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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mayors, First Nations, and Cycling and Accessibility Advocates Call on Province to Reinstate Funding for B.C. Active Transportation Infrastructure Grants Program.

Various levels of government and advocacy groups are **deeply concerned** by the BC Ministry of Transportation and Transit's [recent decision](#) to **suspend the BC Active Transportation Infrastructure Grant program**. The program has existed since 2001 under various names and is a cornerstone of building safe, clean, and connected transportation networks throughout the province. This program provides cost-sharing opportunities to Indigenous and local governments for network planning grants and infrastructure grants, focusing on building walking and biking infrastructure for people of all ages, abilities, and socio-economic backgrounds.

Despite being affirmed in the 2025/2026 provincial budget, the Ministry has paused the program pending a review of the CleanBC climate action plan. However, this grant program long predates CleanBC, with the first “BikeBC” grants launched in 2001 and later renamed to BCAT Infrastructure Grants. While some funding has been connected to CleanBC since 2019, the vast majority has always come from the Ministry of Transportation and Transit’s (MoTT) core budget.

Since 2017, BCAT has awarded nearly **\$130 million to over 400 projects**, enabling communities of all sizes across the province to build and upgrade sidewalks, bike lanes, and multi-use pathways. The program is consistently oversubscribed, demonstrating both its success and the urgent demand for investment in active transportation infrastructure. AT investments in 2024-25 represent less than 1% of the total spending of MOTT.

Active transportation infrastructure is also a critical affordability tool. A recent [Metro Vancouver report](#) found that transportation is now the second-highest household

expense after housing, and, for many families living farther from city centres, transportation costs can even exceed housing costs. When communities have safe and reliable walking, cycling, and rolling routes, residents, especially those in lower-income and suburban communities, can reduce dependence on costly private vehicle ownership. By supporting access to affordable, zero-fare modes of travel, this program directly helps British Columbians keep more money in their pockets while staying connected to work, school, and essential services.

We, the undersigned, are calling on the Province to:

- Immediately **reinstate the BCAT Infrastructure Grant program** so that 2025/2026 community projects are not delayed or cancelled.
- **Increase funding** to meet demand, as the program is already oversubscribed.
- Ensure **long-term stability** for municipal partners who depend on predictable provincial support to plan and deliver active transportation networks.
- **Incorporate funding for active transportation infrastructure as a permanent part of the Ministry of Transportation and Transit's capital budget.** Because AT currently has no fixed budgetary commitment, BCAT grants are vulnerable to shifting priorities. Active transportation projects are more than infrastructure; each represents an investment in economic development, chronic disease prevention, mental health, and the social fabric of our communities. Recognizing this formally in the Ministry's budget would ensure that future communities can continue building safe, connected, and equitable transportation networks without unnecessary risk of disruption.
- **Commit to equitable reallocation of road space**, ensuring safe, connected AT networks while maintaining safe and reliable access for people who must drive, including those with disabilities, trades workers, and rural residents.

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Patrick Johnstone, Mayor of the City of New Westminster, along with representatives from several advocacy organizations, are available for media interviews. To schedule an interview, please contact:

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QUOTES:

“Careful review of programs is important in a time of economic uncertainty, but I am confident any review of BCAT will show it returns orders of magnitude more value to British Columbians than its cost to the province. If we want to meet our shared climate action, affordability, and road safety goals, the program should be expanded, not suspended.”

- Patrick Johnstone, Mayor, City of New Westminster

“Walking, canoeing, and running have been the ways First Nations people travelled since time immemorial. With the rise of highways and freeways, these traditional modes of travel have become more dangerous, underscoring the urgent need for safe active transportation pathways to connect our province. These projects are not frivolous spending—they are investments in connecting British Columbians to the land, strengthening communities, and creating environmentally responsible ways to travel through our beautiful region. We call on the Provincial Government to lift the pause on this program and commit to supporting both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in safely accessing and celebrating the beauty of our shared home.”

- Aaron Pete, Chief of Chawathil First Nation

“Pausing this program will stall critical projects across BC, slowing progress on safer streets and healthier communities. Communities rely on this funding to deliver the kind of high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure that reduces dependency on personal vehicles, lowers emissions, and saves lives. Suspending it sends the wrong signal at a time when British Columbians need more transportation choices, not fewer.”

- Rose Gardner, Executive Director, HUB Cycling

This very small investment reaps multiple benefits squarely aligned with this government’s goals: affordability, health care cost savings, economic development, First Nations partnerships and improved mental health. Saving and expanding rather than cancelling these grants should be a priority.

- Peter Ladner, Board Chair, BC Cycling Coalition

It is a well-established fact that investments in active trail infrastructure lead to a reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. It is ludicrous to suspend funding for active transportation projects when the Province has 42% of B.C.'s total emissions coming from the transportation section. BC needs to make it easier for communities to be connected with greenway trails for active walking, rolling and bicycling.

- Ciel Sander, Board President, Trails Society of BC (TrailsBC)

British Columbia communities have been building critical active transportation infrastructure to make our air cleaner and neighbourhoods more accessible and inclusive. These pathways are not only reduce our global heating emissions, they are essential for creating more healthy, safe and resilient neighbourhoods and to provide inexpensive transportation options. To ensure we have livable, affordable communities the BC government must continue the BCAT programme that supports this necessary infrastructure.

- Cameron Esler, Manager Sustainable Communities, David Suzuki Foundation

As advocates for seniors' mobility and walkable communities, we are deeply concerned about the pause to British Columbia's Active Transportation Infrastructure Grants Program. Access to safe transportation options is foundational to both individual and community well-being. For seniors in particular, the lack of safe and accessible active transportation infrastructure, such as sidewalks and pathways, can become a barrier to accessing essential services, social connection, civic participation, and health care services.

- Laura Jane, Executive Director, Better Environmentally Sound Transportation (BEST)

About HUB Cycling

Since 1998, HUB Cycling has been championing cycling across British Columbia as a charitable not-for-profit organization. HUB has worked to remove barriers to cycling and amplify the health, environmental, and economic benefits of active transportation. Through education, advocacy, research and engagement, HUB has empowered thousands of people to cycle more often and supported the development of a safer, more connected cycling network by working to #UnGapTheMap.

HUB Cycling's mission is to get more people cycling more often. With nearly 4,000 members, over 75,000 direct supporters, and 10 volunteer transportation advisory committees across the region, HUB promotes cycling for people of all ages and abilities (AAA) in communities throughout Metro Vancouver. Learn more at bikehub.ca.

About BC Cycling Coalition

BC Cycling Coalition is your voice for safer and more accessible cycling and active transportation in British Columbia. We work with government agencies, municipalities and communities to make cycling safer, more fun and accessible.

About Capital Bike

Capital Bike has been active in the Capital Region since 1994. Our Mission is to create a sustainable community where active transportation is a safe, healthy, fun, and normal everyday activity. With annual Bike Education for over 3700 students, community events impacting close to 10,000 participants, and six active local committees, Capital Bike is an informed and respected voice for active transportation across the Capital Region. Our vision is to see more people, cycle to more places, more often.

About Trails BC

The Trails Society of BC (Trails BC) is a registered non-profit and charity with a mandate to assemble the British Columbian section of the Trans Canada Trail, as well as advocate for the expansion, sustainability and preservation of greenway trails across the province.

About Better Environmentally Sound Transportation (BEST)

Since 1991, Better Environmentally Sound Transportation (BEST) has worked to make sustainable transportation options better and more accessible. Our programs include initiatives that promote active transportation and walkable communities, including programs to help ensure seniors access to the transportation options they need. We believe that everyone should be able to move around their communities safely and with dignity. More information at best.bc.ca