

Summer 2023 Sustainability Scholars Program Internship Opportunity

The UBC Sustainability Initiative (USI) is pleased to offer current UBC graduate students the opportunity to work on funded sustainability internship projects. Successful candidates work under the mentorship of a partner organization, and are immersed in real world learning where they can apply their research skills and contribute to advancing sustainability across the region.

- Visit the [Sustainability Scholars Program website](#) to learn [how the program works](#) and to [apply](#).
- Be sure to review the application guide on the Apply page to confirm your eligibility before applying.

Applications close at midnight on Sunday January 29, 2023.

Project title: Best practice research to support the use of active travel to childcare facilities

Project Background & Overview:

Childcare in Vancouver has been in a long-standing challenge. Need for childcare exceeds the childcare spaces available to parents, and what services exist are unaffordable for many families. This adds additional pressure on already high costs of living in Vancouver, leaving families trading off other necessities, adding to precarity and potentially forcing parents to forgo education or employment. In 2022, the City of Vancouver passed [Making Strides: Vancouver's Childcare Strategy](#), to guide its actions for the next 10 years to support senior levels of government in their commitment to develop a universal system of quality, affordable childcare.

Meanwhile, as part of the [Climate Emergency Action Plan](#) to reduce carbon emissions (passed in 2020), the City of Vancouver set two targets relating to active transportation – that 90% of people live within an easy walk or roll of their daily needs; and that two-thirds of all trips will be made by active transportation (such as biking or e-biking, and transit), both to achieve by 2030. The [2021-2025 Transportation Demand Management Action Plan](#) lists out specific actions for encouraging active transportation and transit, and reducing private motor vehicle use.

Research has previously shown that the presence of a child or children can be a key determinant in households acquiring, maintaining or shedding vehicles. Shifts in travel patterns resulting from trends such as broader availability of work from home, and growth in availability of electric assist bikes and electric assist cargo bikes, have additionally impacted decision-making on trip-making. Through better understanding of how families meet their childcare needs, make travel and location decisions, and navigate key tradeoffs, the City of Vancouver has an opportunity to identify and implement policies and actions that can better support families in meeting their daily needs in ways that support their physical and mental health, their resiliency and connection to community, as well as the City's transportation and climate action goals.

Project description

The aim of this project is to build knowledge and understanding of how families are making trips to and from childcare, for the purpose of supporting families in shifting to active and sustainable modes. The City of Vancouver's 10-year childcare strategy, *Making Strides*, seeks to create new childcare spaces, and to maintain or expand existing facilities, in close collaboration with public partners (such as schools, parks and other public institutions), and non-profit operators. Furthermore, the City of Vancouver's 5-year Transportation Demand Management Action Plan lists out specific actions for encouraging active transportation and transit, and reducing private motor vehicle use. There is an opportunity for the City of Vancouver to incorporate actions supporting families using transit and cycling, alongside development of universal childcare. To assist in identifying possible actions, this project will identify strategies to address ongoing gaps in knowledge about barriers to families using active transportation to meet their travel needs (with particular focus on families using childcare for children ages 0-5), anticipating that those needs may both vary and overlap with the travel needs of other users accessing co-located public facilities.

Where possible, this project can also include recommendations for adapting or working with existing programs, initiatives or ongoing actions, which may potentially support families using childcare in overcoming barriers to active travel – particularly if these are initiatives already undertaken by the City or its public or non-profit partners. The project should consider research, analysis and recommendation development through an equity lens, such as considering the impact of geographical and systemic inequities, as well as social identities (such as race, ability, class and gender) on families' experience of both accessing childcare and using active transportation generally.

Project scope

This project will consist of:

- A policy scan with 3 to 5 notable best practices in other jurisdictions for encouraging car-free families and supporting active travel to and from childcare facilities with children aged 0-5. (These can consist of interventions involving both infrastructure and encouragement initiatives.) Where possible, literature scan scope should consider experiences of equity denied families and their relationship with active travel and childcares.
- A stakeholder summary and gap analysis highlighting the relationships of partners, facility managers, and childcare operators, and programs supporting active travel (bike, e-bike, and transit) in the City of Vancouver
- Conduct 3 to 7 semi-structured interviews and 2 to 4 focus groups with childcare operators, staff with visibility or involvement in the process of creating or upgrading childcare facilities, and parents to better understand:
 - o strategies or opportunities to support families to access childcare using active transportation
 - o variations in needs and barriers across different areas of the city, in different co-location settings (parks, schools, neighbourhood houses, high-density / multi-family residential), proximity to dedicated facilities, with differing levels of active transportation use, and among families with varying childcare needs.

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- A report that summarizes research findings and makes recommendations for future study, community / stakeholder engagement, or potential pilot projects for the City's Childcare Team and Community Transportation Branch to further develop or pursue to address both childcare and active transportation goals simultaneously.

Deliverables

- A final report containing a summary of the work completed
- A final report for the online public-facing [Scholars Project Library](#).

Time Commitment

- This project will take 250 hours to complete
- This project must be completed between May 1 to August 15, 2023
- The Scholar is to complete hours between 9 am and 5 pm, Monday to Friday, approximately 17 to 20 hours per week.

Required/preferred Skills and Background

- Excellent research and writing skills
- Demonstrated interest in sustainability
- Familiarity with research methodologies and survey techniques
- Excellent public speaking and presentation skills
- Community engagement experience
- Strong analytical skills
- Ability to work independently
- Project management and organizational skills
- Demonstrated experience in **climate justice, social planning, intersectionality**
- Familiarity with community planning and active transportation principles and practices
- Comfortable interacting with strangers to conduct public/in person surveys
- Lived experience with childcare and active transportation would be considered assets

Applications close **midnight Sunday January 29, 2023**

Apply here: [Click here to apply](#)

Contact Karen Taylor at sustainability.scholars@ubc.ca if you have questions

Useful Resources

We are holding a special **resume preparation workshop for prospective Scholars** on January 23, 2023. [Click here for details and to register.](#)

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Below are some links to useful resources to help you with your resume and cover letter (there are many more online). Some of these resources also provide information on preparing for your interview.

<https://students.ubc.ca/career/career-resources/resumes-cover-letters-curricula-vitae>

<https://www.grad.ubc.ca/current-students/graduate-pathways-success>

<https://www.grad.ubc.ca/cover-letter-cv-resume-templates-ubc-career-services>