

October 30, 2024

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

Ms. Shalanda Delores Young
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Secretary Buttigieg and Director Young:

We, the undersigned organizations, write to urge you to fulfill the promise of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) by requesting full funding for the Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program (ATIIP) at \$200 million in the president's Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 budget request. We appreciate your ongoing work implementing IIJA, particularly your focus on addressing climate emissions, promoting equitable investments in underserved communities, and ensuring the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists, and people with disabilities. As we enter the latter stages of IIJA, it is critical that this appropriations cycle not be overlooked, since this appropriations cycle represents one of the last opportunities to solidify ATIIP's impact ahead of reauthorization.

Communities across the country have developed plans to build active transportation networks that connect people to essential destinations and create critical spine trails linking communities. Accelerating the completion of hundreds of trail and active transportation networks under development nationwide is necessary to realize the IIJA's vision of a safe, sustainable, and equitable transportation system. A fully funded ATIIP is essential to making this vision a reality.

We were disappointed to see that ATIIP was not funded for FY24, particularly as the program's objectives align so closely with the administration's goals of reducing carbon emissions, improving safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and people with disabilities, as well as promoting equity. Communities across the country are still eager to apply for ATIIP grants, and there is a clear and overwhelming demand for the program's support. These investments are essential to achieving the IIJA's legacy, which depends on accelerating active transportation network completion in this final phase of funding.

The FY 2026 appropriations cycle offers perhaps the last chance to create a foundation of success for ATIIP leading into future transportation reauthorizations. By fully funding ATIIP now, USDOT can demonstrate the program's ability to catalyze the development of active transportation networks nationwide creating the "proof of concept" necessary for its continuation and expansion beyond the IIJA.

Investing in safe and convenient options for walking, biking, and other active transportation brings many benefits. It reduces climate emissions and traffic congestion by shifting trips to carbon-free transportation. It addresses the transportation and economic needs of smaller towns that seek to connect with each other. Additionally, rising pedestrian and bicycle fatalities can only be reversed by providing safe routes to routine destinations. There are billions of dollars in immediate unmet needs for filling gaps in active transportation systems nationwide. These networks require dedicated, consistent, and concentrated investments, which are not currently available through other existing federal programs.

Through recent discretionary grant program awards, USDOT has demonstrated a strong understanding of the importance of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in achieving IIJA's goals of climate, safety, and equity. However, even with a balanced portfolio of 2023 RAISE awards, fewer than a quarter of active transportation project applicants received funding due to the highly competitive multimodal scope of the program. This underscores the incredible unmet demand for concentrated active transportation funding—needs best met by ATIIP through reliable, large-scale grants specifically for active transportation projects.

Investing in connecting active transportation infrastructure within and between communities would support USDOT's goals by reversing the rise in pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities and injuries, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and providing equitable, accessible mobility options. A [study by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy](#) found that substantial investment in active transportation focused on shifting trips to walking and biking, could reduce U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 54 million metric tons annually. Furthermore, the Non-Motorized Pilot Project created by Congress demonstrated that connectivity investments significantly shift car trips to walking and biking, while decreasing pedestrian and bicyclist crashes and fatalities. Active transportation investments also ensure greater equity by providing affordable, accessible mobility for the millions of households that do not own a car, including people with disabilities, while improving public health.

Local and regional governments have worked diligently to develop transportation plans that prioritize community needs, including active transportation networks, to ensure safe, accessible, and equitable routes for all users. However, limited funding and uncertainty about the long-term future of the ATIIP program may hinder the full realization of these plans. While many communities are eager to apply for ATIIP grants, the lack of available funding and concerns about the program's continuation may discourage participation.

As the DOT implements the IJA, we urge you to prioritize ATIP funding to empower communities to connect safe routes to everyday destinations. Doing so will lead to long-term benefits for everyone through healthier communities, reduced traffic fatalities, and decreased carbon emissions. The opportunity to establish ATIP's success is now, and full funding in FY 2026 is essential to ensuring the program's future viability in upcoming reauthorization discussions.

Sincerely,

National Organizations



State and Local Organizations



Regional Organizations

