



Website: durhamsafecycling.ca
Email: durhamrcc@gmail.com
Mail: 1B-701 Rossland Road East
Suite # 629
Whitby ON, L1N 9K3

Advocating for Safe Cycling Throughout Durham Region

Shane Baker
Chief Administration Officer
Town of Ajax
65 Harwood Ave. S.
Ajax, ON
L1S 2H9

Via e-mail: shane.baker@ajax.ca

July 14, 2021

RE: Federal Government Active Transportation Strategy

Dear Shane,

Durham Region Cycling Coalition (DRCC) is a not-for-profit volunteer organization representing the six cycle clubs as well as local cycling enthusiasts across Durham Region advocating for safe cycling improvements.

As a community partner, we are writing to you today regarding the recently announced Federal Active Transportation Strategy which included a funding model of \$400 million investment over the next five years available to local municipalities.

Press Release: <https://www.canada.ca/en/office-infrastructure/news/2021/03/government-of-canada-announces-first-federal-fund-for-cycling-paths-and-trails-across-the-country.html>

Infrastructure Canada: <https://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/trans/active-actif-eng.html>

This in mind, DRCC has been following this exciting announcement closely. Most recently, we reached out to the Federal Government seeking details and would like to take this opportunity to share with you the response we received. (Attachment # 1).

Upon review, we are encouraged to learn a funding announcement is pending very soon with the possibility of our local communities receiving funding support.



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In anticipation, it is our belief that communities should be planning now and would recommend the following actions which may already be occurring within your organization.

- Review current non funded future active transportation cycling plans and strategies.
- Asses *pull forward* infrastructure priorities with a goal of closing immediate gaps within your cycling network.
- Prepare and fully cost a number of *Shovel Ready* Active Transportation Projects ready for application once details unfold on the application process.

Realizing active transportation funding support is always a challenge, we see this announcement as a gateway to local improvements with those communities fully prepared reaping the rewards. As a community partner, our objective is for your community to maximise available funding dollars with a mutual goal of improving our local cycling network.

On behalf of every-one at DRCC, thank you for taking time to review our comments. We look forward to the inherent benefits of this new program and learning more as the Federal Government provides additional details.

If we can assist in any way with planning priorities, please reach out and we will be happy to help.

Respectfully,

Ron Lalonde
Corporate Secretary
Durham Region Cycling Coalition
ron@durhamsafecycling.ca

C.C. A. Collier, Mayor, Town of Ajax
B. MacDonald, Executive Director, Durham Region Cycling Coalition



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Attachment # 1

From: Contact (INFC) <infc.contact.inf@canada.ca>
Sent: June 7, 2021 11:42 AM
To: ron@durhamsafecycling.ca
Subject: Your correspondence of April 29, 2021

Dear Ron Lalonde,

I am writing in response to your letter of April 29, 2021, addressed to Chantalle Aubertin, Press Secretary to the Honourable Catherine McKenna, Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, regarding the Active Transportation Strategy. Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding.

As you note in your correspondence, on March 12, 2021, Minister McKenna and Parliamentary Secretary Andy Fillmore announced a \$400-million fund over five years for active transportation that will help build new and expanded networks of pathways, bike lanes, trails and pedestrian bridges. This is the first federal fund dedicated to building active transportation throughout Canada, and part of the Government of Canada's plan to create one million jobs, fight climate change, and build a more sustainable and resilient economy. Investing in pathways and trails for cycling, walking, hybrid e-bikes and scooters, and wheelchairs gives everyone the opportunity to get to work, school, parks or public transit in a safe and convenient way.

The Active Transportation Fund is part of an eight-year, \$14.9-billion public transit investment outlined by Prime Minister Trudeau on February 10, 2021. It will support communities as they build vibrant neighborhoods where people can live, work and play. The Fund will also help Canadians living in rural communities and places without active transportation options to unlock the potential in their communities.

This funding builds on existing federal initiatives that support active transportation. Recognizing the environmental and public health benefits of active transportation, the Government of Canada has adjusted the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program so that provinces and territories can use federal funding to act quickly on a wider range of more pandemic-resilient infrastructure projects, such as active transportation projects. Under the new COVID-19 Resilience stream, active transportation infrastructure, such as parks, trails, foot bridges, bike lanes and multi-use paths are eligible for a significantly larger federal cost share.

As well, the \$31-million Canada Healthy Communities Initiative is supporting community-led solutions that respond to needs arising from COVID-19. Smaller-scale projects are eligible for funding under three main themes: creating safe and vibrant public spaces, improving mobility options, and digital solutions. Active transportation infrastructure, such as multi-modal paths, are eligible projects.

In addition to new funding, Minister McKenna and Parliamentary Secretary Fillmore launched stakeholder engagements for Canada's first Active Transportation Strategy on March 12, 2021. Since that time, they have met with provinces and territories, municipalities, Indigenous organizations, non-government organizations, academics and business groups from across the country to seek their views on how to best deliver active transportation infrastructure in Canadian communities.

Details on the new Active Transportation Fund, including application timelines and eligibility criteria, will be shared soon.

Thank you for writing on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Gerard Peets
Assistant Deputy Minister