



**BICYCLE
NETWORK®**

Moving NSW towards health and happiness

Pre-budget submission

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December 2018



Bicycle Network

With nearly 50,000 members, Bicycle Network is one of the top five member-based bike riding organisations in the world. With a proud history reaching back more than 40 years, we are committed to improving the health and wellbeing of all Australians by making it easier for people to ride a bike.

Operating nationally, we have a measurable and large-scale impact in community participation and the promotion of healthy lifestyles through bike riding.

We achieve this through:

- improving the bike riding environment by working with government at all levels to provide better infrastructure, data, policies, legislation and regulations
- delivering successful, large-scale and measurable behaviour-change programs such as Ride2School and Ride2Work
- providing services that support bike riders through membership
- running mass participation bike riding events such as Around the Bay
- acting as a key spokesperson on issues related to cycling and physical activity.

Bicycle Network welcomes the opportunity to make a pre-budget submission to Treasury as preparations are made for the 2019-20 NSW State Budget.

If you need our help to turn NSW into Australia's healthiest and happiest state, please get in touch

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Executive summary: Moving NSW towards health and happiness

The increasing cost of living, health and congestion is having a very real and profound impacts on the people of NSW. Population growth, urbanisation and new technologies are rapidly changing the accessibility and connectivity of our communities. Combined with the growing burden of disease caused by physical inactivity and our future is looking bleak.

We need to get more people in NSW moving and it's clear that the most efficient and cost-effective way is by bike. Making it easier for more people of all ages, genders and backgrounds to ride a bike for transport will build physical activity into our daily lives, unclog public transport and free up our roads.

However, NSW continues to have the lowest bike riding numbers in Australia. At the same time, less than one per cent of the NSW transport budget is allocated to active transport.

With an election looming, the Berejiklian Government has an opportunity to change the direction and prioritisation of transport investment for the state. The people of NSW are looking for a government that is willing to make the decisions that deliver the biggest economic and social gains and the answer isn't in organised sport or low-co-ordination, vaguely-justified roads and rail.

By planning, investing and creating space for active transport, the NSW government can create smart, connected, accessible and productive communities, filled with happy and healthy people.

This is why Bicycle Network, Australia's biggest bike riding organisation, is calling on the NSW Government to deliver a responsible, forward-focused budget which promotes active travel and boosts the standard of living for years to come.

Consecutive governments have failed to implement a range of commitments to increase bike riding or deliver infrastructure improvements. We want to see a NSW state budget that supports the development of key cycling projects and behaviour change programs across NSW that will help the state remain the beating heart of Australia, driving our nation forward.

Bicycle Network is recommending the NSW Government invest in the following projects and programs which will ensure the strong coordination and proper prioritisation of active travel.

Budget impact:

Financial year	2019-20 \$m	2020-21 \$m	2021-22 \$m	2022-23 \$m	TOTAL \$m
Annual bike fund	237.7	240	242.2	244.9	964.8
Ride2School program	0.5	1	1	1	3.5
Annual Rail Trail fund	25	25	25	25	100
MPDL enforcement program	1.75	1.75	1.75	1.75	7



Key budget asks and recommendations:

Bicycle Network is calling for the delivery of four critical key priorities in the 2019-20 NSW State Budget. Bicycle Network strongly believes that these asks are not only cost-effective but will deliver wide ranging benefits to society over and above those of the individual. The asks are also consistent with Bicycle Network's previous NSW state budget submissions.

1. Invest in an annual dedicated bike infrastructure fund of more than \$237 million to support the rapid roll out and construction of a connected network of cycleways within metropolitan and major regional centres. The investment should support the acceleration of the Future Transport Plan 2056 to 2026.
2. Invest in a state-wide Ride2School program to address the critical physical inactivity rates of school-age children and young people across NSW.
3. Expand opportunities for recreational cycling and cycle tourism with joint funding opportunities for regional communities and the development of rail trails.
4. Invest in an enforcement program for minimum passing distance laws (MPDL) using learnings from the award-winning *Operation Close Pass* program which has now been adopted by police forces across the UK.

These recommendations also support the acceleration of current funding commitments, transport plans and funding schedules. We must start fast-tracking and prioritising the movement of people over vehicles if our transport system is to truly support the economic prosperity and growth of NSW.



1. Invest in an annual bike infrastructure fund

The UN Environment Program is currently calling on governments at all levels around the world to invest at least 20% of their annual transport budgets on walking and cycling infrastructure [1]. At present, the figure in NSW is approximately a meagre half a per cent of the total \$73 billion transport budget.

The NSW government's current commitment to spend \$80 million over four years on top of an additional \$39 million for walking and cycling projects, only works out to be \$3.81 per person per year. By comparison, London has achieved great results by spending about \$33 per person per year on cycling infrastructure.

Bicycle Network is calling on the NSW government to increase spending to at least \$30 per person per year in the 2019–20 budget to speed up the delivery of cycling infrastructure and to start realising the benefits of more people riding bikes.

This would mean establishing an annual cycling infrastructure fund of more than \$240 million when adjusted for population growth over four years.

A forward-looking, ongoing investment program is needed to set a new course for people who ride, with strong co-ordination and proper prioritisation across the government and its departments.

The outcome of an ongoing fund will be a completed, strategic network of direct, quality, accessible and connected cycling routes that will greatly reduce the demand on our roads and risk for vulnerable road users.

Budget impact:

Financial year	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	TOTAL
	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m
Annual cycling infrastructure fund	237.7	240	242.2	244.9	964.8

This infrastructure fund will enable the NSW government to deliver key bike projects such as:

- Priority cycleways in metropolitan and regional NSW including the completion of the Sydney Harbour Bridge steps and the construction of the King Street Cycleway;
- the provision of end-of-trip facilities and bike parking available at commuter hubs, stations and ferry terminals;
- the construction of the Sutherland to Cronulla Active Travel Link within the next two years;
- the construction of the Northern Rivers Rail Trail (Murwillumbah to Casino), the Molonglo Rail Trail (Bungendore to Captain's Flat) and the first stage of the Riverina Highlands Rail Trail (Tumbarumba to Rosewood)
- the completion of key projects outlined in Sydney's Cycling Future that connect hubs such as Parramatta, Blacktown, Penrith and Liverpool, Nepean River Green Bridge, Eastern Suburbs link, North Shore link, South East Light Rail links, Inner West Light Rail links, and Parramatta Light Rail links.



1.2 Fast track priority projects to make bike riding easier

Consistent with our 2018-19 pre-budget submission, Bicycle Network is continuing to call for the completion of cycling infrastructure and related plans as set out in the Future Transport Strategy 2056 by 2026. For the people of NSW to start realising the benefits of more people riding bikes for transport and recreation, we are asking for the delivery of the following key projects:

1.2.1 Within the next two years

1. Construct the city centre cycleway network planned in the *Sydney City Access Strategy*.
2. Build a bi-directional separated north-south cycleway along Castlereagh Street (between Hay Street and King Street) and Pitt Street (between King Street and Circular Quay) in the Central Business District.
3. Connect the short east-west cycleway along King Street between Castlereagh and Clarence Streets.
4. Build Liverpool Street cycleway between Darling Harbour and Castlereagh Street.
5. Extend the east-west cycleway along Park Street.
6. Extend the existing bi-directional separated King Street cycleway east to Pitt Street.
7. Reconstruct the College Street cycleway or provide a north-south cycle path connection to Circular Quay on the eastern side of the CBD via Hyde Park and Macquarie Street within the next two years.
8. Commence the construction of the *GreenWay* cycle path from Cooks River to Iron Cove.
5. Commence the construction of the Sutherland to Cronulla Active Travel Link.
6. Redevelop the *Regional Transport Plans* to include targets for increases in the proportion of journeys taken by bicycle within a 5km radius of a town or centre with further emphasis on and funding for bicycle planning and infrastructure for rural and regional NSW.
7. Require that councils receiving contributions from developers under sections 94 and 94A of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979 apply 20% to infrastructure projects for bike riding.

1.2.2 Within the next three years

8. Design and complete Sydney Airport Links outlined in *Sydney's Cycling Future* document.
9. Complete the M4 Regional cycleway between Wentworthville and Parramatta.

1.2.3 Within the next five years

10. Complete and deliver cycling infrastructure projects as per Sydney's Cycling Future that connect hubs such as Parramatta, Blacktown, Penrith and Liverpool, Nepean River Green Bridge, Eastern Suburbs link, North Shore link, South East Light Rail links, Inner West Light Rail links, and Parramatta Light Rail links.
11. Commence the construction of a high-quality, separated cycleway network as outlined in the Parramatta Road Urban Transformation Strategy
12. Delivery of the Inner Sydney Regional Bike Network within 10 kilometres of the Harbor CBD.



1.2.4 Within the next six years

13. Allocate funding for a “Bike-Train-Bike” initiative which includes retrofitting and installing future metropolitan, regional and inter-city trains with “bike-friendly” carriages at the front and back ends.
14. Develop and preserve access for bike riders and walkers around Sydney and Newcastle Harbour foreshores as part of the redevelopment works in both areas.

1.2.5 Within the next seven years

15. Deliver a safe cycleway network within 10 kilometres of Parramatta within the next 10 years.
16. Deliver well-connected cycling infrastructure, end-of-trip facilities and secure bike parking cages:
 - At metropolitan and regional commuter hubs, stations and ferry terminals to allow for 5% of customers to travel by bike;
 - At all metropolitan train stations as set out in the *Bike and Ride* program outlined in *Sydney’s Cycling Future*,¹ replacing bike lockers with bike parking cages that use space more efficiently and benefit more customers;
 - For students and staff to ride a bike to all government buildings, schools, university and TAFE campuses and provision of end-of-trip facilities.

1.3 Add financial incentives linked to delivery and usage of bike infrastructure

Bicycle Network is aware of the financial incentives some Transport NSW staff are eligible to receive for reductions in travel times and congestion on NSW roads, and recommends the development of a similar program based on active travel rates. This would include the setting of active travel targets for walking and cycling and measurement of usage.



1.4 Commit to positive provisioning for all major transport projects

The provision of new or improved active travel links for people who walk and ride should be a critical measure of success for all major transport projects, upgrades and their ongoing maintenance, not an additional extra.

Bicycle Network is asking the NSW Government to implement a framework, regulation or policy that requires bike infrastructure and facilities to be adequately prioritised as part of all state-funded transport projects.

Positive provisioning or mainstreaming of bike infrastructure serves to inform effective state government decision making about investment in cycling infrastructure. Positive provisioning ensures fair and balanced equity of access for all road users and helps ensure that that transport infrastructure spending isn't skewed by electoral political considerations.

It can also help accelerate, improve integration and reduce costs of cycling infrastructure where provisions are included at the time of planned infrastructure/engineering works rather than during retrofitting.

In many other states across Australia, positive provisioning applies to state-owned roads projects (new works and upgrades), retro-fitting cycling infrastructure on state-owned roads, non-road transport projects (rail), recommended maintenance regimes for state-owned roads.



2. Invest in Bicycle Network’s state-wide Ride2School program

We support the efforts of the Berejiklian Government to reduce childhood obesity, but they don’t go far enough. The children of NSW are suffering from a crisis of inactivity. Currently 70 per cent of children don’t get enough exercise to maintain their health and happiness and that figure is even worse when we look at activity among young girls [2].

Without drastic action, children and young people in NSW are headed for a life troubled by chronic, preventable diseases and an early death. We are at crisis point — for the first time we are faced with a generation of young people who won’t live as long as their parents.

In the 1970s, eight of 10 children and teenagers walked, cycled or used public transport to get to school. Now two in every three are being driven. NSW needs a youth-focused behaviour change program to build physical activity into the daily lives of young people.

Children and young people can also serve as catalysts for behavioural change towards sustainable and smart cities. Childhood is a key stage for establishing long-term travel habits rather than interventions to change ingrained behaviour later in life.

For more than 10 years, Bicycle Network’s Ride2School program has successfully increased active travel rates in participating schools across Victoria. The cost-effective and impactful program is a world leader, with schools who participate in the program recording active travel rates of 45 per cent, more than the national active travel average of 25 per cent [3] [4].

Using a proven model of behaviour change within a school community, Ride2School successfully implements holistic and proven interventions to increase and promote active travel. Each initiative is underpinned with research and needs assessments before being uniquely tailored to the specific barriers and motivators in each school community.

Bicycle Network is calling on the NSW government to work with us to develop and implement a state-wide Ride2School program to support children walking and riding bicycles to school.

Budget impact:

This would include a \$500,000 pilot program in its first year with a view to expanding to \$1 million per year for the following three years:

Financial year	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	TOTAL
	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m
Ride2School program	500	1	1	1	3.5



3. Expand opportunities for recreational cycling and cycle tourism

Bicycle Network would like to see regional communities across NSW reap the economic and social rewards of a growing cycling tourism market. Cycling tourism helps contribute to local economies through increased tourist visitation and offers transport/recreational facilities that locals can use and enjoy.

There are many local and global examples which show that rail trails and other off-road bike trails offer considerable benefits to the communities they service. Rail trails provide many health and wellbeing benefits for riders and walkers of all ages and abilities, create jobs in regional and rural communities, and act as “land banking” for local communities by preserving the corridor for alternative uses in the future.

Tasmania’s North East Rail Trail Preliminary demand and economic benefit assessment for the re-development of 89.6km of disused rail corridor from Launceston to Billycock Hill identified that investment of \$3.89 million in the development of the trail would yield \$6.6m in direct and indirect expenditure within 5 years while creating 40FTE jobs.

Unfortunately, NSW residents who want to ride on rail trails currently must drive interstate or fly overseas to spend their tourism dollars. Similarly, regional businesses are missing out as the range of rail trails in NSW is limited to a few short trails.

With small amendments to existing legislation and a rail trail funding program, the NSW government and community can reap the benefits of improved local amenity and increased numbers of visitors to our beautiful state seeking to enjoy spectacular landscapes and scenery.

Bicycle Network is asking for the NSW government to recognise the value of rail trails by:

- Ensuring all rural trains have facilities to carry bicycles to encourage tourism in regional NSW
- Developing a Rail Trails Strategy and creating a Rail Trail Fund of \$25m per annum to be used for feasibility studies, planning and design, and project construction of new rail trails to enable the development of a pipeline of prioritised and sequenced projects
- Beginning construction of the Northern Rivers Rail Trail (Murwillumbah to Casino), the Molonglo Rail Trail (Bungendore to Captain’s Flat) and the first stage of the Riverina Highlands Rail Trail (Tumbarumba to Rosewood);
- Conducting feasibility studies for the Murrumbidgee Valley Rail Trail and Goulburn Crookwell Rail Trail.

Budget impact:

Financial year	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	TOTAL
	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m
Rail trail fund	25	25	25	25	100



4. Invest in an enforcement program of minimum passing distance laws

Bicycle Network congratulates the NSW Government on the introduction of minimum passing distance laws (MPDL) which play an important role in reducing the risk for bike riders from drivers of vehicles on our roads.

However, the success of MPDL also relies on active enforcement and widespread education. Recently revealed data found that between March 2016 and May 2018, only 65 traffic infringement notices were issued for unsafe passing. This is despite a survey conducted by the Dulwich Hill Bicycle Club which found that a vast majority of bike riders in NSW encountered drivers disregarding the safe passing distance rule [5].

This problem is not unique to NSW. A current petition of state governments across Australia has nearly 12,000 signatures calling for greater enforcement of MPDL [6]. It also has support from 39 national cycling organisations, including Bicycle Network. This presents an opportunity for NSW to lead, not follow.

Bicycle Network would like to see the NSW Government invest in a close pass cycling initiative like that of the West Midlands Police in the UK.

The award-winning Operation Close Pass program has now been adopted by police forces across the UK. The program involves plain clothes police officers on bikes equipped with cameras that alert uniformed colleagues of close passes or other instances of poor driving. Drivers are then offered road-side education but repeat offenders, or dangerous drivers can be prosecuted and taken to court.

Since the launch of the proactive *Operation Close Pass* program in the UK, the number of cyclists killed or seriously hurt on the region's roads has dropped by a fifth, with almost 200 drivers stopped, 13 prosecuted and an additional 350 fined through a review helmet and dash-cam footage [7].

Implementing this program would require NSW Police to set up a special traffic policing unit to specifically target driver behaviour towards bike riders. The unit would also be responsible for establishing an online portal and processing online reports of close pass drivers.

Budget impact:

Financial year	2019-20 \$m	2020-21 \$m	2021-22 \$m	2022-23 \$m	TOTAL \$m
MPDL enforcement program	1.75	1.75	1.75	1.75	7



Conclusion: Be bold for bikes

If NSW is to rise above the challenges it faces with congestion, health, population growth, our communities must move away from a dependence on cars.

Traffic gridlocks, over capacity public transport networks and the cost of living will continue to get worse unless the NSW Government prioritises the movement of people over the movement of motor vehicles.

Getting more people out of cars and public transport and on to bikes is a cost effective, efficient, sustainable and easy way to solve these growing concerns. Making it easier for more people to ride bikes, regardless of their age, background or ability, will help make our cities more liveable, connected, accessible and mobile.

However, without the rapid and accelerated delivery of bike infrastructure, supportive policies and youth-focused behaviour change programs, the people of NSW and the economy will continue to suffer.

If we are going to future-proof the health, happiness and liveability of our cities and towns and truly support the economic growth of NSW, we need a multi-model transport system that equitably support more people riding and walking.

By investing in cycling as transport, recreation and tourism, the Berejiklian Government has the ability to turn things around and set a new, brave and long overdue agenda for the coming election.

Bicycle Network's message to the NSW Government is clear: be bold. The people of NSW want to ride bikes and will back a government that's courageous enough to prioritise active transport over roads and rail as a solution to the health and congestion issues plaguing our cities and towns.

Bibliography

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