



BC Active Transportation Strategy Recommendations Round 2

From HUB Cycling

May 2019

In February 2019, HUB Cycling submitted Round 1 of its recommendations to the BC Active Transportation Strategy. We have further additions and details now that we have seen the direction of the strategy and have engaged with more stakeholders.

OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES & CONSIDERATIONS

The Need for Action: Cycling's Province-wide Benefits

Riding a bike appeals to people of all ages and abilities, from all backgrounds. For the individual who cycles, it's an activity that can generate physical and mental health benefits and cut transportation costs. Multiply the individual benefits of cycling by the tens of thousands of new riders that can be attracted and nurtured through connected networks and community-based programming and events, and the poverty reduction, social, environmental, health and economic impacts are huge for the province. Active transportation reduces congestion and increases choice, improving quality of life for all British Columbians.

Research from around the world suggests that encouraging more people to cycle more often generates multiple benefits beyond those impacting road use. In fact, increasing the growth of cycling could help us address some of the most pressing issues facing British Columbia today.

To be most powerful, the Active Transportation Strategy should reflect all types of trips by active transportation, not just trips to work or school. Trips to reach shopping, community centres, libraries, entertainment, activities, and other destinations should all be taken into account.



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The Active Transportation Strategy is part of the CleanBC climate plan as well as the Poverty Reduction Strategy, but to make meaningful progress to reduce GHG emissions and improve affordability, significant investment will be required to enable everyone to cycle, walk and roll in communities across BC. Policies and funding programs will need to be updated to ensure that high quality, well maintained facilities that are protected from traffic are the *default*, not an option that requires more work by municipalities or community groups. HUB Cycling encourages the continuation of the cross-ministerial approach that has started during the development of this strategy. Benefits accrue across ministries; therefore, investments should also be made from across ministries such as Health, Environment & Climate Change, Education, Municipal Affairs and Housing as well as Transportation & Infrastructure.

The current lack of high quality, connected cycling facilities has increased inequity, as relatively affluent communities where cycling infrastructure investments have attracted higher-income people who like to walk and cycle, and typically have the time and resources to advocate for local facilities suited to their needs. The result is that those with lower incomes have fewer mobility options and decreased opportunities to be physically active.

The strategy should seek to support diversity, equity, inclusion in order to encourage all types of people to choose active transportation for more trips. Here is a Guide to Inclusive Cycling that can assist in viewing active transportation considerations through this lens:

<https://wheelsforwellbeing.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/v2-Nov-2017.pdf>

Other important mechanisms that have been adopted by jurisdictions around the world, and that should be considered as part of any effort to reach climate and poverty reduction goals are measures to make electric cycles, adaptive cycles, and bicycles more affordable, especially for those with lower incomes. Options include eliminating the PST, offering rebates, rental and lending programs, low cost financing, and sharing systems. Promotion of E-bikes and providing cycle highways are effective ways to increase distances cycled and replace carbon-emitting trips from motor vehicles with active transportation trips.

The original Four Pillars of the Strategy suggested by the Province before consultation are in bold below. Consider the additional components, shown in blue text, as additional guiding principles:

- **Building: Accessibility, Connectivity and Maintenance**
- **Encourage and Educate**
- **Safety and Security**
- **Leadership, Partnerships and Evaluation**



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INVESTMENT

BC currently spends about \$1.50 per person, per year on active transportation, correlates with the low cycling mode share of 2.5 % of personal transport in B.C. By comparison, the Netherlands spends \$48 per person per year on active transportation programs; Denmark invests \$34 per person, and New Zealand recently announced an investment of \$24 per person on infrastructure, education, promotion and safety. HUB Cycling recommends at least \$21/person/year on completing cycling networks and an additional at least \$2/person/year on cycling promotion enabling and education.

GOALS

1. The Province works directly with regional transportation authorities, UBCM and municipal governments to ensure the built environment in most BC communities supports and promotes cycling for all trips under 5 km.
2. BC's cycling environment is safe for people of all ages, striving to achieve a record of zero fatalities and few serious injuries.
3. BC's cities and towns will have interconnected networks of safe cycling routes locally, regionally, inter-regionally, including water crossings, enabling people to cycle to work, school, home and key destinations.
4. BC has an integrated province-wide network of cycling routes to support the province's promotion as a global leader in active transportation for utility and recreation, including tourism.

The **FOUR PILLARS EXPANDED**

BUILDING: Accessibility, Connectivity and Maintenance

1. There is a need to document and prioritize cycling gaps so that the Province and municipalities understand the cost-benefit and can make informed decisions on what to build first and how people will be served by it. Together with HUB Cycling and other stakeholders, the South Coast MoTI team has drafted a Regional Cycling Network Study, based partially off of our UnGaptheMap prioritization tool, that helps to understand gaps in the cycling network and their prioritization in terms of safety, utility and feasibility. This tool should be finalized and shared as a resource across the province.
2. Promote the use of rail-trail greenways in British Columbia as active transportation corridors and incentivize bikeways and greenways that improve equity, diversity and



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inclusion, including reconciliation efforts with First Nations. For example, support the construction of Great Blue Heron Way, connecting the Tsawwassen ferry terminal north through Delta, Richmond, Vancouver and the North Shore as recommended by the Tsawwassen First Nations and including Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations well as extending eastward to Surrey and Semiahmoo First Nations.

3. To further expand upon our previous recommendation for building and incentivizing cycle highways within Provincial jurisdiction and with municipal cost-sharing, please see our [previous letter to the Province](#) (Nov 2017), along with a [January 2019 update of recent developments](#).
4. Facilitate camping and recreational getaways within easy cycling distance of urban and town centres. Solutions include cycle highways, electric bikes with charging stations at convenient locations, better multi-modal connections (bus, ferries, trains) and camping and other accommodations within easy cycling distances. Implement a “no turn-aways” policy for cycle tourists at provincial campgrounds, recognizing that for human-powered tourists the next available campground is likely too far to reach within the day.
5. Demand for BikeBC funding from municipalities far outweighs the supply of funding. Increase BikeBC cost-sharing amounts and introduce more flexibility in the BikeBC funding applications and make them easier for municipalities to access, as well as weight more funding to benefit disadvantaged communities - these are both recommendations from [California Department of Transportation: A Review of the State’s Active Transportation Program](#).

The best-practice cycling infrastructure guidelines presented in MoTI's forthcoming Active Transportation Design Guide should be reflected in the Bike BC funding program, in order to approve higher-quality projects for all ages and abilities of riders.



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- Partner with municipalities to implement Complete Streets policies and develop cycling or active transportation plans as applicable. Complete Streets are streets that are designed to be safe for everyone: people who walk, bicycle, take transit, or drive, and people of all ages and abilities. A Complete Streets policy ensures that transportation planners and engineers consistently design and operate the entire street network for all road users, not only motorists. Complete Streets offer wide ranging benefits. They are cost

Complete Streets Policy Framework



- effective, sustainable, and safe. More information: www.completestreetsforcanada.ca
- Make 30km/h default speed limits on all neighbourhood street bikeways and greenways. This measure should be mandatory for accessing BikeBC cost-sharing, and have the Province allow municipalities to create default speed limits without signing each block.

ENCOURAGE & EDUCATE

- Invest in Everyone Rides Grade 4-5 systemic school cycling education. Providing kids with the skills, confidence and opportunity to learn to ride in school is the best way to raise a generation of sustainable transportation users and safer road users. Every child should finish elementary school having received cycling education (much like they do in many European jurisdictions) - this creates a systemic culture of cycling that permeates student, parent and teacher lifestyles and transportation choices.¹ [Everyone Rides Grade 4-5](#) is ready to deliver as a pilot project starting in 2019-2020, with the aim of a future roll out across BC. Through in-class and on-bike instruction, students learn the rules and responsibilities of riding on city streets and bike paths, and get hands-on practice with fundamental cycling skills on school grounds. Bikes are provided for students who do not have their own, and a selection of adaptive bike designs are used by children with physical and cognitive disabilities to help us achieve 100% participation. Program evaluation shows that youth are more likely to continue biking to school after taking a HUB Cycling course. 100% of school staff and 99% of parents somewhat or strongly welcome and recognize the value of cycling instruction for children.

¹ <http://tram.mcgill.ca/Research/Publications/Cycliste%20averti.pdf>



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9. Provide project funding to support the establishment and operation of a province-wide service to facilitate and promote active and safe routes to schools (aka active school travel planning).
10. [City of Vancouver Active Transportation Promotion and Enabling Report](#) shows that every best practice municipality surveyed had dedicated *promotional* program budgets. In addition, most municipalities surveyed (88%) maintained at least one full time staff member to work exclusively on promotional campaigns. The Province should create dedicated staff roles for active transportation promotion, education and enabling (additional to active transportation infrastructure staff) that would work with municipalities and community groups to support and share information for programming like Bike to Work Week, Bike to School Week, Everyone Rides Grade 4-5, Bike to Shop Days, Open Streets or Ciclovia-type events, etc. The Province could also encourage municipalities to have dedicated staff time to manager active transportation promotion, education and enabling.
11. Provide support for all ages cycling education that connects with existing community hubs such as immigrant service centres, community centres, libraries, etc. [The Toronto Centre for Active Transportation has a helpful report](#) on its related project that could be emulated here in BC.

SAFETY and Security

12. Support a common bike theft registry - [Project 529](#) has had great outcomes and already operates in many BC communities. Bike theft is the number two reason for people reporting that they don't ride. Stats Canada tells us that for every ten people that have their bike stolen 1 person never rides again.
13. The BC Motor Vehicle Act has not been meaningfully updated in over 50 years. Much has changed in our transportation reality since then. The BC MVA should be updated to include better road safety for all road users, especially vulnerable road users like those using active transportation. Other provinces such as Ontario, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick are ahead of BC in this regard. The UBCM and BC Provincial Health Officer also support modernizing the MVA to improve road safety. We are aware that changing legislation is a long term action - so you must start this process now, and also identify shorter term regulatory changes that can be made quicker than legislation.

- Examples of urgent MVA improvements and evidence, case studies: [Safe passing law white paper from League of American Bicyclists](#) and bikehub.ca/mva





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- Safe Neighbourhood Speeds - [Provincial Health Officer report Where the Rubber Meets the Road](#) - Managing Speed Limits section starts on page 113 [Map of jurisdictions using 30km/h or 20miles/h speed limits globally.](#)



14. Limit motor vehicle emissions exposure when building new active transportation infrastructure.
15. Please refer to [HUB Cycling's Ride hailing, e-bike, and autonomous vehicle positions](#) to assist with safer integration of these new modes of transportation.

LEADERSHIP, [Partnerships and Evaluation](#)

16. Introduce a 411-style hotline for municipal staff to call the Provincial active transportation staff team and get support, referrals to experts/contractors/peers
17. Provide an online forum for municipal staff to post and discuss active transportation issues/solutions/ideas
18. Show the economic benefits of active transportation and use these in partnerships and evaluation. [My Health My Communities research](#) from UBC, Vancouver Coastal Health, Metro Vancouver, TransLink, and other partners demonstrates the significant direct health savings that accrue from creating active transportation-friendly land use and design, along with the livability and quality of life increases. Recent research from Los Angeles showed \$1 spent on active transportation returns over \$8 in economic benefit. This value for money assessment by the [UK DfT](#) shows a very solid 5:1 benefit: cost ratio that motor vehicle and transit projects could only dream of. Local businesses also benefit from day-to-day spending by those who cycle. In urban areas, people walking and cycling spend more money with local businesses than motorists who visit the neighbourhood, according a study by the Clean Air Partnership.² We know that

² Clean Air Partnership, Bike Lanes, On-Street Parking and Business: A Study of Bloor Street in Toronto's Annex Neighbourhood (2009)



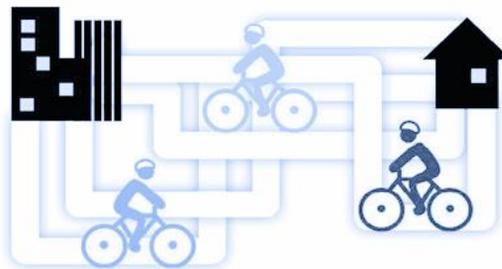
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many of the economic benefits come back to areas other than transportation - this is where it is important to be working across ministries for investments and returns, for example with Health, Environment, Education, Higher Education, Municipal Affairs and Housing, etc.

19. Monitor and track progress on attitudinal and behavioural changes related to cycling, as well as cycling program outputs and outcomes.



We look forward to seeing the progress the ATS team is making and being able to provide iterative feedback. We are always available to answer questions and provide further evidence and support for our recommendations. Please reach out at any time.

Sincerely,

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