



# Annual Report

2023-24





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# About Us

## Mission

*Empowering youth to be healthy and resilient through using a bicycle to reach everyday destinations.*

## Vision

*Youth have agency to independently travel their community by bicycle.*



## What we do

Our programs provide youth with the skills, equipment and inspiration to navigate their world. Cycling education builds skills, confidence and community and opens doors for youth to be independent and resilient as they pedal their path in life.



## Acknowledging the land

We respectfully recognize the relationship that the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis across Canada have with the land all Canadians live on and enjoy. YER acknowledges that Alberta is comprised of the traditional and ancestral territory of many peoples, presently subject to Treaties 6, 7, and 8. These peoples include the Cree, Dene, Saulteaux, Nakota Sioux, Stoney Nakoda, Tsuut'ina Nation, Métis People of Alberta, and Blackfoot Confederacy. We acknowledge the land and its peoples as an act of reconciliation and gratitude to those whose territory on which we walk, wheel, and roll.

# Message from the Board

After just three years offering programming, Youth en Route board members spent the start of 2024 re-imagining our mission and vision. It's not that we were on the wrong path, but we knew that we had to change our focus a bit to actually reach our goals. We worked with over 1000 students – and they kept telling us over and over that the only way they could consider biking places was if they actually had a bike. They wanted our help to do that.

This year we started giving bikes, helmets, locks and tools to youth without the means to acquire them independently. We are keen to see data and check success this year. After many considered conversations, we arrived at the concept of the five links. We've now changed the way we think about governance, organizing all of our work, partners and processes into these links that are required to inspire active travel.

I've been fortunate to have joined this board at the start of its journey and am amazed at the progress and impact drive, passion and only a few grants have taken us. We take pride in being nimble and responsive to our key audience – youth. We've already heard from one of the members of our Youth Advisory Committee at a meeting over the summer and expect that sharing to continue with regular reports to the board. We know we are best able to support our mission when we understand and react to lived experiences.

The 2024–25 year is shaping up to be busy and fun with many new schools and their students keen to take on cycling.



*Kimberley  
Nelson  
Director*

# Message from Executive Director

I have a vague memory of my brothers teaching me how to ride a tiny green bike with red basket near our home in Vancouver. With my own children, the ups and downs of learning is easier to recall. The oldest was timid, and I held the video camera why my husband ran along side. Years later, she took it upon herself to remove training wheels for her little sister and came into the kitchen to announce that "You should come see Mom. Anne is biking all by herself." So much for capturing the moment.

Riding a bike is one of those stepping stones that everyone should achieve. But what happens if you missed out, or didn't have a bike, or come from a place where women aren't encouraged to be independent? That's where Youth en Route comes in. We are the metaphorical (or actual) hands that guide youth from non-rider to rider. At many schools, classmates help each other and celebrate every success. Even a few independent pedal rotations can result in whoops and hollers from classmates.

We have learned so much this year. Every class is a mini focus group to help us understand what youth need to be independent.

We know we are never going to achieve our goal of every student having the agency to get where they want to go independently unless students have bikes, the skills to look after them and the confidence to use them to get around.

Our goals this year are big. We want to double our reach from 1,300, to 2,600 students and give more youth the tools to pedal their path.



Our dedicated staff, Stuart, Rob, Duncan, Kimberley and Kauther are on a learning journey too. We improve our skills with every kid we connect with. Together, we roll.

*Laura Shutiak,  
Founder and Executive Director*

# Our priorities

As we consider our mission and how we achieve our vision, we know that there are five requirements or links for active travel. All are needed to shift from cars to independent, sustainable modes.

We work to build all of these links. It's a great way to simply articulate our work. Grantors can easily understand the demand when we look at each pillar as part of the bigger picture.

Only a few privileged schools have students that can check all five requirements. We want a majority of students in every school to be able to check off all the boxes below. What's in blue below, are our priority areas where YER can foster change. The other two are important too, but require collaboration with our civic partners.



- Access**  
Provide bicycles, helmets, and locks for youth who wouldn't otherwise be able to acquire them.
- Ability**  
Teach youth safely and skillfully ride a bicycle in classes at school where students are already learning.
- Culture**  
Build school culture and community around active transportation.
- Safe Routes**  
Identify and advocate for safe, calm (preferable 5A) routes to school for most students working closely with City of Calgary
- Secure Parking**  
Support school boards and encourage installation of secure bike racks.



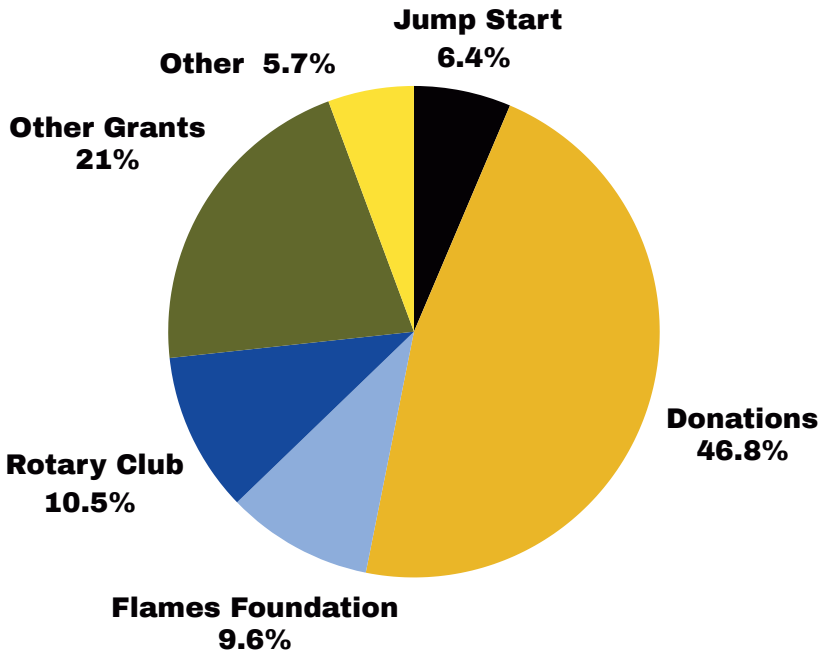
Going home with bikes



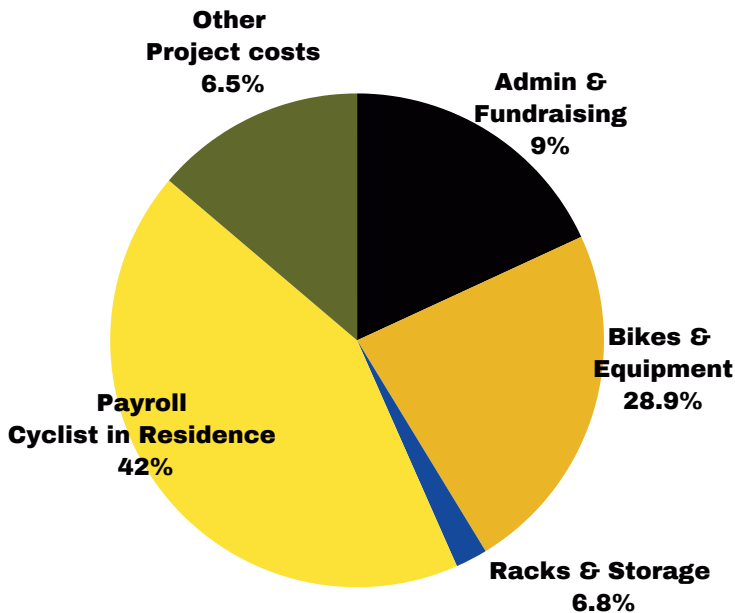
Ability in action!

# At a Glance

Revenue: \$110,777



Expenses: \$128,056



## By the #

# 1,293 Students

Experienced YER cycling education through, PE, outdoor education or special education class. Hundreds more interacted with us through Rollout Carbon Week in October and in our support of bike clubs and info sessions.

# 23 Schools



Senior High	.....	17
Junior highs	.....	2
Middle	.....	4

## Adaptive Trikes

With funding from Rotary Club of Stamped Park we were able to purchase 25 bikes and adaptations for 10 schools bringing total to 44 AT 17 SCHOOLS.



## Bikes

193 bikes, either donated or salvaged from landfills, were refurbished by the Bike Shed at the Greater Forest Lawn 55+ society and donated to schools for fleets or for students upping the total donated to 455 bikes!

# 193



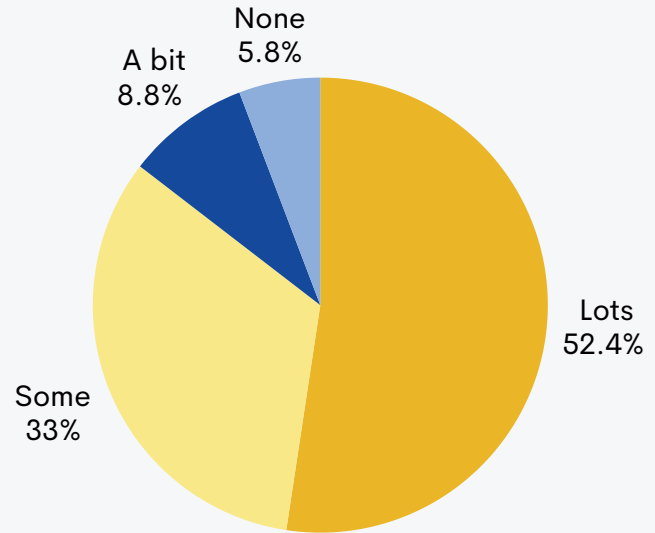
# Ability: Building cycling skills

One thing we learned this year is that there is no point in encouraging students to cycle places if the links in the chain are not there. Many students have never experienced the joy and freedom of cycling.

When we ask kids to rate their cycling skills, only 52% say they have the skills to travel everywhere. Many say they are not comfortable on roads or integrating transit into their commutes.

So we come to the school, with our fleet of bikes, helmets and friendly, well-trained Cyclists in Residence to support teachers to offer cycling education in their classes. Stuart, Duncan, Rob, Kimberley and Kauther taught about 200 non-riders to balance and build confidence on two wheels.

## Rate your cycling skills Calgary high school average



## Riding in the community



Queen E Grade 8s wheeling



Diefenbaker Outdoor Ed rides Nose Creek



Our Lady of Rockies PE class testing skills



Stuart fitting a helmet

Each week ends with a bike ride in the community. The route is planned with success in mind, and varies from four to 10 or more kilometres.

Invariably, students who have never experienced a bike ride have no idea how far they've travelled. Two kilometers is the usual guess. Once they learn they have gone four or eight kilometres, their minds race as they consider where their bike could take them.

Students will ask for bikes, or buy bikes once they understand how they can deliver freedom.

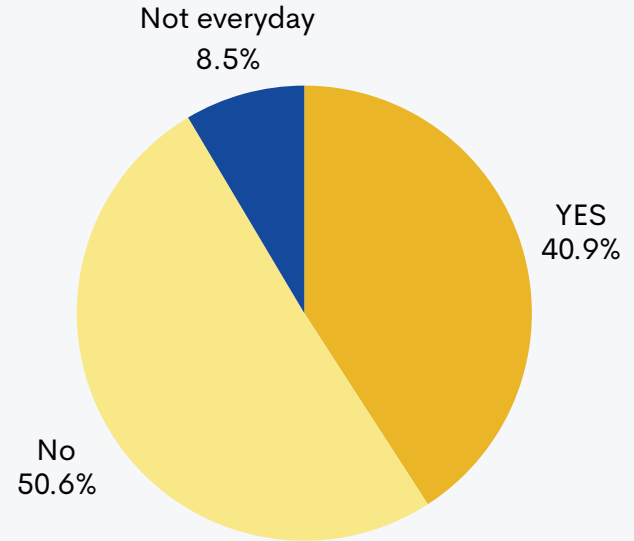
# Access: Getting Youth bikes

The barrier to buying a bike is huge for many youth. It's not just the cost - but that is a part of it. How do they get it home from the store? Many aren't comfortable enough with their skills to ride it home or take it on transit. Even the schools with the highest bike ownership - like Queen Elizabeth or Henry Wise Wood, 25 to 28% of students don't have bikes.

We also know that for many youth, a flat tire means a useless bike. They don't have a pump, or the ability to take a broken-down bike to a shop. We delivered our bikes to youth at their schools. It was easy for them to collect them and they had friends to ride home with if they wanted support.

We provided 80 bikes to students at Forest Lawn HS, 20 at St. Mary's HS, 40 to kids at Sir John Franklin with plans to grow our capacity to give any student that goes through our programs that lack the means to acquire a bike, a bike, helmet lock and tool kit.

## Do you have access to a bike? Average of 4 lowest schools





# Access: Working in community

## Imam Ali Association

Summer student Kauther Alsaimari realized through her work that many people in her community lacked the resources and knowledge to acquire a bike. Many young women wanted to learn to ride, so Kauther organized a bike giveaway on a Tuesday in August. 20 bikes went to good homes. Many took the time to learn and improve while they had Kauther's steady hand to guide them.

## Temple Calgary Housing complex

Social workers from Calgary Housing reached out to Youth en Route in the hopes they could support families in the complex with bikes. We did better than that. We taught each child how to lock their bike, some basic riding skills and provided a helpful booklet of information.

Each bike that we giveaway is registered on Bike Index and the ownership is transferred to the family. This helps everyone learn about Bike Index and prevent theft.



## Other highlights

- **Spring Bike Show.** YER participated in the Spring Bike Show where we advocated for active transportation and we offered bike engraving with Inkless Engraving. (The sign said "Tattoo your Wheels.") We sold "Pick your Bike" raffle tickets and gave away a road bike, a mountain bike and an urban cruiser to lucky winners. Bathtub Bikes shared our booth, celebrating the circular economy of bikes.
- **Youth Advisory Council.** In order to better reflect the perspective of the youth we serve and to ensure we are providing solutions to the barrier they face, YER created a Youth Advisory Council. This team of students in Grades 8 to 12 collaborates with our charity to develop and coordinate our programs and initiatives.



# Culture: Roll out Carbon week

In October 2023, we held a week-long initiative across the city that got students and teachers to choose active transportation over driving or taking the bus. We think these activities are big way to build community.

We invited all 30 Calgary high schools and 11 took us up on the challenge. With 389 participants throughout the city, 9493 Km travelled and 1747 Kg of CO2 prevented from being dispensed to our environment.

Thanks to a Neighbours grant from the Calgary Foundation, we had a prize of \$2000 to the top participating school. Bishop McNally took the school award with had 67 registered students who rode bikes and eliminated 294 Kg of CO2. Teachers Brian Scott and Denine Ogg were excited to accept the cheque on behalf of the Wolves on Wheels Bike Club. Scott said students worked really hard to spread the word and get kids riding.

Three names were drawn randomly from all participants to win our grant prize of an E-Bike, and two second prizes of folding bikes.

This was our first time organizing an event of this kind and we are excited to take what we've learned and make the 2024/25 edition even better.



## Donors and supporters!



# Ability & culture: Bikes for all

When we talk about building bike culture at schools, we know our adaptive bike program pays huge dividends. Youth with complex learning challenges are able to ride with their peers in special education and PE classes.

We now have 44 trikes at 17 schools! Over the 2023-24 school year, our Cyclists in Residence supported learning in Special Education classes at eight schools. We ride the school's trikes, and bring others to make sure every student is able to ride. In most classes, we are able to get 100% of students riding with varying levels of support. Teachers and learning leaders are amazed at how these tricycles increase opportunities for relevant learning, including following directions, testing gross motor skills and building spatial awareness.

A CBE learning specialist told us about one Grade 7 student with autism, and is nonverbal who was introduced to an adaptive bike from YER in September 2023 at his school. "Over a period of 6 weeks, the student went from working on tolerating the helmet, to sitting on the bike and being pushed, to pedalling with support of an adult to initiate the movement, to now pedalling and steering independently. To see this skill building in sequential planning in such a short period of time is phenomenal. Additionally, while riding the bike the school team have also been able to target some core word communication, such as "Go", "Stop", "Fast", "Slow", "Finished". Having access to an adaptive bike has opened so many opportunities for him." Securing our master agreement with the Calgary Board of Education will allow us to visit more schools, with more bikes and empower more youth.

**Path forward:** In August, Youth en Route received confirmation that a Capstone team from the University of Calgary's mechanical engineering department has chosen our project proposal and will work over the next eight months to build a new and improved adapted bike for use in the close confines of a gym with the goal of improving safety and skill development.



# Success Stories

## Pedalling a new path

Louis, a Grade 11 student in an outdoor leadership class, had never been on a bike when Youth en Route arrived to teach the bike unit. At first, he didn't want to try because he was worried his classmates would laugh at him. With encouragement, he learned balance on a run bike. On day 2, he was pedalling and following the snake of students. He completed the 5-kilometre ride with the rest of the class on the last day and indicated he wanted a bike to get to his job. Louis never imagined cycling, but thanks to Youth en Route, he's now planning to build active travel into his routine. He's got freedom.



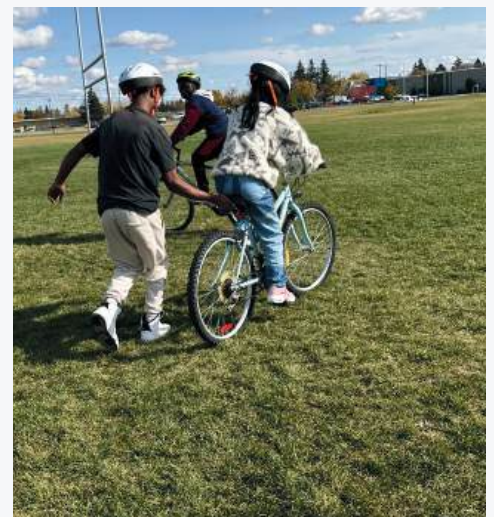
## Engaging with wheels

A 15-year-old from special needs student from Afghanistan with autism, used her wheelchair during gym time. Not one for challenges, she amazed everyone when YER showed up, and she got on a trike. She pedalled / was pushed for 11 laps of the gym, holding the handlebars so tightly she went close to 15 minutes without putting anything in her mouth - a first for her. Seeing her so engaged in an activity brought tears to her aide's eyes.



## Paying it forward, building culture

We had our Forest Lawn bike giveaway on a warm June day. Students were asked to come in at staggered times to get fitted for a bike and helmet, learn to use their locks, get an idea of good routes before going on their way. One young woman was spotted in the parking lot 20 minutes after walking out with her new bike. She was walking on one side, with a friend on the other side and a third was riding tentatively, her abaya tied safely way from the chain. This girl hadn't owned her bike for an hour before she was building a community of cyclists. Amazing. It's something we see with every class - kids supporting each other!



# Measuring Social Impact

The environmental impact of transportation mode shifting reduces automobile dependence and demonstrates that we can all individually make a difference in our communities and for our planet.

Youth en Route's five-link approach strategically breaks down economic, cultural, and opportunity barriers for youth. Youth attain and retain cycling skills from our Ability link and begin their journey to autonomy. It is an adventure of hope becoming effort becoming opportunity becoming achievement becoming accountability becoming celebration. The initial attempt to straddle a bike seat can lead to, someday, sitting in a seat at a board table.

In a post-pandemic period, some youth have lost hope for tomorrow. They don't have goals, and they don't know where to begin setting goals. While hope isn't a strategy, no strategy succeeds without the spark of hope. Learning the skills to ride a bike and then honing those skills by having access to a simple and safe bike are the first steps. The pathway away from a cycle of poverty to riding into new opportunities lifts youth out of where they are to where they never imagined they would be.

Whether riding to school, work, or social engagements youth navigate through their neighbourhoods and become part of those places. *They belong. They explore. They thrive.*


**Cost**  
**\$ 53** PER student for 5-10 hours of instruction

**Value**  
**¢15** Benefit to society of 15 cents per KM biked\*  
**\$ 5.60 per trip\***  
**\$ 224 student/year**  
Based on modest 2 bike trips to school per week over 20 weeks

\*[Todd Litman and the Victoria Transport Policy Institute \(VTPI\)](#), quantifies the benefits of cycling.



## Social Media By the #s

 **31**  
Blog posts

 Posts: 223  
Followers: 355  
Following: 426

 Followers: 84  
Impressions/month: 1,741  
Unique Impressions: 985

 Videos: 8  
Subscribers: 24  
Views: 613

# Partners

## Greater Forest Lawn 55+ Club



Bike Shed Seniors refurbished most of the 210 bikes we delivered to schools and assembled or repaired another 10 adaptive trikes, putting in over 480 volunteer hours over the year.



## B&P Cycle and Sports



Our partnership means we've been able to extend our grant funds with a minimum of 25% discount on our purchases, which constituted a \$2500 donation in kind.



## Bathtub Bikes



Adam Rhind of Bathtub Bikes is our partner to store and maintain our bikes. He is also a contractor to repair adaptive bikes in schools. We receive an excellent partner rate for these services.



# Funders



# Financial Statements

13008037 Canada Association (Youth en Route)

## 13008037 Canada Association operating as Youth En Route Statement of Financial Position

	August 31, 2024	August 31, 2023
<b>Assets</b>		
Cash at bank	\$ 14,225	\$ 25,038
Inventory of product for use in projects and for fundraising program	4,194	8,259
Accounts receivable and prepaid expenses	3,852	1,875
	<u>22,270</u>	<u>35,172</u>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Accounts payable	\$ 5,035	\$ 431
Payroll liabilities	394	620
Short-term loan payable	8,000	8,000
	<u>13,429</u>	<u>9,051</u>
<b>Equity</b>		
Retained earnings	8,841	26,121
	<u>\$ 22,270</u>	<u>\$ 35,172</u>



Director



Director

# Financial Statements

13008037 Canada Association (Youth en Route)

## 13008037 Canada Association operating as Youth En Route

### Statement of Operations

	Year ended August 31, 2024	Year ended August 31, 2023
<b>Income</b>		
Grants received	\$ 49,342	\$ 98,582
Donations	59,711	19,537
Fundraising receipts, less related costs	1,719	2,111
Interest income	5	27
	<u>110,777</u>	<u>120,258</u>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Project expenses		
Bikes and equipment	28,049	25,813
Bike restoration and maintenance	1,990	5,806
Racks, storage and infrastructure	4,649	6,067
In-school programming	6,955	2,572
Payroll and volunteer recognition	58,275	43,667
Other project costs	7,811	2,816
	<u>107,729</u>	<u>86,741</u>
Administration and fundraising costs		
Payroll	245	912
Short-term fund development consulting contract	8,000	-
Financial charges	740	265
Insurance	744	124
Bookkeeping	5,919	4,972
Organizational development and marketing	3,454	512
Website and software	957	1,426
Other expenses	268	352
	<u>20,327</u>	<u>8,563</u>
Total expenses	128,056	95,304
<b>Excess of (expenditures over income) income over expenditures for the year</b>	<b>(17,279)</b>	<b>24,954</b>
Opening retained earnings	26,121	1,167
Closing retained earnings	\$ <u>8,841</u>	\$ <u>26,121</u>



# Financial Statements

13008037 Canada Association (Youth en Route)

## 13008037 Canada Association operating as Youth En Route

	Year ended August 31, 2024	Year ended August 31, 2023
<b>Statement of cash flows</b>		
Operating activities		
Excess of income over expenditures for the year	\$ (17,279)	\$ 24,954
Net changes in non-cash working capital items		
Inventory	4,066	2,330
Accounts receivable and prepaid expenses	(1,976)	(1,429)
Accounts payable	4,604	(1,207)
Payroll liabilities	(226)	(620)
Cash used in operations	<u>(10,812)</u>	<u>24,029</u>
Cash at beginning of year	25,038	1,009
Cash at end of year	<u>\$ 14,225</u>	<u>\$ 25,038</u>

## 13008037 Canada Association operating as Youth En Route

### Notes to financial statements

#### Year ended August 31, 2024

##### Formation

- 1 13008037 Canada Association is a corporation without share capital which was incorporated on May 11, 2021, under the Canada Not For Profit Corporations Act. It operates as a Registered Charity under the name Youth En Route ("YER").

##### Operations

- 2 YER promotes and facilitates cycling for schoolchildren by providing education and equipment.

##### Registered Charity status

- 3 On July 21, 2022 YER was granted Registered Charity status by the Canada Revenue Agency, it previously operated as a non-profit organization.



## Contact Information



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