



March 2, 2026

The Honorable Monique Limón
President Pro Tempore, California State Senate
1021 "O" Street, Suite 7610
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Robert Rivas
Speaker, California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 219
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable John Laird
Chair, California State Senate Budget Committee
1020 N. Street, Room 502
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Jesse Gabriel
Chair, California State Assembly Budget Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8230
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Laura Richardson
Chair, California State Senate Budget Committee Subcommittee 5
1020 N. Street, Room 502
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Steve Bennett
Chair, California State Assembly Budget Committee Subcommittee 4
1021 O Street, Suite 8230
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Proposed 2026-27 Budget Request for Active Transportation Infrastructure and Incentives

Dear President Pro Tempore Limón, Speaker Rivas, Chair Laird, Chair Gabriel, Chair Richardson, and Chair Bennett,

Despite all of the progress that has been made, California still struggles with wildfires caused by climate change, lack of reliable and safe transportation options, and rising economic costs. To combat these concerns and invest in a cleaner and sustainable transportation system, **we strongly urge you to invest additional resources into active transportation solutions that advance safety, accessibility, and affordability by allocating an additional \$200M annually toward the Active Transportation Program and providing \$15M for e-bike incentives.**

A recent study has illuminated that as many as 35% of Californians have limited access to a vehicle¹. This includes children and teenagers who are too young to drive, elderly people for whom driving can be too dangerous, people with disabilities, and people who simply can't afford the costs associated with vehicle ownership. These people have to either rely on members of their family or community to give them a lift, or have to brave the lack of safe infrastructure and unreliable transit systems to reach their destinations. The fourth largest economy in the world shouldn't leave over a third of its population behind when it comes to transportation choices. This is especially so as Caltrans reports showcase the large scale of resources that go towards expanding our highway system when compared to building new sidewalks and bike lanes².

Investing in active transportation doesn't just impact those who cannot drive, but benefits California as a whole. The main benefit of active transportation infrastructure is helping reduce vehicle miles traveled by providing driving alternatives. This reduction in congestion not only helps improve air quality and reduce climate pollution, but also reduces the rate of car collisions, road wear, and commute travel times³. This, in turn, helps improve California's economy, as hospitalizations and road maintenance costs drop. Additionally, access to active transportation improves overall health as it encourages people to be more active, helping lower obesity and heart attack rates⁴. With California already struggling as the worst state in the nation for air pollution⁵, pedestrian fatalities⁶, and transportation costs⁷, prioritizing active transportation options would help improve the quality of life and affordability for Californians.

Additionally, there is strong public support for these options. For example, the California Transportation Commission's Active Transportation Program, which has successfully funded over 1,000 projects since its inception, saw almost 300 applications this last cycle, totaling \$2.5 billion in asks. Similarly, the E-bike Incentive Project (EBIP) managed by the California Air Resources Board, which provided e-bike voucher incentives to low-income Californians, was so popular among Californians that the applications for the 1,500 initial vouchers were filled within the first hour after CARB had launched the program, with over 100,000 people waiting in the queue. Yet, despite their popularity, both programs have recently faced significant cuts. The Active Transportation Program was cut by \$400M in 2024, which almost completely wiped the funding for that cycle, leaving only \$160M available to fund almost 300 projects. The E-bike Incentive Project was even less fortunate, as the previous Budget Bill directed CARB to move all of its remaining EBIP funding to the Clean Cars 4 All program, effectively canceling this highly popular program unless additional funding can be found.

We are concerned that continuing to cut these programs will hinder compliance with the state climate targets. While CARB data has shown that GHG emissions have begun to decline in California⁸, more work needs to be done to ensure that we meet the goal stated in SB 32 to reduce GHG emissions to 40% below 1990 in the next 5 years. Additionally, the same cannot be

¹Lehman, A. & Henningson, S. (2025) Who Doesn't Have a Car? NRDC

https://www.nrdc.org/resources/who-doesnt-have-car?utm_medium=email&utm_source=climateplan&utm_content=mb

²Caltrans (2025) Select State Highway System Project Outcomes

<https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/asset-management/documents/select-shs-projecttt-outcomes-022625-a11y.pdf>

³Moravec et al. (2024) Drive Less, Live More: How States Can Lead the Way in Climate-Smart Transportation, RMI

<https://rmi.org/drive-less-live-more-how-states-can-lead-the-way-in-climate-smart-transportation/>

⁴National Recreation and Park Association, Active Transportation, Parks and Public Health

<https://www.nrpa.org/contentassets/4db5df14a30e49ef853101af360cf1a1/active-transportation-parks-public-health.pdf>

⁵American Lung Association (2024) Most Polluted Cities <https://www.lung.org/research/sota/city-rankings/most-polluted-cities>

⁶<https://www.ots.ca.gov/media-and-research/campaigns/pedestrian-safety/>

⁷Lehman, A. & Henningson, S. (2025) Who Doesn't Have a Car? NRDC

https://www.nrdc.org/resources/who-doesnt-have-car?utm_medium=email&utm_source=climateplan&utm_content=mb

⁸California Air Resources Board (2025) California Greenhouse Gas Emissions from 2000 to 2023: Trends of Emissions and Other Indicators https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2025-11/nc-2000_2023_ghg_inventory_trends.pdf

said for efforts to reduce VMT, as the recent Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure (CAPTI) Progress Report showed that despite progress made to implement all CAPTI actions, many of California's transportation programs continue to result in a net increase in VMT⁹. We need a stronger commitment to funding the solutions that move our transportation system in a more sustainable direction, which is why we urge you to include funding for the Active Transportation Program and e-bike incentives in the Legislative Budget Proposal. In particular, **we request that you allocate an additional \$200M annually toward the Active Transportation Program over the next 5 years and provide an additional \$15M in one-time funding for e-bike incentives.** The additional ATP funding would help offset the rising costs of active transportation projects and would ensure we meet our climate targets by 2030. The one-time funding for e-bike incentives would also help unpause the E-bike Incentive Project as our organizations work with CARB and the Legislature to further improve the program.

Our state is currently on the precipice of change. We have an opportunity to limit the impacts of climate change and poor air quality by increasing investments in clean, sustainable, affordable, and accessible transportation options. We have an opportunity to ensure that children feel safe walking to school. We have an opportunity to help low-income communities find employment opportunities that do not require them to spend a large portion of their paycheck on transportation. We have an opportunity to prevent needless deaths from traffic violence by building safer bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. We urge you to support these values and increase funding for the Active Transportation Program and e-bike incentives.

Sincerely,

⁹ CalSTA (2023) Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure 2023 Annual Progress Report
<https://calsta.ca.gov/-/media/calsta-media/documents/capti-2023-annual-report-finalreport-ally.pdf>

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