



# BC Active Transportation Strategy Recommendations

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*From HUB Cycling*

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CleanBC priority initiative:

“The Province will establish an active transportation strategy with measures to support new infrastructure, education and incentive programs, and safety improvements for people walking, cycling and using other kinds of active transportation.”

Active transportation provides more healthy, affordable, equitable, environmentally friendly ways to get around and to support the local economy. The majority of British Columbians use active transportation or want to use it but are held back by inadequate infrastructure, education, awareness, and regulation to protect their safety and to facilitate convenient and viable trips on foot, bike and other human-powered modes.

A range of transportation options should be available to all British Columbians – including those who live in smaller communities, and vulnerable groups such as children, older adults and those with disabilities or low incomes as well as non-drivers – so that everyone can have access to education, employment, shopping, healthcare, recreation, cultural events and social connections. Safe biking and walking routes, good street design and regular transit should be available to all British Columbians so that it is easy to be active and healthy. These can also make it easier for people to be socially connected which is important for mental health.

Active and public transportation facilities are smart investments as they can stimulate local business and tourism in communities of all sizes. These investments can also control rising healthcare costs because regular physical activity keeps people healthier and out of the healthcare system.

HUB Cycling supports all forms of active transportation and believe along with transit, they all complement one another and facilitate further active transportation uptake. Our expertise relates to cycling, so that will remain the focus of our recommendations in this document.

- 1.9 million British Columbians ride a bicycle at least once per year.<sup>1</sup>
- 2.3 million adults in the province indicate they would ride more if there were protected bike lanes.<sup>2</sup>
- 1.3 million BC residents say walking (23%) or cycling (11%) would be their ideal commute.<sup>3</sup>
- 2.8 million adults in BC **support enhancing cycling infrastructure**.<sup>4</sup>

Four Pillars of Strategy - HUB Cycling recommendations for pillar language:

- **Building:** Develop a province-wide network of active transportation infrastructure including walking, cycling, wheeling, and end-of-trip facilities, fully integrated with public transit.
- **Encourage and Educate:** Promote, normalize and incentivize the use of active transportation, deliver programs to raise awareness of active transportation options and ensure systemic access to cycling education for both school age children and adults.
- **Safety and Security:** Adopt an integrated Vision Zero approach to transportation safety, develop best practice design guidelines for active transportation facilities and review and revise regulations with a focus on preventive safety and equity for active transportation users. Invest in safety, security, and theft deterrent programming.
- **Leadership:** Lead by example by fully integrating active transportation into B.C.'s public sector programs and operations, support municipal programs and facilities with comprehensive design guidelines and matching funds and work with the private sector to ensure that all developments support active transportation choices. Implement monitoring, evaluation, reporting and adaptation to measure and make progress on all four pillars.

## BUILDING

### Infrastructure

- Provide sufficient matching funds to maximize the rapid development of municipal active transportation facilities, recognizing that development of complete networks maximizes the usefulness and value of active transportation investments. Increase BikeBC Funding to at least \$100 million/year for next 10 years (\$21 per person per year) to complete the bike network in that time.
- Consider extending BikeBC project timeline eligibility to allow for more meaningful projects.
- Systematically evaluate, prioritize and upgrade Provincial active transportation infrastructure with a focus on resolving network gaps and optimizing user comfort and safety. Include best practice active transportation facilities on all new and reconstructed transportation infrastructure. Include upgrading of active transportation facilities in all rehabilitation projects. Enforce Ministry of Transportation meaningfully fulfilling its commitment to build cycling facilities along with all new and improved highway and bridge infrastructure projects (highway, bridge, etc).

<sup>1</sup> <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/82-003-x/2017004/article/14788/tbl/tbl01-eng.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Andrea O'Brian.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Kirk & Co. Consulting Ltd. & Mustel Group, B.C. on the Move: Engagement Summary Report, January 2015, [http://engage.gov.bc.ca/transportationplan/files/2015/03/BCOTM\\_Summary-Report\\_March-2015\\_web.pdf](http://engage.gov.bc.ca/transportationplan/files/2015/03/BCOTM_Summary-Report_March-2015_web.pdf), page 57

- Identify, build and improve cycle tourism routes throughout the province. Develop a cycle tourism program including but not limited to branded, consistent wayfinding, maps, promotion and incentive opportunities for service providers.
- Measure and acknowledge the potential and real economic value of bike tourism in BC. Cycling tourism's contribution to Oregon's economy amounts to \$400 million USD per year – about \$1.1 million per day.
- Upgrade BikeBC funding criteria to emphasize network connectivity, best practice design guidelines for all ages and abilities, and promotion programs. For example, follow TransLink's example with BICCs funding where higher quality infrastructure is incentivized through eligibility for higher cost sharing amounts. Add BikeBC funding requirement to include minimum 1-5% of budget for promotion, education and/or engagement for each infrastructure project, as is done with TransLink's bicycle cost sharing program. Include and promote eligibility of evaluation and measurement costs such as bicycle counters. Encourage cross-municipal, cross-region connections and collaborations.
- Provide professional support and best practice guidelines to assist smaller communities that don't have sufficient financial and staff resources and expertise.
- Create best practice consistent categorization of cycling facilities to measure existing infrastructure and benchmark improvements. HUB Cycling and TransLink are developing a Benchmarking State of Cycling report for Metro Vancouver that can serve as a template for provincial use later this year.
- Upgrade the expertise of provincial staff, consultants and contractors to best practice active transportation knowledge. Incentivize professional development opportunities.
- Develop consistent wayfinding guidelines and templates for use throughout the Province. See [TransLink's wayfinding guidelines](#) for example that could be adopted provincially.
- Support public bike share with appropriate policies, regulations, templates and cost-sharing that facilitate equity and access and emphasize first and last mile trips that do not compete with bike rental shops.
- Update provincial highway design manuals to reflect current best practices in urban and rural communities. Include and incentivize best practice cycle highways in infrastructure guidelines and design manuals for municipalities as well as for Provincial jurisdiction projects. Leverage opportunities for cycle highway use as utilitarian transportation, recreation, and tourism. Cycle highways support the growing popularity of electrification of bicycles and new mobility types that increase the distance possible by active transportation. Norway, whose population is only slightly larger than B.C.'s, is planning to invest \$1.25 billion in Cycling Highways to link suburbs to city centres.

#### End of Trip Facilities

- Enhance BikeBC funding for bike parking and end of trip facilities, including public secure bike parkades, bike stations with end of trip facilities such as lockers, showers, change rooms, electric bike charging, weather protected bike parking, especially at public transit stations and other transportation hubs, and community spaces like schools, libraries, hospitals and community centres. See [Not Just Bike Racks report](#) for more information.

### Integration with Public Transit

- Invest in improved walking and cycling connections to public transit that allow access to people of all ages and abilities
- Design all transit vehicles to be bicycle accessible and implement policies that allow overflow access to bicycles on busy bicycle routes, such as connecting to and from ferries.
- Work with private transport providers to ensure accommodation for bicycles and mobility aids on taxis, ride sharing and ride hailing services and inter-municipal bus services.

### Land Use

- Prioritize and accelerate transportation investments in transit, cycling and walking that encourage development in compact mixed-use communities that enable people to drive less.
- Introduce and promote incentives and policies to encourage high quality cycling and walking networks in new developments.
- Develop land use policies that encourage compact mixed-use communities that enable walking and cycling to be practical transportation choices for the majority of trips.

## ENCOURAGE and EDUCATE

### Encourage

- Increased, multi-year investment in encouragement programming such as Bike to Work Week and Bike to School Week, Bike to Shop Days, ciclovias or open street events, etc.
- Invest at least \$2/capita/year in promotion, enabling and education for active transportation.
- Invest in events, programs and broadly based public information campaigns to reduce barriers to cycling and improve the safety of active transportation.
- Use marketing to get more people choosing active transportation by making it noticeable & newsworthy, delightful, sociable, participatory, and inclusive. See [City of Vancouver Active Transportation Promotion and Enabling Report](#) for more information.
- Remove PST from electric-assist bicycles. This will help cycling become more accessible to older folks, families with cargo bikes, people traveling long distances
- Set mode share target of 10% cycling for all trip types in BC by 2040.
- Develop or support data collection programs to monitor progress and identify provincial trends of encouragement and education.
- Collect and share data to highlight the estimated impacts and cost-benefit ratios of using active transportation (including health and absenteeism benefits from increased physical activity, journey ambience impacts, direct road safety impacts and the benefits associated with mode shift away from car use: environmental, decongestion, indirect road safety and indirect taxation).
- Collect data and evaluate impacts of encouragement and enabling programs including modal shift, greenhouse gas emissions savings, etc.

## Educate

- Integrate and invest in systemic cycling education into all elementary schools led by trained cycling instructors, and including adaptive bicycle options for 100% participation including those with mobility challenges.
- Invest at least \$2/capita/year in promotion, enabling and education for active transportation.
- Provide easily accessible adult cycling education, including for newcomers to Canada.
- Require integration of cycling education into driver training and licencing and licence renewals to include new and evolving infrastructure and regulations. Require comprehensive knowledge of rules related to active transportation safety to pass driver exam (i.e. safe passing distance, slow speeds, only overtaking when enough space to do so).
- Collect data and evaluate impacts of education programs.

## SAFETY & SECURITY

- Update the BC Motor Vehicle Act and related regulations to better protect vulnerable road users. See [BC Road Safety Law Reform Group Position Paper](#) for full recommendations.
- Clarify legal status and rules re electric bikes / scooters / new mobility devices to indicate where each vehicle goes to maximize safety.
- Strategic enforcement should communicate a fair and data-driven message about road user safety and behaviour. Conditions and contexts that create the most dangerous situations in terms of collisions should be examined, and the highest priority targets for education and enforcement should be the behaviors that result in the most harm.
- Adopt Vision Zero principles in the design, regulation and operation of the transportation system with special focus on the safety of vulnerable road users. Use safe systems approach that is preventive and not only reactive - include near-miss data to direct investment for improvements.
- Design with security and comfort in mind - provide paved, lit and direct routes that are intuitive and convenient.
- Develop active transportation infrastructure design manuals reflecting best practice facilities.
- Update all relevant provincial design manuals, including highway design, subdivision and access control, traffic control, etc. to reflect active transportation best practices
- Review and upgrade road maintenance practices and contracts with a focus on active transportation safety (i.e. frequent sweeping and debris removal)
- Active transportation user safety increases when more people are using active modes. Acknowledge the importance of investing in infrastructure, education, encouragement in increasing active transportation mode share which in turn improves safety.
- Monitor and report frequently on safety data for active transportation users. See [City of Vancouver Cycling Safety Report](#) and [Pedestrian Safety Study](#) for examples of annual reporting.

## LEADERSHIP

- Mandate active transportation end-of-trip facilities in all provincial government buildings, including secure bike parking, electric-assist cycle charging stations, showers, lockers, and related amenities like hair dryers, etc.
- Provide orientation and awareness about the above facilities and encourage and incentivize employee participation in active transportation events and programs.
- Integrate active transportation into provincial operations wherever possible and offer cycling education to all employees at least annually.
- Province of BC to encourage and incentivize employee participation in active transportation events such as Bike to Work Week, Commuter Challenge, Bike to Shop Days, etc.
- Province to review and update rules and restrictions affecting cycling amenities at multi-family residences, workplaces and educational institutions with a focus on ensuring safe, convenient and secure bicycle and mobility aid storage at both existing and new developments( eg: strata council regulations, tenancy agreements, building and development regulations, etc.) See [Not Just Bike Racks report](#).
- Encourage and incentivize employees to switch to active transportation for their daily commute (provide free or subsidized public bike share membership, a subsidy or reimbursement to buy a new bicycle, helmet, lock or gear, etc).
- Provide sufficient matching funds to maximize the rapid development of municipal active transportation facilities, recognizing that development of complete networks maximizes the usefulness and value of active transportation investments.
- Develop an Active Transportation unit within the Ministry of Transportation to provide professional planning and policy expertise at the provincial level.
- Develop and promote active transportation facility manuals and best practice guidelines applicable to municipal and private infrastructure.
- Develop and promote planning guidelines that support the development of communities that encourage and facilitate the use of active transportation.
- Implement regular monitoring, evaluation, reporting and adaptation to measure and make progress on all four pillars, including mode share for all trip types at least every 5 years, as well as economic impact of increased active transportation and related tourism.
- Set mode share target of 10% cycling for all trip types in BC by 2040.
- Establish an active transportation advisory council including community groups, government staff, and other relevant stakeholders, that meets regularly to maintain best practice policies, procedures and actions.
- Encourage more inter-ministerial collaboration and communication regarding active transportation building, education, encouragement, safety, and leadership.

These recommendations are HUB Cycling's macro-level contributions to the first stages of development of the BC Active Transportation Strategy. We aim to continue engagement to provide more detail as the strategy is further developed, and to ensure that there is a related implementation plan so that the strategy is activated in a timely and meaningful way.

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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