

We know that diverse teams are more innovative, show better performance and higher revenue growth, can further goals for community impact, and lead to more diverse leadership. For these reasons, it is important that organizations conduct self-evaluations and begin to implement protocols that encourage diverse candidate pools and a culture of inclusion in the workplace. During the hiring process, consider how job descriptions, educational requirements, outreach, and interviews have an impact on who is selected to fill a position. Ensure the workplace

environment supports all cultures, encourages input at all levels, and provides opportunities for team members to grow in their careers.

To work towards equity at all levels of the workforce, we need to be intentional about creating inclusive hiring protocols, ensuring a diverse workplace culture, and utilizing team diversity to further system goals.

While it's imperative that leadership at each organization be deeply involved and drive their teams to cultivate a culture of diversity and inclusivity, the impact is even greater when the entire staff shares that responsibility. Now it's time to take action.

Leading the industry in this direction is an essential priority for NABSA's mission, and our hope is that this toolkit is a helpful launching point for more intentional discussions around how the industry can cultivate diversity and inclusion on its teams.



Photo: Darren Burton Photography



PHOTO: BICYCLE TRANSIT SYSTEMS



# Workforce Diversity Toolkit at a Glance

## CREATE INCLUSIVE HIRING PROTOCOLS

- Examine job qualifications for potential bias
- Distribute job listings to news outlets run by communities of color, multicultural centers, and HBCUs
- Use cultural and gender-inclusive language
- Seek out experience living in or working with disadvantaged communities
- Consider strict hiring standards like those seen at PBOT/BIKETOWN to ensure prioritization of diversity

## ENSURE DIVERSE WORKPLACE CULTURE

- Create avenues for staff to provide input on how work processes can be inclusive
- Consider allowing flexibility in work schedules
- Make upholding diversity goals a shared responsibility for every employee
- Support entry-level and seasonal staff in their skill and career development

## UTILIZE TEAM DIVERSITY TO FURTHER SYSTEM EQUITY GOALS

- Encourage full staff input in ways to impact the community
- Employ staff that speak prominent languages of the community
- Get input from diverse voices on organization goals and projects

DOWNLOAD  
THIS PAGE AT  
[NABSA.NET/  
DIVERSITY](https://nabsa.net/diversity)

## SELF-EVALUATION

### DIVERSITY HIRING

- Is our staff representative of the diversity of those we are serving?
- Is diversity a part of the conversation when hiring for every position?
- Do we have staff that are fluent speakers of common languages of the community?
- Are women and people of color represented at all levels of the team, from seasonal employees to management?

### WORKPLACE DIVERSITY

- Are communications and work protocols supportive of cultural differences?
- Are there opportunities for staff to provide productive feedback on how company culture can support all members of the team?
- Is there a clear path for upward mobility for entry-level staff?
- Is inclusion a shared responsibility at all levels of staff?
- Has staff completed training for cultural competency and are there ongoing efforts to maintain knowledge and principles learned in diversity trainings?

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# Resources

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USDN Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Recruitment, Hiring and Retention Fact Sheet: Steps to evaluate and amend hiring processes, onboarding and support practices to promote employee retention.

Amendment to PBOT with Motivate/BIKETOWN contract: Exhibit F “High Road Standards” begin on page 83.

Bringing Equitable BikeShare to Bed-Stuy: How Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration, Motivate, the operators of the Citi Bike program, NYC Department of Transportation (DOT), and the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene addressed low ridership in Bedford Stuyvesant.

Workplace Diversity Through Recruitment - A Step-By-Step Guide: Outlines benefits and challenges of a diverse workplace, provides tips for changes at each step of hiring to remove potential biases.

BBSP Sample Job Descriptions: Sample job descriptions with an equity focus.

Bicycle Transit Systems Workplace Diversity Chart: A tool by Kiera Smalls, Marketing Manager and Chair of the Leadership Team for Diversity & Inclusion at Bicycle Transit Systems, with tips from hiring to programs to increase cultural awareness.

Rocío Lorenzo TED Talk: How diversity makes teams more innovative.

Janet Stovall TED Talk: How to get serious about diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

Government Alliance on Race and Equity: Tools and resources for advancing racial equity.

Partnership for Southern Equity: Resources specific to equity in the south.

StrengthsFinder: TransForm subscribes to the StrengthsFinder model to make sure work aligns with employees' interests and strengths.

Atlanta Bikeshare Outreach: Atlanta Bicycle Coalition's Champions outreach program.

Divvy Outreach: Divvy hires for outreach to low-to-moderate income neighborhoods in Chicago.

**RESOURCE LINKS AVAILABLE AT  
NABSA.NET/DIVERSITY**

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## SPECIAL THANKS

THANK YOU TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS  
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HELPING PRODUCE THIS TOOLKIT.

- **Clarrissa Cabansagan:** New Mobility Policy Director, TransForm
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- **Dorothy Mitchell:** Market Manager, Lyft Portland (BIKETOWN)
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- **Rebecca Serna:** Executive Director, Atlanta Bicycle Coalition
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Photo: Bicycle Transit Systems

With this toolkit, NABSA has hoped to call attention to the issue of workforce diversity, feature the leading work that organizations in our industry are already doing to meet this goal, and most of all help organizations take the necessary first steps toward building a more diverse industry at all levels of leadership and operations.

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