

**BICYCLE  
NETWORK®**

# **Federal pre-budget submission 2020-21**

**Bicycle Network**

**January 2020**



## About Bicycle Network

With more than 45,000 members, [Bicycle Network](#) is one of the top five member-based bike riding organisations in the world, and the largest in Australia. With a 40-year history, 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, successful 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, legislation, data, policies and regulations
- Delivering successful, large-scale and measurable behaviour change programs such as Ride2School and Ride2Work
- Providing services that support bike riders through nationwide membership
- Running mass participation bike riding events such as the Great Vic Bike Ride and United Energy Around the Bay
- Being a key national spokesperson on issues related to cycling and physical activity

Bicycle Network welcome the opportunity to make a pre-budget submission to Treasury as preparations are made for the 2020-21 Federal Budget.

If you need our help to build a nation of bike riders, please contact us.

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## 1. Executive summary: Build for a bicycle future

It's no secret that Australia's urban transport networks are under increasing pressure to meet the needs of our cities and towns. Traffic congestion and its negative effects have become an increasingly critical challenge for decision makers.

We cannot deny that the cost of traffic congestion has significant ramifications for national health and wellbeing, sustainable economic growth, social amenity and the environment. Yet despite the best intentions of transport planners, the movement of motor vehicles continues to be prioritised over other sustainable and cost-effective transport modes.

The mindset of governments at all levels must shift from a focus on moving vehicles to moving the most amount of people quickly, cheaply and actively. In the process, we'll create smart, healthy, connected and productive communities.

Bicycle Network is asking the federal government to consider the following key asks as part of their 2020-21 Federal Budget. The following programs and initiatives will make riding a bike more accessible while at the same time, helping reduce the risk for people who ride.

### KEY 2020-21 BUDGET ASKS:

BUILD MORE PLACES FOR PEOPLE TO RIDE	SOCIAL NORMS	PROTECT PEOPLE WHO RIDE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•An ongoing cycling infrastructure fund</li><li>•Create a safe streets fund</li><li>•Delivery of 2019 election commitments</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•National Ride2School program including <i>Road Ready</i> and <i>Mind.Body.Pedal</i></li><li>•Introduce a national pay-to-ride-to-work scheme</li><li>•Tax rebate for the purchase of bicycle including pedelec e-bikes</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Establish higher safety standards for heavy vehicles</li><li>•A heavy vehicle education and awareness campaign</li></ul>



## 2. Budget impact summary

Financial year	2020-21 \$m	2021-22 \$m	2022-23 \$m	2023-24 \$m	TOTAL \$m
<b>Annual bike fund</b>	492.0	500.0	508.0	516.0	2016.0
<b>Safe Streets</b>	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0
<b>Federal election commitments</b>	17.5	n/a	n/a	n/a	17.5
<b>National Ride2School program</b>	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	16.0
<b>Ride2School Road Ready</b>	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	22.0
<b>Mind.Body.Pedal</b>	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	10.4
<b>Pay to Ride Scheme</b>	500.0	500.0	500.0	500.0	2000
<b>Bike commuter rebate</b>	150.0	150.0	150.0	150.0	600.0
<b>Heavy vehicle awareness campaign</b>	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	5.6



### 3. Investing in active transport shouldn't be 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 and investment that increases physical activity through active transport represents a low-cost, high-value investment with returns and benefits that will reach throughout the community for years to come.

When it comes to investing in bike riding for transport and recreation, parties, 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 waists 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** – Women, children and low socio-economic communities are currently denied their right to bike riding and physical activity because of barriers. It's unfair.
- **Tourism** – Promoting cycling tourism offers an enormous opportunity for economic growth and revitalisation in regional and rural areas. Cycling events, bike paths and rail trails are all visitor drawcards, and not only for people in Australia.



## KEY BUDGET ASKS:

### 4. Establish an annual cycling infrastructure fund

In the previous federal budget, the Morrison Government announced a \$100 billion infrastructure fund to be spent over the next decade. This shows that the federal government knows that money needs to be spent to keep Australians moving, with large scale infrastructure projects regularly in the pipeline.

However, bicycle infrastructure is chronically underfunded. We need the federal government to provide our states and councils with the funding and tools that they require to build the active travel infrastructure we need.

Last financial year, Bicycle Network called on the federal government to invest \$492 million a year to an ongoing cycling infrastructure fund which works out to be roughly \$20 per head of the population. It broadly matches what is spent in Denmark, London and the Netherlands. The amount also equates to only five per cent of the budgeted \$9 billion that was to be spent on communications and transport infrastructure in 2019-20.

This coming financial year, Bicycle Network is renewing its call for the federal government to invest in an annual cycling infrastructure fund. More than ever, bicycle infrastructure is desperately needed. Separated infrastructure continues to be the best way to get more people of all ages, abilities and background riding.

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.

Alongside sustained investment in active transport, Bicycle Network calls for a national framework and regulation that requires bicycle and active travel infrastructure to be part of major infrastructure projects. It should not be an additional extra. This will ensure that bike projects are linked to strategic success of any federally funded road or rail project.

#### Budget impact:

Financial year Budget impact	2020-21 \$m	2021-22 \$m	2022-23 \$m	2023-24 \$m	TOTAL \$m
	492	500	508	516	2016



#### **4.1 Invest in transport alternatives for commuter hubs**

The current method of building more car parks at stations perpetuates driving behaviours and reduces land values around metropolitan railway stations and centres. In building more free parking for commuters, the Australian taxpayer subsidises the drive for commuters.

Using the money from the annual cycling infrastructure fund, Bicycle Network calls on the federal government to invest in building sustainable transport options for major commuter hubs. This includes provision for safe and secure bicycle parking and infrastructure links to bicycle routes.

#### **4.2 Amend the Building Code of Australia to include the provision of end-of-trip facilities**

To support the normalisation of adequate end of trip facilities, Bicycle Network is calling on the federal government to amend the Building Code of Australia. Adding a provision of end-of-trip facilities such as bike parking to the code will make riding for transport an easier and more accessible option.

#### **4.3 Continue and expand the Building Better Regions Fund (BBRF) to boost cycling tourism**

Regional communities are undergoing massive changes in their economies and are being hardest hit by changing environmental conditions. We are asking for the continuation and expansion of the Building Better Regions Fund (BBRF) to boost cycling tourism.

The criteria of the BBRF should make explicit mention of rail trail proposals that will draw tourism dollars and provide benefits to regional communities from a transport, recreation and connectivity perspective.







## 5. Establish a safer streets traffic calming fund available for local councils

Comfortable street environments with more green spaces, easier access to shops, less car parks and lower speed limits are more inviting for people who are interested in riding a bike and walking.

As well as making it easier for people to be physically active, it also encourages them to spend more time in retail areas, stimulating local economies. In residential areas, calmer streets can give families and people new to riding more confidence, helps them get outside and creates a greater sense of community.

Bicycle Network is asking the federal government to establish a \$10 million safer streets traffic calming fund to allow councils to apply for funding to improve the liveability and amenity of local streets, making them less car-focussed and more pedestrian and bike friendly.

Lower speed limits are also vital in reducing risk for all road users. The risk of death if hit by a car travelling at 30km/h is less than 10 per cent, however at 40km/h the risk of death jumps to almost 30 per cent [2]. 30km/h is also the speed limit recommended by the International Transport Forum for the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in built-up areas where people ride and walk [3].

A 30km/h speed limit trial was held in Fitzroy in inner-Melbourne by Yarra City Council in 2018 and 2019, with the council recommending in December 2019 that the reduced speed limit be made permanent and reductions in other areas be considered.

The 30km/h trial cost \$261,500, with Yarra City Council contributing some of their own money [4].

A \$10 million safer streets traffic calming fund would allow 40 councils and municipalities to apply for up to \$250,000 to implement traffic calming measures in a local area.

### Budget impact:

Financial year	2020-21 \$m	2021-22 \$m	2022-23 \$m	2023-24 \$m	TOTAL \$m
Budget impact	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	40.0





## 6. Deliver on 2019 federal election commitments

During the 2019 federal election, the Morrison-led Coalition promised several cycling or active travel infrastructure projects. It is imperative that the federal government honours its commitments to the Australian public and swiftly delivers on these much-needed projects.

### **Fund and build the Northern Rivers Rail Trail – \$7.5 million**

During the 2019 federal election, The Nationals MP Kevin Hogan committed \$7.5 million in funding to build a 13-kilometre stretch of the Northern Rivers Rail Trail from Casino to Bentley. This commitment also included building public amenities in Bentley.

### **Improving Melbourne’s Yarra Boulevard and the Walmer Street Bridge – \$7.5 million**

Melbourne’s Yarra Boulevard has been the site of at least 40 crashes in recent years. It is also regularly targeted by the infamous ‘*boulie tacker*’ who has been dropping small nails on the road for more than five years, causing tyre punctures and injuries to bike riders. Despite efforts, police have not been able to catch the offender.

During the 2019 election campaign, Treasurer Josh Frydenberg promised \$5 million to provide much needed safety and security measures to Yarra Boulevard including CCTV, lighting and measures to combat speeding and hooning.

A further \$1.5 million was promised to widen and improve the Walmer Street bridge which is used by around 2,000 bike riders plus walkers every day. While the cost of fully upgrading the bridge is estimated by Boroondara Council to cost more than \$7 million, the initial \$1.5 million is a step in the right direction to improve one of Melbourne’s most popular bicycle routes.

### **Build a new mountain bike park in Queenstown, Tasmania – \$2.5 million**

During the election there was bi-partisan support to develop the West Coast Mountain Bike Trail Strategy which included a new mountain bike park in Queenstown, Tasmania. The Coalition committed \$2.5 million to complete the entire strategy if re-elected.

### **Budget impact:**

Financial year Budget impact	2020-21 \$m	2021-22 \$m	2022-23 \$m	2023-24 \$m	TOTAL \$m
	17.5	n/a	n/a	n/a	17.5



## 7. Fund a national Ride2School program

Currently, two thirds of Australian children don't get the 60 minutes of physical activity they need each day to maintain their health and happiness [5]. This statistic is even worse among young girls alone. We're suffering a crisis of inactivity and it's putting our children and young people at risk of chronic disease and obesity.

The easiest way for children to fit 60 minutes of physical activity into each day is by riding a bike to school, however the car dominates the drop-off zone and Australian children are among the most chauffeured young people in the developed world. While almost 75 per cent of Australian children rode or walked to school in the 1970s, today it's closer to 25 per cent.

Despite one in four young Australians being classed as overweight or obese [6], most Australian states don't have the resources or inclination to fund a youth-focused behaviour change program. Childhood is the fundamental stage when long-term healthy habits are established – it is better to introduce children to physical activity than try to change behaviours later in life after they have become entrenched.

Australians need a national approach to tackle the dropping rates of physical activity among our children and bicycles offer kids a way out of obesity and physical inactivity because they can be easily and efficiently integrated into daily lives.

Bicycle Network's [Ride2School](#) program has successfully increased active travel rates for over 10 years at schools across Victoria [7]. This cost-effective and successful program is a world-leader and has been able to increase active travel rates to around 45 per cent, more than the national active travel average of 25 per cent.

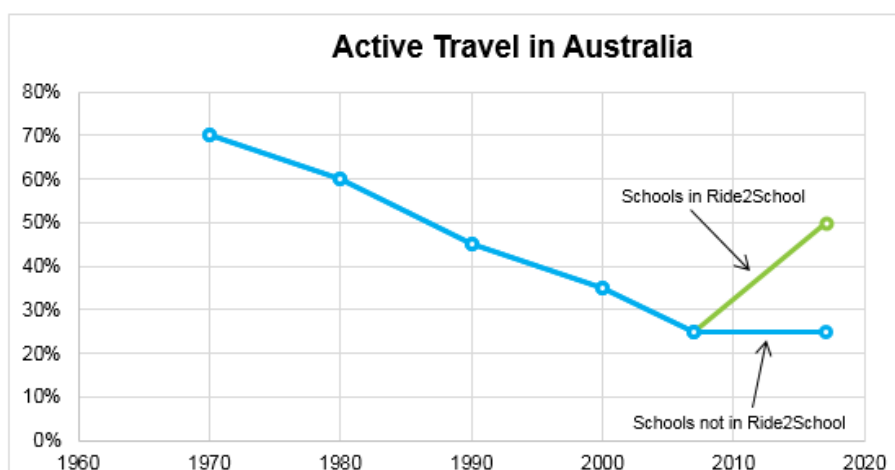


Figure 1- Active Travel Rates in Australia



Ride2School successfully implements proven behaviour change interventions that increase and promote active travel in school communities. Using diagnostic tools, the program categorises schools and offers behaviour change interventions that help remove barriers and develop a culture of active travel. Each intervention is underpinned with research and needs assessments before being uniquely tailored to the barriers and motivators of the school community.

However, the program’s national impact is limited as it is currently only funded at a state-level by the Victorian and Tasmanian governments. A national Ride2School program with ongoing funding would increase the reach, impact and success of the program.

The program currently operates in Victoria on \$700,000 per annum. While economies of scale exist, there are expenses in putting people on the ground around the country and coordinating them.

Bicycle Network is calling on the federal government to put the health of Australia’s young people first and invest \$16 million over four years in a cost-effective and nationally coordinated Ride2School program.

**Budget impact:**

Financial year Budget impact	2020-21 \$m	2021-22 \$m	2022-23 \$m	2023-24 \$m	TOTAL \$m
	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	16.0



## 8. Invest in the Ride2School Road Ready program

Due to societal changes, a lack of active travel infrastructure and our dependence on cars, young people are also being driven to school at increasing rates [8]. As a result of this, children and young people are not learning social skills and resilience to deal with others in traffic-related situations.

By missing opportunities to interact with the local street environment, young people don't understand the roads in a way that will ultimately enable them to be competent drivers when the time comes. Car crashes are the second leading cause of death among young people aged 15-29 in Australia [9], and there are clear gaps between states in terms of education programs.

Bicycle Network's new Ride2School Road Ready program aims to educate young Australians about the road rules along with road safety. With a focus on theory and real-world, practical examples, it will enable students to deal with the current challenges of active travel and help students make the correct decisions when interacting with road environments.

Rather than a bike education program, Ride2School Road Ready is an opportunity to instil a positive model of safe road user behaviour, prior to driving age. It builds on existing experience, skills and lays the foundation for safe driving behaviours between various road user groups.

Various analysis indicate that bike riders make safer drivers [10], and the experiences developed in this program will hopefully translate to better and safer driving behaviour.

In order to implement a new national road safety campaign with riding at its core, we followed a similar costing method to the national rollout of Ride2School that considers relevant expenses.

### Budget impact:

Financial year Budget impact	2020-21 \$m	2021-22 \$m	2022-23 \$m	2023-24 \$m	TOTAL \$m
	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	22.0







## 9. Invest in a national Mind.Body.Pedal program to get young girls active

Teenage girls are twice as inactive when compared to teenage boys. Exercise is a hugely positive influence on physical and mental health, however many young women are missing out because of unique barriers that prevent them from being as active as their male counterparts. Studies show that young women don't want to be judged and are often self-conscious about how they look during and after exercise [11].

Bicycle Network's Mind.Body.Pedal program works to turn this around and was piloted at Elwood College in 2016 as a holistic health promotion program for female teenagers. Since then, the program has won a VicHealth award and worked with more than 1,500 students from 20 schools in Victoria and Tasmania.

The program addresses common barriers that prevent young females from participating in physical activity and helps them develop strategies to overcome societal pressures and build resilience. It also works closely with schools to address the environmental influences affecting the uptake of active travel by identifying feasible and long-term solutions to infrastructure barriers such as safe route planning and bike parking.

The program has been extremely well received by the schools who have engaged with it. Federal funding will enable young girls around the country to experience the benefits offered by the program and develop positive behaviours for the rest of their life.

### Budget impact:

Financial year Budget impact	2020-21 \$m	2021-22 \$m	2022-23 \$m	2023-24 \$m	TOTAL \$m
	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	10.4



## 10. Introduce a national pay-to-ride-to-work scheme

Bicycle Network is renewing previous calls for the federal government to incentivise active travel by introducing a scheme where commuters can receive a government benefit of \$5 for every trip to work made by bicycle.

Successful pay-to-ride tax schemes are already running in Italy, the Netherlands and the UK.

Various studies and research show that for every kilometre driven, there is a cost to society, and a net economic benefit for bike riding [12] [13]. The economy benefits \$21 every time a person cycles to work and back [12]. Rewarding people who ride to work with a \$5 bonus will encourage even more people to swap out cars for bikes.

Shifting just five per cent of short distance car trips to active transport could result in a reduction of between 20,000 and 50,000 motor vehicle trips per day on our roads.

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





## 11. Incentivise and plan for a bicycle future

The growth of electric bicycle food delivery in our major cities and e-bike commuting has shown the ease in which electric bicycles can be adopted and used by businesses and people who wouldn't regularly ride a conventional bicycle.

The advantage of pedelec electric bicycles is that they allow people to still exercise, while riding further than before. Specifically, pedelec e-bikes bicycles refer to electric-powered bicycles with a 250w power limit and limited to 25 km/h. These bicycles are all to be primarily pedal powered, with the electric motor only engaging once the rider is pedalling.

In the Netherlands, more e-bikes were sold than regular mechanical bicycles, four years ahead of market predictions [12], meaning that there is enormous potential for electric bicycles growth in Australia

### 11.1 Create a tax rebate on the purchase commuter bicycles including e-bikes

Bicycle Network proposes that Australia adopts a tax rebate scheme for all bicycles used for riding to work by offering a 25% rebate up to \$500.

By creating a tax rebate, Australians have a financial incentive to purchase a sustainable mode of transport that is cheaper to run and reduces congestion while also providing health benefits.

Electric bicycles sales are the largest growing section of bicycles retail, but the cost remains a barrier. In offering a rebate, electric bicycles would become more affordable to wider sections of the population, while those who prefer conventional bicycles would also benefit.

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. These schemes also boost the local bicycle industry with people purchasing approved bicycles locally, stimulating business.

As Australia does not collect import price data, it is difficult to assume the overall cost of this scheme. At the upper limit Bicycle Network estimates a cost of \$150 million per annum. Considering \$8.8 billion was claimed work related car expenses in 2016-2017 [13] this is a measured amount.

Bicycle Network proposes a trial for 2020-21 to determine the effectiveness of such a scheme.

#### Budget impact:

Financial year	2020-21 \$m	2021-22 \$m	2022-23 \$m	2023-24 \$m	TOTAL \$m
Budget impact	150.0	150.0	150.0	150.0	600.0





## 12. Establish national safety standards for heavy vehicles

Bicycle Network strongly believes that we need to actively pursue technologies to improve the safety of heavy vehicles on our roads. Bicycle Network is calling on the federal government to require that all heavy vehicles be fitted with the following:

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

Rail Projects Victoria and TransUrban have driven industry change by setting minimum safety standards for all trucks entering their worksites (most of what are listed above). These standards are beyond what is required federally. It costs approximately \$10,000 per truck to meet these upgrade requirements.

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.

### 12.1 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.

To rapidly reduce the risk that heavy vehicles pose to people who drive and walk, we must build a shared understanding of the limitations each group faces when it comes to visibility, behaviours, perspective and vulnerability. Technological advancements or modifications to heavy vehicles in isolation cannot wholly minimise risks where decision making is ultimately controlled by the individual.

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.

#### Budget impact:

Financial year	2020-21 \$m	2021-22 \$m	2022-23 \$m	2023-24 \$m	TOTAL \$m
Budget impact	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	5.6



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