

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary  
US Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue  
Washington, DC 20511

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

We, the undersigned organizations, write to ask you to address the unfulfilled promise of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) by requesting full funding for the Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program (ATIIP) in your FY24 budget request. Now that the first year of the implementation of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) has passed, we appreciate your work implementing this important legislation, especially your focus on addressing climate emissions, promoting equitable investment for BIPOC and low-income communities that historically have not had access to transportation investments in or who have been harmed by past investment, and ensuring the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists, people with disabilities, and other vulnerable road users.

Communities around the country have developed plans to construct active transportation networks connecting people to routine destinations and critical spine trails connecting between communities, which would help fulfill the IIJA's vision of a safe, sustainable, and equitable transportation system. To fully enable local communities to address these priorities, however, this program must be funded, and we call on USDOT to include funding for ATIIP at the authorized level of \$200 million in its proposed FY 2024 budget. This would enable communities construct these active transportation networks and spine trails and help our country achieve the full promise of the IIJA.

Full funding for ATIIP would help cities and regions provide opportunities for safe walking, bicycling, and rolling to daily destinations and enable communities to combat climate change by shifting to carbon-free transportation options. It would also address the transportation and economic needs of smaller towns seeking to connect to each other via longer, multi-purpose trails which provide not only transportation options, but also serve as economic development engines. A brief survey in spring 2020 of local transportation planners and bicycle and pedestrian organizations identified over \$7 billion in unmet need to fill gaps in active transportation systems. These networks require major concentrated investment to tie together existing elements of prospective systems often funded at the smaller project-by-project level by the 30-year-old Transportation Alternatives program.

This funding would also complement other grants, such as the Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program, by extending the reach of safe and connected infrastructure for walking, bicycling, and rolling to surrounding neighborhoods and significantly increasing access to employment, residential and commercial centers. Although the Neighborhood Access and Equity Grant Program includes welcome eligibility for multi-use trails, regional greenways and active transportation networks and spines, ATIIP provides dedicated funding that would better encourage and provide critical ongoing support to communities to plan and construct complete, connected active transportation systems. ATIIP is the only program that focuses investment on enabling communities to plan and construct safe and convenient routes to walk and bike to routine destinations; the necessary centerpiece of any strategy to shift short driving trips to active transportation.

Investing in connected active transportation networks and spine trails would help USDOT reach its goals by reversing rising fatalities and serious injuries among pedestrians and bicyclists, reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector, providing equitable mobility options, ensuring accessible options for people with disabilities, and rebuilding our local economies. A recent study found that a substantial investment in active transportation focused on mode shift to walking and biking could reduce U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 54 million metric tons annually. The Non-motorized Pilot Project created by Congress proved that connectivity investments significantly shift car trips to walking and bicycling, while decreasing pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities and crashes.<sup>1</sup> Active transportation connectivity will also help ensure greater equity by providing affordable and accessible transportation options for the millions of U.S. households that do not own an automobile, as well as providing greater access for people with disabilities, especially to job and education opportunities that could help drive the economy. ATIIIP ensures that connectivity investments will be equitably distributed to the communities that need it most and have had the least access.

The Fiscal Year 2024 appropriations process provides an opportunity for USDOT to acquire funds for the infrastructure projects that Americans most need, but that were not funded in IIJA. The Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program is a critical tool to achieve our nation's transportation goals, providing a uniquely high return on investment. Please include full funding at \$200 million per year in your proposed Fiscal Year 2024 budget.

Sincerely,

America Walks

Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals

Autistic People of Color Fund

Center for Disability Rights

Church World Service

Detroit Greenways Coalition

East Coast Greenway Alliance

Endangered Species Coalition

Environmental Law & Policy Center

GreenLatinos

Hispanic Access Foundation

Hispanic Federation

League of American Bicyclists

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<sup>1</sup> See William Lyons, et al., "Nonmotorized transportation pilot program: continued progress in developing walking and bicycling networks," available at <https://rosap.ntl.bts.gov/view/dot/12063>.

Lyft

Madison Area Bus Advocates

North American Bikeshare & Scootershare Association (NABSA)

NRDC

PeopleForBikes

PolicyLink

Propel ATL

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

Ride New Orleans

Safe Routes Partnership

Sierra Club

Transportation for America

Trust for Public Land