

## **2024 AVICC Resolution**

**Category:** Transportation

**Title:** Active Transportation within Provincial Highway Rights of Way

WHEREAS according to CleanBC's Roadmap to 2030, transportation is our largest single source of GHG emissions which accounts for approximately 40% of our annual total, and to address this the Province has committed to doubling the proportion of trips using active transportation by 2030.

WHEREAS given the urgency of the climate crises, the fast-approaching 2030 deadline and the fact that safe active transportation infrastructure provides economically accessible transportation for more individuals of all ages and abilities, there is a pressing need for the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to provide stronger leadership, accountability, and equitable investment in infrastructure for all modes of transportation.

THEREFORE, be it resolved that AVICC and UBCM request the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to take on the responsibility for the development, operation and maintenance of all active transportation infrastructure within Provincial Highway rights of way to align with active transportation planning of Indigenous and local governments, thus ensuring equitable commitment to active transportation infrastructure commensurate with infrastructure focused on motor vehicles.

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**Introduction:**

Since 2018, the Province has been making strides to address climate change through a growth in resources to promote active transportation. Initiatives such as “Move Commute Connect, BC’s Active Transportation Policy”, Active Transportation Design Guide and ongoing Active Transportation Infrastructure Grants have shown partnerships with Indigenous and local governments to promote mode shift and equitable access to safe transportation. While these initiatives have enabled changes on the local level there is a disconnect of intention and commitment to meet 2030 goals without the same investment in Provincial Highways.

**Background:**

Communities taking a leadership role in active transportation have been making investments in their local infrastructure to improve connectivity and safety thus incentivising mode shift. This includes infrastructure on Provincial Highways that cut through communities and play an important role in route planning for active transportation. Development on Provincial Highways is done thorough permitting and/or issuing of licences of occupation, meaning that the Indigenous or local governments are required to develop, maintain, and operate this new infrastructure. This puts additional financial pressure on this level of government activate and achieve active transportation while the MoTI remains focused and invested on infrastructure focused on motor vehicles.

We are currently in a climate crisis where transportation accounts for 40% of BC’s annual total GHG emissions. Similarly, in a time of increasing cost of living, the costs of maintaining and owning a vehicle pose a financial barrier for some BC residents. According to MoTI’s 2022/23 Annual Service Plan Report “Encouraging more people to use active transportation or transit is also essential in the context of British Columbia’s rapidly growing population.” If the Province is going to continue to take a leadership role in reducing climate emissions and providing equitable access to transportation alternatives, then it is important for the MoTI to be proactive with the development and operation of active transportation infrastructure on those roads within its sole jurisdiction. Furthermore, by committing to aligning to an Indigenous or local government’s active transportation planning it incentivize the creation of active transportation plans in those governments that have not yet developed their own policies.

Finally, investments in active transportation infrastructure on Provincial Highways show a direct benefit to the Province. For one, it helps achieve BC’s climate target of a 27-32% reduction of emissions by 2030, relative to 2007 levels. Additionally, it also increases safety and reduces conflict and collisions between road users. Currently as a performance measure to improve highway safety and reliability, MoTI partners with the RCMP and ICBC to establish a serious

collision rate on Provincial Highways (Collisions per million vehicle kilometres). The Ministry also partners with the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC) on capital and preservation projects that have expected safety benefits to improve safety. Similarly, mode shift aims to reduce the overall number of vehicles on roads that could potentially contribute to more collisions. Active transportation improvements currently undertaken by Indigenous and local governments on Provincial Highways improves the safety and thus improves metrics use to measure safety on those Provincial Highways.

Rationale:

When residents experience even small gaps in safety in their transportation routes, they are more likely to avoid active transportation. According to Infrastructure Canada's National Active Transportation Strategy, "Unsafe road conditions, poor or non-existent signage, gaps in the network, and inconsistent infrastructure are just a few reasons why someone might have a poor experience or not want to choose active transportation." Limited resources often can lead to investment in active transportation routes phased over years thus leading to fragmented and disconnected active transportation routes that do not encourage use. By removing fiscal challenges, Indigenous and local governments can be more effective, and faster thus addressing the urgency of the climate crisis. Additionally, the overall public benefit of access to safe, equitable and affordable transportation is achieved with shared leadership to improve active transportation on all rights of way in communities. Cohesive active transportation networks can be achieved effectively and efficiently when the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure makes commitments to take on the responsibility for the development, operation and maintenance of all active transportation infrastructure within Provincial Highway rights of way.

Links:

[https://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/Annual\\_Reports/2022\\_2023/pdf/ministry/tran.pdf](https://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/Annual_Reports/2022_2023/pdf/ministry/tran.pdf)

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