

*Bike Box of the Blue Ridge is a non-profit organization whose mission is to empower people. Our work will enhance the physical and economic wellbeing of people in our communities by providing quality recycled bikes and the skills to maintain and ride them safely.*

[BikeBoxBlueRidge.org](http://BikeBoxBlueRidge.org)

Not active

**Waynesboro**

Boys & Girls Club, Main St.

**Staunton**

Location TBD

Randall Wolf

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## Concept paper

### Mission:

*Bike Box of the Blue Ridge is a non-profit organization whose mission is to empower people. Our work will enhance the physical and economic wellbeing of people in our communities by providing quality recycled bikes and the skills to maintain and ride them safely.*

Bike Box of the Blue Ridge is a bike shop for the community—much like a food pantry, but for bikes. Our focus is to provide access to a quality used bikes to at-risk youth and low-income families for transportation and recreation. Individual freedom, healthy lifestyles, and economic stability can come from ownership of a bike. Our services will include skilled bike fitting, training on how to maintain bikes, and safe riding lessons. Alliances with other area organizations is critical to building and sustaining the program.

### Why here, Why now?

Augusta Health's 2016 PRC Community Health Needs Assessment identified overweight and obesity as the number one health issue in our communities. The survey also showed that 37.8% of area children are obese, more than triple the national level, and of the area's lower income community, 50% of adults are obese. The 2017 Robert Wood Johnson Foundations County Health Rankings show Augusta County behind the nation and state in two key health behaviors, "Physical Inactivity" and "Access to Exercise Opportunities." Bike Box will present opportunities and the tools for residents in our communities to increase their physical activity and economic wellbeing.

Bike Box will encourage youth to establish a healthy lifestyle, ride to school, explore their world and develop self-reliance. Waynesboro Police Sgt. Brian Edwards shared that each school day 1,500 to 1,800 cars drop elementary and middle school students off at school, think of the impact if just ten percent of those students biked to school instead.

Lower income adults use bikes as primary mode of transportation over twice as much as middleclass adults. The Central Shenandoah Transit Development Plan shows dense pockets of people who do not own or have access to a car in Waynesboro, Staunton, Lyndhurst, Stuarts Draft and Fishersville.

Providing adults with bikes will give them access to better fitness and economic stability. The yearly cost of owning a small sedan is about \$6,748 per year, while owning a bike provided by Bike Box and the occasional use of public transportation is about \$1,196. That would leave over \$5,500 per year for that individual and their family to put that money to work for child care, education, food and housing.

Nearly three-quarters of bikes sold are low quality bikes from big box stores. Many of these customers are our targeted audience. Big box stores do not offer skilled salespeople to help you choose a bike or a mechanic to fix the bike you bought there, Bike Box will offer both and replacement parts at or below big box store prices

## Goals:

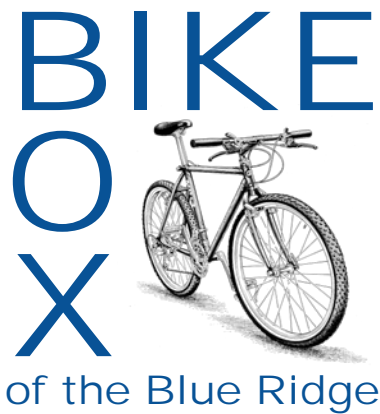
- Recycle 300 to 500 bikes annually and return them to the community—at low or no cost to bike riders;
- Empower people of all ages, fitness, and income levels to ride bikes for transportation, recreation, and FUN!
- Energize an army of volunteers to support this mission;
- Partner with over 20 area organizations to build outreach;
- Mentor youth through a partnership with the SAW Boys & Girls Club as part of their STEM program;
- Provide bikes (as needed), equipment, space, tools and most of all expertise to student members of the new Staunton, Waynesboro, Augusta County Youth Cycling Team.
- Teach bike repair and give people the tools, equipment, and space to fix their own bikes;
- Hold safety classes on bike handling and the rules of the road;
- Engage the community to donate bikes;
- Promote the value of a positive lifestyle through biking, and its positive effects on health;
- Support economic development by supporting reliable transportation and self-reliance;
- Be the keystone for biking activities in our communities and advocate for biking initiatives.

## Objectives:

- Provide the right used bike to the right person: Three-quarters of new bikes sold in America are sold through Big Box stores at an average cost of \$84.00. Those buyers are our target customers.
- Build a strong network of partner organizations to provide customers, volunteers, and revenue to sustain our program.
- Offer customers four ways to obtain a bike:
  1. Youth under age 14 can receive a bike at no cost (free) based on need;
  2. Customers can buy a bike or equipment at a reduced price;
  3. Volunteers can collect credits toward purchasing a bike or equipment;
  4. Partner organizations will provide vouchers to their clients towards receiving/purchasing a bike.
- Bring everyday bike riders together: Bike Box is a human locomotion social club that will organize group rides for all levels of riders.
- Provide bike training: Safety training will be taught by certified League of American Bicyclists of America instructors.
- Bike Box will advocate for bike safety and support building greenways and other bike infrastructure in the area.
- Provide ease of access to physical activity: Augusta Health's 2016 PRC Health Needs Assessment and the 2017 Robert Wood Johnson report identified as health issues facing our communities.

## Structure:

Bike Box of the Blue Ridge has applied for 501(c)3 status and will operate as a non-profit, but with a business mindset. We will employ a part-time Executive Director who will work with the board of directors to help launch and grow the program. The board will include 7-11 local directors made up of community leaders who will bring critical oversight, expertise, and guidance to the organization.



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The initial plan is to be open Tuesday, Thursday and Saturdays, four to six hours per day, and manned by the executive director, who is a seasoned bike mechanic and bike rider, managing operations. Within a year, Bike Box plans to be open more days and hire a part-time mechanic to staff the shop two to four days per week.

The executive director will recruit and organize volunteer efforts. Volunteers will provide thousands of hours per year to support the mission. They will operate collection drop-offs, work to sort and repair bikes, and teach customers how to maintain and ride their bikes safely. Some volunteers will provide expert advice to the organization in areas of business, accounting, and legal advice. James Burris, owner of Black Dog Bikes in Staunton is an ardent supporter of the program and sees the need in the community on a weekly basis. To support Bike Box he will order parts and equipment for us and provide them at near wholesale costs.

Bike Box of the Blue Ridge will be a non-voting membership organization. Membership will be based on the ability to pay. (i.e. free to anyone who volunteers over 24 hours per year, or \$25.00 for an individual, or \$35.00 for a family). We will also offer sponsorship membership levels of \$100, 250, and \$500 or corporate sponsors that will include access for their employees).

Community outreach through group rides and advocating with local governments to provide support for biking and walking infrastructure will be a part of raising awareness and empowering people to ride.

## **Fundraising:**

Bike Box of the Blue Ridge aspires to be the hub of the wheel, with customers the outer rim, and our partner organizations as the spokes that join everything together. These spokes will connect customers to the Bike Box as well as help support it financially.

Bike Box of the Blue Ridge's projected first year operating budget is approximately \$57,375, with five methods for raising revenue for the organization:

- direct sales (\$8,375)
- partner support through vouchers (\$7,500)
- membership fees (\$1,500)
- grants (\$35,000)
- fundraising events (\$5,000)
  - o Charity ride
  - o Party with auction
  - o Sale of promotional items, shirts, water bottles, saddle bags.

Should Bike Box of the Blue Ridge not be able to meet our fundraising goals, we will readjust our budget projections quarterly and reduce expenditures while maintaining our core mission of providing bikes to those in need.

## Launch:

Bike Box is ready to launch, but needs startup funding to open the Waynesboro location at the beginning of August to coincide with the opening of school and the Boys & Girls Clubs programs. To build awareness, we will attend community events and setup a booth to repair bikes and receive bike donations. A high profile, VIP charity ride and community ride will be held in early Fall to raise money and excite the community about the project.

We have:

- Dedicated space at the Boys & Girls Club in Waynesboro;
- Over 100 bikes ready to be repaired;
- Donated tools to work on the bikes;
- A network of potential volunteers;
- Community support from the cities of Waynesboro and Staunton, and from partner organizations;
- A community in need of access to low cost bikes and repair facilities.

For the first three-months we need:

- To form a Board of Directors and establish bylaws;
- Funds to hire a legal advisor to register as a 501(c)3 - \$600;
- Funds to hire an Executive Director - \$4,300;
- Funds for operational and administrative costs
  - Office equipment, computers, screens, AIO printer, shelving, software – \$3,000;
  - Internet access and telephone - \$600;
  - Utility hookups - \$300;
  - Parts inventory, tires, tubes, chains, cables, housing, and safety equipment - \$1,500;
  - Signage - \$600;
  - Fundraising launch ride, marketing materials, website registration and design - \$1,500;
  - Insurance - \$750;
  - Rent - 2,100

The funds needed to launch and sustain the organization for the first three-months is approximately \$18,500. Ongoing monthly costs will run approximately \$4,000, with a total yearly operating budget of approximately \$55,000 to \$65,000. We project a third of our revenue will be generated by business operations, a third will be from grants, and the balance from the partner voucher program, membership, donations and fundraisers.