



**BICYCLE
NETWORK®**

Building activity into our daily lives

**Priorities for the
2019 Federal Election**

March 2019



Bicycle Network

Bicycle Network knows that physical activity is vital for a happy, healthy life, so that's why we work to make bike riding easy for everyone, every day.

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 successful and world-renowned bike riding events such as Around the Bay, Peaks Challenge Falls Creek and the Great Vic Bike Ride as well as the Newcrest Orange Challenge.
- acting as a key national spokesperson on issues related to bike riding and physical activity.

If you need our help to turn Australia into a nation of happy and healthy people riding bikes, please get in touch

Craig Richards
CEO
Bicycle Network
craigr@bicyclenetwork.com.au

Anthea Hargreaves
General Manager – Public Affairs
Bicycle Network
antheah@bicyclenetwork.com.au



1. Pedalling to health and happiness

Australia is undergoing rapid and complex changes. Population growth, urbanisation and technological advancements are causing profound changes to our everyday lives and communities.

At the same time, our sedentary lifestyles are killing us. Australians of all ages aren't getting enough exercise. We've reached a crisis point where we have a generation of young people that won't live as long as their parents.

If political parties truly want to bust congestion, reduce the cost of living, improve health outcomes and protect the future success of our economy, we must make it easier for more Australians to ride bikes, walk and catch public transport. Government policy and infrastructure projects must incentivise physical activity and deter sedentary behaviours.

The long-term benefits of getting more people moving around our cities by bike are well established. Increasing bicycle mode share improves our health, saves money, reduces congestion, improves connectivity and access to employment and positively impacts the sustainability and liveability of our communities.

However, the Commonwealth Government continues to short change people who ride.

Despite "*supporting measures to increase all aspects of active transport in Australian communities*" the government has failed to work with State Governments to deliver desperately needed bike infrastructure or programs.

The Commonwealth Government holds important influence on the provision of economic and social infrastructure that has a major bearing on the whole community's wellbeing. An integrated, multi-modal transport system is Australia's greatest preventative health mechanism and congestion-busting tool.

This election, momentum is building for change. Major parties have an opportunity to set a national agenda that shifts our communities towards active transport. More than four million Australians ride bikes every week and many want to, but we need transformative and accountable federal leadership.

We can reap the rewards of moving and connecting more happy and healthy people if the next federal government of Australia delivers these four key actions:

1. Build more places for people to ride
2. Make bike riding a social norm
3. Protect people who ride
4. Strategic direction



2. Bike policy isn't complicated

Making it easier for more people to ride bikes shouldn't be hard or complicated. International experience tells us that governments of all political ideologies can make real change that will get people riding.

Policies that increase physical activity through active transport represent a low-cost, high-value investment with returns and benefits that will reach throughout the community for years to come.

When it comes to forming policies and investing in bike riding for transport and recreation, parties, candidates, ministers and the wider community should be thinking about:

- **Decongestion** – when more people can choose to ride, there will be fewer people competing for space on overcrowded public transport and traffic-choked roads.
- **More capacity** – In dense, thriving cities, we need to focus on the movement of people, rather than just the movement of vehicles. Encouraging more people to ride builds capacity in transport networks and last mile freight delivery.
- **Health** – Our sedentary lifestyles are shortening the lifespans of us and our children, supersizing our waistlines and the health budget. Physical activity is vital for happy and healthy communities. Making it easier to ride gives people the choice for more activity every day.
- **Ride2School** – Freedom, resilience, learning, confidence and a lifetime of healthy habits are all by-products of ensuring that children of any age can ride safely to school.
- **Liveability** – More people riding and walking creates places for people and streets that are attractive, alive, friendly and productive. It helps build a sense of community.
- **Jobs and education** – Access to employment, education and training is the backbone of every economy. Bikes are ideal for these everyday trips.
- **Equality** – Access for women, children and low socio-economic communities are currently denied their right to ride and physical activity because of barriers. It's unfair.
- **Tourism** – Promoting cycling tourism (events, trail networks and rail trails) offers an enormous opportunity for economic growth and revitalisation in regional and rural areas.



3. Priorities for the Federal Election 2019

3.1 BUILDING PLACES FOR PEOPLE TO RIDE

Funding

3.1.1 Establish a \$492 million+ annual federal cycling infrastructure fund

The \$492 million fund is based on \$20 per head for the Australian population. This level of funding broadly matches what is spent in Denmark, London and the Netherlands.

These funds must be available to state governments on an ongoing basis so that bicycle networks are upgraded strategically. The outcome will be a completed network of high-quality bike routes that will greatly reduce use of single occupant vehicles and the demand for roads.

The amount equates to only five per cent of the budgeted nine billion to be spent on communications and transport infrastructure in 2019-20.

Positive provisioning

3.1.2 Establish a national framework, policy or regulation that requires bike infrastructure to be part of all federally-funded land transport projects

The provision of new or improved active travel links should be a critical measure of success for all major transport projects, upgrades, works and their ongoing maintenance. It should not be an additional extra. Positive provisioning ensures fair and balanced equity of access for all road users.

Rail trails

3.1.3 Continue and expand the Building Better Regions Fund (BBRF) to boost cycling tourism

Ensure that the criteria of the Building Better Regions Fund makes explicit mention of rail trail proposals that will draw tourism dollars and provide benefits to local and regional communities from a transport, recreation and connectivity perspective.



3.2 SOCIAL NORMS

Pay-to-ride-to-work scheme

3.2.1 Introduce a national pay-to-ride-to-work scheme

Incentivise active travel by introducing a scheme where commuters can receive a government benefit of \$5 for every trip to work made by bicycle.

If successful, it's expected the scheme will cost \$500 million and encourage even more people to swap short car trips to bicycles, combating congestion and driving down the cost of living.

National preventative health program

3.2.2 Invest \$3.9 million annually to fund a nation-wide Ride2School program

Using a proven model of behaviour change within a school community, Bicycle Network's Ride2School program successfully implements interventions which are proven to increase and promote active travel.

Since 2007, the program in Victoria has achieved significant success in increasing the number of students riding, walking, skating and scooting to school. Schools in the program report an active travel rate of 45 per cent, above the national average of 25 per cent

End-of-trip facilities

3.2.3 Modify the Building Code of Australia to include the provision of end-of-trip facilities

Amend the Building Code of Australia to include the provision of end-of-trip facilities such as bike parking to make riding for transport an easy and accessible option.

Fringe benefit tax exemptions

3.2.4 Abolish the fringe benefit tax exemption for private vehicles and small business car parking

To motivate more people to swap their cars and prioritise bikes, walking or even public transport, we must remove incentives for single use vehicles and car parking.

3.2.5 Extend fringe benefit tax exemption to bikes or ebikes

To fast-track the uptake and growth of cycling participation as a means of transport, the fringe benefit tax exemption should be extended to private bicycle or ebike use.

The tax scheme for people who ride could mirror what's done in Belgium and the Netherlands. These European schemes provide tax-free bikes to employees

3.3 PROTECTING PEOPLE WHO RIDE

Heavy vehicles

3.3.1 Establish national safety standards for heavy vehicles

Actively pursue technologies that improve the safety of heavy vehicles on our roads. Make it a requirement that all heavy vehicles in Australia be fitted with:

1. Class V mirrors, and reversing and blind spot cameras, giving the driver a better view of road users around their vehicles
2. Side underrun protection to protect bike riders from being dragged under the wheels in the event of a collision
3. Audible left turn warning and reverse squawker alert systems to communicate heavy vehicle movements to all road users
4. Hydraulic payload monitoring system to determine and notify drivers of real time truck weight

To support the widespread implementation of safety upgrades and to subsidise the cost, the federal government should offer rebates to help small owner-operators of heavy vehicle fleets. Strict timelines should be set for implementation so that all heavy vehicle fleets on our roads (both new and old) are fitted with the technology by 2025.

3.3.2 Fund national heavy vehicle training and road user awareness programs

Truck driver training and road user awareness programs are integral to the prevention of crashes involving heavy vehicles.

Funding a national awareness program like Bicycle Network's Swapping Seats initiative would help to not only raise awareness but build a consistent and clear communication of behaviours for both drivers and bike riders. Vulnerable road user training should also be introduced and mandated across all truck driver licensing curriculums.

Distracted driving

3.3.3 Adopt eight key recommendations in Bicycle Network's submission to the National Transport Commission.

1. The rapid roll out of hi-tech traffic camera technologies and legal reforms that make it easier for police to enforce distracted driving laws.
2. A national advertising campaign to highlight the kinds of distracted driving and their consequences.
3. Higher penalties for distracted driving with consistency across states and territories.
4. Fast-track in-vehicle mobile phone blocking technologies and its mandated implementation across all new vehicles sold in Australia.
5. In-built opt-out '*Do not disturb while driving*' apps automatically activated in all smartphones sold in Australia.



6. Implement autonomous safe-vehicle technology such as emergency braking and lane departure warnings in all new cars sold in Australia.
7. Establish a national crash database to track the causes of crashes and the impact of distracted driving.
8. Greater research into the motivations of distracted driving with a focus on smartphone use.

National Road Safety Strategy

3.3.3 Urgently prioritise and implement the recommendations from the inquiry into the National Road Safety Strategy

It is critical that the following recommendations are implemented to reduce harm and minimise risk for all Australian road users:

- *Establish a national road safety entity reporting to the Cabinet minister with responsibility for road safety*
- *Set a vision zero target for 2050 with an interim target of vision zero for all major capital city CBD areas, and high-volume highways by 2030*
- *Implement rapid deployment and accelerated uptake of proven vehicle safety technologies and innovation*
- *Accelerate the adoption of speed management initiatives that support harm elimination.*
- *Invest in road safety focused infrastructure, safe system and mobility partnerships with state, territory and local governments that accelerate the elimination of high-risk roads.*
- *Make road safety a genuine part of business as usual within Commonwealth, state, territory and local government.*
- *Resource key road safety enablers and road safety innovation initiatives.*
- *Implement life-saving partnerships with countries in the Indo-Pacific and globally as appropriate to reduce road trauma.*

Crash database

3.3.5 Establish a national crash database for vulnerable road users

A national bicycle crash database would help standardise and centralise data on the nature and causes of crashes. A consistent approach to data collection is essential to ensuring that a true national approach is taken to reducing deaths and serious injury on our roads.

Lower speeds

3.3.6 Instruct the Transport Infrastructure Council to apply lower limits on local streets or those streets with high volumes of bike riders

Reduce speeds on local streets or in built up environments to 30km/h.

High speeds discourage men, women and children from riding their bikes for short trips – whether it's to the local shops, school or work – because they don't feel safe or comfortable. As fewer people ride and walk, our communities and neighbourhoods become disconnected, disengaged and unhealthy.



3.4 STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Bikes on the national agenda

3.4.1 Ensure national agendas and strategies consider bikes

To ensure long-term, sustainable and strategic growth of cycling infrastructure, it's essential that bike riding and active travel organisations have input into related national agenda and strategies including the Australian Government's Smart Cities Initiative.

3.4.2 Adopt and implement the recommendations from the Australian House of Representatives Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport and Cities *Building Up & Moving Out* report

In examining the Australian Government's role in the development of cities, the Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport and Cities came up with several recommendations regarding connectivity and active transport in their Building Up & Moving Out report.

Recommendation 11:

6.117 The Committee recommends that the Australian Government, as part of the system of master planning under the national plan of settlement, ensure that governments at all levels:

- *Commit to a more sustainable model of urban transport connectivity than currently exist*
- *Actively promote investment in the development of a public transport network that is capable of meeting the goal of the 30-minute city.*
- *Actively plan for and promote the integration of active transport within the transport network.*
- *Embrace innovation.*
- *Ensure that transport infrastructure planning is consistent with planning for a more sustainable urban form and conforms to integrated planning at local, regional and city levels.*

National cycling participation and tourism strategy

3.4.3 Develop a new national bike riding strategy backed with a fully funded action plan

A new national bike riding strategy is needed to ensure the ongoing growth of participation and cycling tourism. It should set ambitious but realistic participation and growth targets and include monitoring and evaluation.