

To: Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport, Lana Popham

May 15, 2023

Dear Minister Popham,

In 2022, HUB Cycling released a [research report and analysis of the benefits of cycle highways](#), the potential of which extends to all communities in BC, both urban and rural. Many groups, including BC Cycling Coalition, Modo the Car Co-op, Surrey Board of Trade, Vancouver Bike Share (MOBI by Shaw Go), and Better Environmentally Sound Transportation (BEST), have [endorsed HUB Cycling's call](#) for creating cycle highways in BC.

Cycle highways are high-quality bike facilities - comfortable for most people - that connect important destinations. They are long-distance, intuitive, and have limited stops, like highways for cars and trucks. They are direct, paved, protected, lit, of ample width, and with intersections prioritizing people cycling. This, along with clear signage, branding, and regular maintenance, ensures cycle highways are safe, comfortable, and easy to use for people of all ages and abilities at all times of the day and year.



Photo Credit: Cycle Superhighways, Capital Region of Denmark

British Columbia is a world-class destination with scenic views, pristine natural landscapes and unique attractions. Combine this with a sustainable, active, affordable and endorphin-enhancing way to discover that all, and you would have tourism success. Here are some tourism success stories:

- Cycling tourism brings €44 billion to Europe's economy. EuroVelo is a network of long-distance cycle routes that see 5.3 million visitors annually, with an average increase of 20% yearly<sup>1</sup>.
- In New Zealand, cycle tourism is associated with a direct expenditure of \$76 million a year and a total economic output of \$160 million, comparable to their cruise ship industry<sup>2</sup>.
- In BC, \$38 million is realized from mountain bike tourism on the Sea-to-Sky corridor alone<sup>3</sup>. If we expand to more ages and abilities with cycle highways, that would increase ridership and benefit tourism dramatically.

We are facing many pressing issues, and cycling is a quick and cost-effective part of the solution to these - helping tackle Covid-recovery, affordability, equity, congestion, and climate change. Cycle highways would allow BC to move forward your government's goals to shift to more sustainable tourism and opportunities for Indigenous Peoples to be full partners in the inclusive and sustainable province we can build together.

By promoting cycling as a mode of transportation, cycle highways can help to reduce carbon emissions from cars and other vehicles, and reduce vehicle kilometres traveled. Cycle highways are an equitable and just solution that can help British Columbians achieve the CleanBC targets of net-zero carbon pollution by 2050.

Encouraging active transportation, such as cycling, can have a positive impact on public health. By promoting physical activity, cycle highways can help reduce obesity, diabetes, and other health conditions associated with a sedentary lifestyle.

Cycle highways can also have a positive impact on local economies across the province by promoting tourism and supporting local businesses. By providing safe and attractive cycling infrastructure, cycle highways can attract visitors to many communities across BC and encourage them to explore by bike.

E-bikes and other forms of micromobility are massively increasing in popularity. E-bike firms have experienced a sharp uptick in sales in the past two years, ranging from 100-500% growth. Cycle highways are the perfect infrastructure to leverage the new possibilities introduced by the mainstreaming of e-bikes that flatten hills, reduce time and fitness limitations, allow cargo and kid carrying and make cycle tourism accessible for more ages, abilities and distances.

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<sup>1</sup> [EuroVelo: the European cycle route network](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Bicycle Tourism and Regional Development: A New Zealand Case Study](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Mountain Bike Tourism and Community Development In British Columbia: Critical Success Factors for the Future](#)



*“I took a Streetwise Cycling course (in person) which totally changed my relationship to biking by increasing my comfort levels. Shortly afterward we started taking organized bike tours and now we do 6-week self-supported bike touring in France each year (2,000 km; 18,000 m elevation). A game changer for us - we are in our 70s and plan to continue tourism at the speed of bike for as long as possible.” - Karole S, Vancouver.*

Some examples of existing and prospective cycle highways in BC include:

- Galloping Goose and Lochside Trails in the Capital Region
- Highway 1 - 264 St to Whatcom Rd (Abbotsford to Langley)
- The Kelowna Okanagan Rail Trail
- The 46 km Valley Trail network in Whistler
- Cycle 16 route between Smithers and Telkwa
- BC Parkway in Metro Vancouver
- Sunshine Coast
- Nelson to Castlegar
- Kettle Valley Rail Trail
- Experience the Fraser

We would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to present the findings of our research and discuss how cycle highways can help to achieve your Ministry’s goals.

Sincerely,

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