

**BICYCLE  
NETWORK®**

# **Tasmanian Budget Submission 2020–21**

**December 2019**



## About 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 in Tasmania through:

- improving the bike riding environment by working with government at all levels to provide better infrastructure, data, policies, legislation and regulations
- delivering measurable behaviour-change programs such as Ride2School
- providing services that support bike riders through membership
- encouraging more people to ride by providing free social rides, bicycle valet parking at major events and the e-bike expos.
- being a key spokesperson on issues related to cycling and physical activity.

Bicycle Network would like to thank the Tasmanian Government for the opportunity to provide a submission for the Tasmanian Budget 2020-21. We look forward to working with you to get more people riding bikes across the state.

Handwritten signature of Alison Hetherington in black ink.

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## 1. Executive summary: investing in infrastructure

While Bicycle Network is dedicated to getting more people riding so they can get the physical activity they need to stay healthy, the Hobart congestion issues provide an ideal opportunity for the state government to invest in cycling transport infrastructure.

With our growing population and booming tourism numbers, we should be looking at ways to reduce the economic costs of traffic congestion and improve amenity for people who have no choice but to drive because of age, disability or work requirements.

Encouraging more people to ride bikes means they can get the 30–60 minutes of exercise they need each day and have a flexible transport option other than a car. Electric bicycles provide even more opportunity to get people out of cars as they are capable of being ridden further and faster and can carry shopping and young children. European city, state and national governments are providing incentives for people to buy or lease electric bicycles and Tasmania should be considering similar incentives to get more people riding.

If we are going to target the majority of population to consider riding we need more safe places for people to ride. Cycleways separated from motor vehicles need to be built that will get people to work, study, shops and services. Where there are not available land corridors, these can be retrofitted onto existing streets by removing on-street parking.

Current state and local government spending on bicycle infrastructure is not nearly enough to build networks of separated cycleways in our urban centres. It is also not enough to implement the Safe Systems approach to road construction, which is to separate bicycles on roads of speeds above 30–40 km/h with high traffic volumes.

At the last election, the government promised to spend more than \$800 million on new and improved road infrastructure over five years, but only \$8 million over four years for roadway bicycle infrastructure. This represents just 1% of the roads infrastructure budget.

Most of this money was promised for state road infrastructure, which does not target where it's needed to get people riding for transport: local roads.

The Tasmanian and Australian governments should be investing in separated cycleways as a congestion buster as well as a major public health initiative.

It's time the Tasmanian budget reflected the desire to be the healthiest state in the country by 2025, reduced traffic congestion and a Towards Zero road toll.



Bicycle Network Tasmania wants to see \$12.6 million allocated to bikes in 2020–21 and \$51 million over the next four years. The following table broadly outlines the investment:

Financial year	2020–21 \$m	2021–22 \$m	2022–23 \$m	2023–24 \$m	TOTAL \$m
<b>Bicycle infrastructure fund</b>	10.6	10.6	10.6	10.6	42.6
<b>Ride2School program</b>	0.09	0.09	0.25	0.25	0.68
<b>Ride2Work program</b>	0.17	0.20	0.22	0.22	0.81
<b>E-bike fund</b>	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	1
<b>Cycling tourism</b>	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	6

**The funding would enable the delivery of Bicycle Network Tasmania’s key asks of the Hodgman Liberal government:**

1. Establish a bicycle infrastructure fund to begin delivering separated cycleways.
2. Embed funding for the Ride2School program into recurrent expenditure following the end of the current trial and expand its focus to a behaviour change program.
3. Establish a Ride2Work behaviour change program, beginning in state government workplaces.
4. Improve the uptake of electric bicycles
5. Broaden the Cycling Tourism funding to rail trails and statewide touring.
6. Implement planning policy changes to require end-of-trip facilities and bicycle parking.
7. Implement an integrated transport policy so bicycle riding can seamlessly fit in with bus, and proposed ferry and light rail/trackless tram travel.

## 2. Protecting people who ride with cycleways



Two-thirds of Australian adults don't get the exercise they need to stay healthy.

Many Australians are in sedentary jobs, are time pressured with caring and work responsibilities and don't get the 30–60 minutes of moderate exercise they need five times a week. Building exercise into daily routines is one way of helping people to be more active.

If more people chose active transport options like cycling and walking it would help keep them healthy and would also relieve traffic congestion.

However, the 2016 census found only 1.5% of people rode to work in the Greater Hobart area, that increased to 2.2% in the Hobart LGA. This compares to the Melbourne LGA at 4.7%, Sydney LGA 3.6%, and Brisbane LGA 2.2%.

Despite the overall low number, there are geographical pockets in Hobart where rider numbers are high, usually when good quality bike infrastructure is nearby, such as South Hobart and its access to the Rivulet path.

While there are several reasons why people don't consider riding for transport, the most common reason cited by far is safety. US research has segmented the population and their propensity to ride for transport into these four groups, which has been echoed by local surveys:

- **<1% Strong and Fearless:** will ride anywhere
- **7% Enthused and Confident:** will ride on painted bike lanes but would prefer protection
- **60% Interested but Concerned:** will not ride on roads without physical separation from vehicles
- **33% No Way, No How:** won't get on a bike, not matter how good the infrastructure





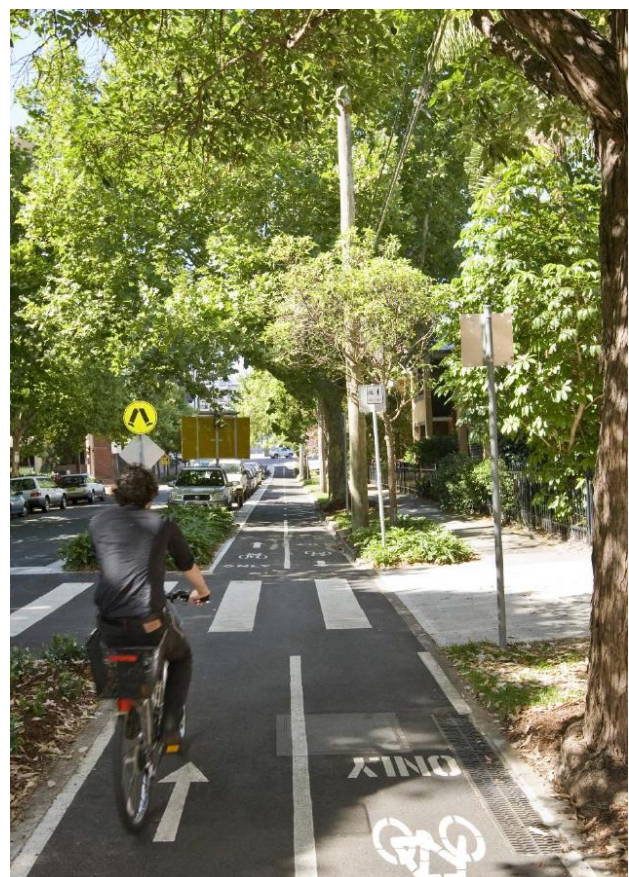
The 2019 National Cycling Participation Survey found that more than one-third of Tasmanians had ridden a bike in the previous year. Of the people who said they'd ridden in the past month, only 23% did so for transport which is well under the national figure of 32%. The key to getting more people riding for transport is to provide separated cycleways as part of a network that takes them to work, shops, services, and schools.

Separated cycleways can be off-road, such as the Intercity Cycleway or Launceston levee paths, or on-road like Danish, Dutch and, increasingly, North American models. When separated cycleways are built as part of a connected network, the numbers of people riding bikes increases.

Vancouver in Canada started building separated cycleways into its network in 2009 and the number of commuter trips has risen significantly to 6.6% in 2013 and 10.5% in 2016. Its network uses an All Abilities ratings system which means its infrastructure must be appropriate for all people aged eight to 80.

The City of Sydney has built several separated cycleways in the inner city which have all resulted in increases in rider numbers above 300% and the City of Melbourne has just approved a transport strategy that aims to add 50 km of separated cycleways to its network.

Most Australian cities are building or are planning separated cycleways, while some departments and councils in Tasmania are talking about it, no plans have been released publicly.





### 3. Invest in an ongoing bicycle infrastructure fund

The United Nations Environment Program has called on governments at all levels around the world to invest at least 20% of transport budgets on walking and cycling infrastructure.

At the last election the government promised to spend more than \$800 million on new and improved road infrastructure over five years, but only \$8 million over four years for roadway bicycle infrastructure. This represents just 1% of the roads infrastructure budget.

With years of underspending on transport bicycle infrastructure in Tasmania, a strong argument could be made for a big boost in spending just to catch up to other states.

Bicycle Network believes state and federal governments should establish cycling infrastructure funds at \$20 per head of the population per year. In Tasmania that means 10.66 million per year, which would be about 5.3% of the promised road budget during the state election campaign.

#### Budget impact:

Financial year	2020–21 \$m	2021–22 \$m	2022–23 \$m	2023–24 \$m	TOTAL \$m
<b>Bicycle infrastructure fund</b>	10.6	10.6	10.6	10.6	42.6

Most urban centres are made up of local roads and that's where the funding is needed to build the separated facilities that will get more people riding. Local governments alone can't afford the investment needed to bring Tasmania's riding environment up to a safer standard, and struggle to match funding on big ticket projects.

The state government could consider funding a core separated bicycle network throughout urban centres, just as it funds the state road network. These networks should be transport focused and would predominantly be on local roads, with cooperation from local governments.

Local government can then build on these central networks with more paths and traffic-calmed 30km/h roads which will help connect people to workplaces, schools, university campuses and local shops and services.

The fund could also be drawn upon to improve safety on popular road cycling routes through shoulder widening and sealing, although it would preferably be funded through positive provisioning and road safety budgets.



## 4. Make it easier for more children to Ride2School

Bicycle Network's Ride2School program helps keep students fit and healthy, alert in the classroom and reduces traffic congestion at school drop-off and pick-up times.



Today, only about 20% of children walk or ride to school across Australia, with a sharp decline in bicycle riding between the ages of 10 and 17. Yet, more than 50% of children ride or walk to school at the 2,700 national schools registered in Bicycle Network's successful Ride2School program.

Bicycle Network is receiving \$90,000 per year over four years from the Road Safety levy to fund a road-safety focussed Ride2School program across Tasmania. The current program aims to deliver 40 workshops in primary schools each year over four years.

This funding finishes in 2022–23 and it would be preferable after that year for recurrent funding to be included in either the Education or Health budgets. A higher level of funding would also enable a complete behaviour change program to be delivered, instead of a basic, road-safety program, and expansion of the program to secondary schools.

An example of an expanded program is the development of active travel plans for Tasmanian schools that include adequate bicycle parking. Bicycle Network can help develop active pathways with fun branding that encourages children to ride, scoot or walk.



## 5. Establish a Ride2Work program

Bicycle Network’s National Ride2Work Day is marked each year with breakfasts to encourage more people to choose to commute by bicycle. However, there is scope to deliver a behaviour change program with employers that would provide more support and encouragement for people to make the switch to bike commuting.

It’s in employers’ interests to encourage staff to ride because of the known productivity benefits of having physically active staff, including fewer sick days.

The Tasmanian Government, through its departments, instrumentalities, and government business enterprises, is one of Tasmania’s largest employers. It can make serious improvements in health outcomes through internal policies directly related to its own workforce.

Bicycle Network is proposing the Tasmanian Government fund a Ride2Work program across government to support people riding bicycles to and from work, with the aim of expanding to the private sector.

### Budget impact:

Financial year	2020–21 \$m	2021–22 \$m	2022–23 \$m	2023–24 \$m	TOTAL \$m
Ride2Work program	0.17	0.20	0.22	0.22	0.81

This would include:

- a pilot program in the first year in government workplaces that would include urban riding skills training, buddy rider system, advice in choosing the right bike and commuting gear
- a commitment to installing secure bicycle parking and end-of-trip facilities in all state government workplaces by 2022
- establishment of bicycle fleets in state government workplaces.



## 6. E-bikes for transport

Electric bicycle (e-bikes) sales are growing rapidly but for many people the purchase price can be off-putting.

Countries such as Austria, Belgium, Finland, Sweden, The Netherlands and Belgium have all offered direct subsidies or grants to people to buy electric bicycles. Cities, states and regions in Europe have also run subsidy schemes.

The Tasmanian government could offer a no-interest loan, similar to the Tasmanian Energy Efficiency Loans, or direct grants to low income Tasmanians to help them buy an e-bike.

It could also offer a grant scheme to businesses to invest in e-bike fleets to replace cars/vans for staff or deliveries.

Cargo electric bikes are popular in some European cities but are virtually unheard of in Tasmania. Such bikes can replace cars as they allow riders to transport young children, groceries and other bulky purchases.

Salary sacrificing and leasing schemes that help people buy e-bikes are currently possible in Australia but we are aware of only one supplier in Australia: E-stralian. The company doesn't currently operate in Tasmania but would be willing to establish here if there were enough people using the service – something that could be facilitated by the Tasmanian Government establishing salary sacrificing of e-bikes.





## 7. Towards Zero road safety

The state government is to be commended on adopting a Towards Zero approach to road safety. One of the key elements of the Safe Systems approach to road design is the separation of vulnerable road users above the 10% probability of a fatality. In Tasmania that is typically on roads of speeds above 30 km/h with high traffic volumes.

The state government's positive provisioning policy, which requires bicycle facilities to be included in new roads and road upgrades along the principal cycling network, should include separation of bicycle riders through or leading into urban centres.

As well as separating cyclists on new and improved road projects, the widening and sealing of shoulders on popular road cycling routes should continue. Ideally these routes would also have barriers from motor vehicle traffic, but the widening and sealing is a good first step.

The 'Distance makes a Difference' road safety campaign has proved successful in raising driver awareness of minimum passing distance laws and Bicycle Network would like to see funding for it continue for at least another year. There is also scope to provide dedicated funding for Tasmania Police to provide education of the laws, similar to the West Midlands Police close pass campaign: <https://vimeo.com/293503049> and recently announced ACT Police enforcement campaign.

## 8. Expand opportunities for tourism and cycling

The government's ambition of Tasmania becoming known as the cycling state, as outlined in the Cycling Tourism Strategy, is one Bicycle Network wholeheartedly supports. Bicycle tourism helps contribute to local economies while also providing facilities that locals can use.

The government made a good first step towards its goal with its \$6 million investment in mostly mountain bike tracks and trails across the state, and pledges to complete sections of the north-west coastal pathway.

Mountain bike tourism has already shown its positive effects on the local economies of the towns of Derby and Maydena, other projects are set to improve tracks near Hobart, St Helens and George Town.

What is now needed is investment in cycle touring. Bicycle Network Tasmania is asking for an investment of \$6 million over the next four years to expand opportunities for rail trails and cycling tourism projects beyond mountain biking.

### Budget impact:

Financial year	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	TOTAL
	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m
Cycling tourism	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	6





The North-East Rail Trail has not received state government funding but is the sort of project that doesn't require a lot of upfront investment for an asset that will be used by visitors and locals alike all day, every day of the year. And unlike heritage rail operations, rail trails cost very little to maintain, with most of the costs being in the marketing of the trail.

A rail trail along the disused Derwent Valley rail line is another possibility that the state government should fund a feasibility study into. Heritage rail enthusiasts have been trying for years to get a regular business up and running and yet there is still no timeline for when that could be or estimate of costs to bring the rail to safe standard for passenger rail.

From New Norfolk to Maydena there are beautiful views of river and forest and plenty of opportunities to sample farm-gate produce. A path from Granton to New Norfolk along the river would further cement the trip as a must-do for cycling tourists. Longer rail trails or paths have the added benefit of some people staying overnight in towns along the way.

On top of specific tourism projects, becoming the cycling state will require investment in separated cycling infrastructure in our urban centres. Hobart, Devonport, Burnie and Launceston all attract tourists and cruise ship visitation has increased the diversity of tourists in the cities.

Tourists should be able to jump on a hire or share bike and get around the cities to see sites and go shopping. This will be a bonus for local businesses as cycling tourists can stop whenever they want, as opposed to being on set bus tours.





## 9. Planning policies for bikes

During the election campaign the government promised it would review planning and development laws with a view to requiring developers to include bike parking and associated facilities in major cities across the state.

Those facilities include undercover, secure bike parking with electricity charging, showers, lockers and change rooms.

This is a long overdue change and should be extended to retrofitting buildings owned by the state government, which will require a budget allocation. State government departments and agencies should also only enter lease arrangements with buildings that have end-of-trip facilities.

State-wide planning policies should integrate the provision of all abilities cycling infrastructure into broader transport and land-use planning. This should include the extension of the positive provisioning policy to new roads in local government areas and subdivisions.

Such planning should be informed by a review of the Principal Urban Bicycle Network and its extension to regional city centres. As well as the establishment of a state-wide cycle network database and long-term urban transport strategies developed as part of the current review of the Tasmanian Walking and Cycling for Active Transport Strategy 2010.

The state government should require all local councils with a population greater than 10,000 to develop and implement a bicycle strategy with bi-annual progress reports that include the health and physical activity measurements across communities. This would emulate state policy in New South Wales.



## 10. Integrated transport the key to mobility

Tasmania has little to no integrated transport connections for bicycle riders. Buses and potentially ferries that could carry bicycles and bus, ferry and light rail stations with undercover, secure bicycle parking could encourage bicycle use for part of people's journeys.

Metro Tasmania should be funded to implement better integration of bicycles in its current and potential operations.

While the very short trial of bicycle racks on the front of 10 buses on a handful of Hobart routes that ran from December 2012 to February 2013 was not accepted by the bus company, there is scope with low-floor buses to have bikes wheeled on and strapped in inside the bus.

There is also scope to promote the frequent bus service routes by providing secure bike parking at set points, such as bike lockers or swipe card access cages that provide a visible, secure parking option.

The potential ferry service between Bellerive and Hobart could increase its customer catchment by providing separated cycleways to the ferry terminals and vessels designed to easily allow riders to roll on and off.

Likewise, secure undercover parking at a Bellerive ferry terminal may encourage people on the eastern shore to ride to the ferry, lock their bike and walk on which would help ease car parking pressures in an already crowded locality.

