

**BICYCLE
NETWORK®**

Victorian Budget 2020-21 submission

**Prepared for the Victorian Government
February 2020**



About Bicycle Network

With nearly 50,000 members, Bicycle Network is one of the top five member-based bike riding organisations in the world, and the largest in Australia. 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 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 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 preparation are made for the 2020/21 Victorian Budget.

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

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1. Introduction: Fund the changes our state needs

The Andrews Labor Government has overseen enormous investment in major infrastructure projects designed to get Victorians moving again.

However, there has been a noticeable lack of equivalent investment in active travel projects, with the overwhelming investment from the state government going to road projects.

Victoria needs an alternative: investment and planning in transport links that will reduce the strain on our major cities. Although Victoria has the policy setting and strategies to increase active travel, it also needs the budget and investment to compliment them.

Victorians continue to subsidise car ownership through continued investment in roads and parking, incentivising a poor choice of mode and perpetuating congestion [1].

In this budget submission, Bicycle Network asks the Andrews Government to invest in sustainable, healthy alternatives that are proven to get people out of cars and get them riding to the city, their local train stations and around their neighbourhoods. Only then will we see tangible differences in our traffic volumes, health and happiness.

Bicycle Network is recommending that the following asks be included in the 2020-21 Victorian Budget.

Build more places to ride	Protect people who ride	Get more girls active
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Invest in a dedicated bike infrastructure fund• Deliver key bike projects in metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria• Co-fund the City of Melbourne's Transport Strategy• Fund active transport at commuter hubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fund a minimum passing distance policing unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Invest in the Mind.Body.Pedal program as an extension of the Ride2School program

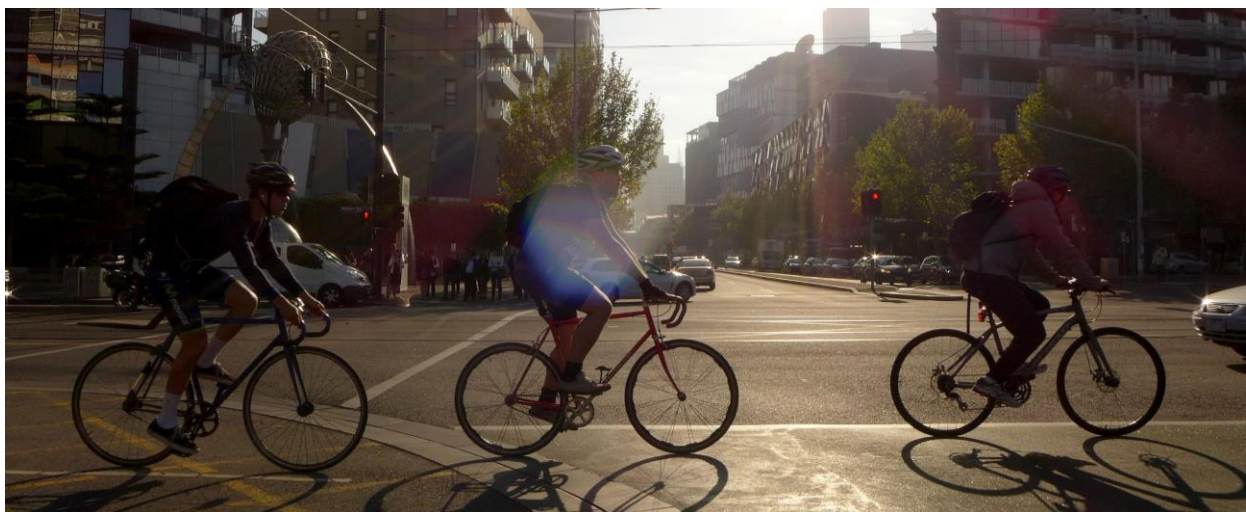
2. Key budget asks

Bicycle Network's 2020-21 budget submission is calling on the government to invest in funding, programs and initiatives that align with the strategic priorities and values of our organisation which represents nearly 50,000 members nationally.

Bicycle Network urges the Andrews government to consider these recommendations carefully as they offer the greatest cost-effective opportunity to reduce congestion, improve health outcomes and connectivity, and save lives on Victorian roads. They are based on sound evidence and support the normalisation of cycling for transport in Victoria.

2.1 Budget impact summary

Financial year	2020-21 (\$m)	2021-22 (\$m)	2022-23 (\$m)	2023-24 (\$m)	TOTAL (\$m)
Bike Infrastructure Fund	127	129	131	133	520
Co-fund the City of Melbourne's bike lane network	12	n/a	n/a	n/a	12
Active transport at commuter hubs	37.5	37.5	37.5	37.5	150
Minimum passing distance policing unit	1.75	1.75	1.75	1.75	7
Mind.Body.Pedal program	.385	.385	.385	.385	1.54





3. Budget priorities

3.1 Invest in a dedicated fund to get more people riding

The Victorian Government has invested massively in infrastructure projects designed to get the state moving again. The government has identified that infrastructure activity has been lacking over the last 20 years and that the state needs to catch up.

The government is commended for realising that the state is congested, and work needs to be done. Unfortunately, most of this investment has been directed to projects related to freeing up space for private vehicles.

We know that if we build safe places for people to ride, Victorians will choose active transport over the other modes. However, cycling infrastructure is not meeting the needs of people who want to ride bikes, predominantly because it is underfunded.

We also know that cars and congestion make us sick. Various cities around the world are implementing bold campaigns to tackle growing obesity levels and cities congested with cars. Examples include London’s healthy streets [2], New York’s Green Wave plan and Barcelona’s superblocks [3].

These strategies give urban planners scope to reclaim land which has previously been dominated by single-occupant vehicles in favour of active spaces.

There’s also an appetite for change. One recent example is the results from VicRoads Sydney Road survey where bike and pedestrian friendly designs were overwhelmingly favoured by the local community.

With an extra 10.6 million trips per day expected in Melbourne by 2050 [4], congestion will remain an ongoing issue for decades unless we provide active transport infrastructure that improves connectivity, accessibility and road safety for all Victorians.

Investment must be made into more efficient, sustainable transport modes that make bike riding a low risk, convenient and enjoyable transport option.

Bicycle Network is asking the government to invest \$20 per head of the state’s population, per year, to deliver a connected bicycle network and a plan to unclog Victoria.

Budget impact:

Financial year	2020-21 (\$m)	2021-22 (\$m)	2022-23 (\$m)	2023-24 (\$m)	TOTAL (\$m)
Bike Infrastructure Fund	127	129	131	133	520



An independent, annual cycling fund will ensure that bicycle projects are not tied to other infrastructure projects, giving them precedence and assisting in the completion of Victoria's bicycle network. It will also ensure that bicycle projects don't lose momentum and are completed sooner.

The state requires investment in order to set a new direction for people who ride, with a priority on completing projects that have been languishing on the policy sidelines. With funding allocated, the outcome will be a network of quality, direct and safe cycling routes that will reduce the strain on the roads and create inviting places for people to ride.

Victorian bike riders require investment from the state government to close many of the missing links in the commuter network, build safe places for families to ride on weekends and develop the culture of bike riding which is lacking in many places in the state.





3.2 Priority bicycle projects and actions for 2020-21

Without action, many of our priority bicycle infrastructure projects and actions remain unchanged from 2019-20. These projects are also consistent with our 2019 election priorities.

3.2.1 Prioritise and deliver on the strategic cycling corridors outlined in the Victorian Cycling Strategy 2018-28

The strategic cycling corridors are the cornerstone of Melbourne's principal bicycle network. Outlined in the Victorian Cycling Strategy [4] and Plan Melbourne 2050 [5], these corridors service Melbournians who live within or just outside a 10 kilometre radius of the CBD.

Bicycle Network calls on the state government to prioritise the completion and construction of these strategic cycling corridors and work constructively with local councils to ensure their completion.

3.2.2 Invest in improving bicycle routes and connectivity to major employment clusters such as Monash University, LaTrobe University and Sunshine

A significant amount of employment and education opportunities are located in the seven national employment and innovation clusters (NEIC), which are identified in Plan Melbourne 2050. As transport requirements are expected to increase to the NEIC hubs, improvements to active transport links should follow.

Bicycle Network asks for investment to improve cycling links to the hubs, such as improved cycling and pedestrian connections to Darebin Creek for Latrobe and improving connections along Inkerman Street to the Djerring Trail for Monash.

3.2.3 Ensure that all major scheduled road and transport projects adequately prioritise bike riding infrastructure and facilities as a critical outcome of the project, not an optional extra

The state government's flagship infrastructure projects include new or upgraded infrastructure for bike riders. The North East Link, West Gate Tunnel and Level Crossing Removal Projects all have projects that add new or improved paths for bike riders. While Bicycle Network welcomes new infrastructure for riders and walkers, these projects follow a concerning trend of adding bicycle infrastructure as an optional extra, rather than creating something with riders at the forefront.

Bicycle Network asks the state government to recognise people who ride bicycles as legitimate road users by investing in infrastructure projects with bike riders at the forefront, rather than as an afterthought.



3.2.4 Commit to further grow the number of rail trails, bicycle paths and riding destinations in regional Victoria

Bicycle Network hopes to see further investment in regional Victoria to make safe places for people to ride, particularly in our regional cities.

Not only do bicycles offer health and environmental benefits, they are proven to offer economic benefits as well. The state government has realised this with the building of destination bicycle infrastructure. Recent examples include the Warburton and Omeo mountain bike parks.

Bicycle Network hopes to see continued investment in regional bicycle projects that can bring money to regional communities and promote healthy behaviour. These include the completion of the Daylesford to Macedon Rail Trail, Yarra Ranges trails and continue the development of the 12 Apostles Trail and Bendigo–Kilmore Rail Trail.

Regional Victoria can benefit tremendously from cycling tourism and there are numerous high value opportunities across the state.

3.2.5 Renew, refresh and empower Active Transport Victoria to obtain greater contribution from across government towards active transport

In the 2019-20 Budget, \$15.3 million was committed by the government towards safety upgrades for walking and cycling. These included better lighting on the Upfield bike corridor and improved connections between Heidelberg and Rosanna stations.

Bicycle Network asks the state government to increase the spend on these active transport projects for the 2020-21 Budget and prioritise active transport safety upgrades.

3.2.6 Establish a single bicycle network plan for Victoria to guide investment and prioritise, plan and coordinate delivery of cycling infrastructure across the state

The strength of a city's overall bicycle network is dependent on having the key links within the city interconnected. With multiple stakeholders and jurisdictions making up various parts of the road network, there are currently gaps in Victoria's bike network.

Bicycle Network asks the state government to commit and fund a single plan covering all jurisdictions across the whole state.



3.3 Co-fund of the City of Melbourne’s Transport Strategy

The City of Melbourne’s 2030 Transport Strategy takes the city on a bold transformative path, which will enable people who ride bicycles to move about the city more freely and comfortably.

As part of the strategy, the council has approved 90 kilometres of separated bicycle infrastructure. 50 kilometres of these separated lanes are on council roads. The remaining 40 kilometres are on state government roads and subsequently require approval and buy-in from the state government.

Research undertaken by the City of Melbourne indicates that people who live in the catchment areas of possible riders have a large discrepancy of riding confidence between protected bike lanes and a simple painted lane.

The research indicated that 83 per cent of respondents felt confident in a protect lane and just 22 per cent felt confident in a painted lane [6]. If the city is to reduce congestion and get individuals riding, there is a clear need for an entire network of connected, physically separated bike lanes.

While the city has committed to building 50 kilometres of these roads over the next 10 years, the remainder of the network will require state government funding. The city estimates the cost to be greater than \$3 million per year, over the next four years.

Bicycle Network calls the state government to contribute to the completion of the network, recognising that most of the riders within the city are riding from areas outside its boundaries.

Budget impact:

Financial year	2020-21 (\$m)	2021-22 (\$m)	2022-23 (\$m)	2023-24 (\$m)	TOTAL (\$m)
Bike Infrastructure Fund	12*	n/a	n/a	n/a	12

**Estimated budget impact over four years*



3.4 Invest in active transport alternatives at commuter hubs

The 2019-20 Victorian Budget earmarked \$150 million to add car parks at some of the busiest suburban train stations. While at face-value, this investment is aimed at encouraging more people to use public transport networks, evidence shows that creating extra spaces for people to park simply increases driving amongst residents on local streets, adding to congestion [1].

With costs estimated to be \$10,000 per car parking space and \$65,000 for a multi-level car park [7], it's obvious that taxpayers are propping up a small number of commuters at exorbitant rates.

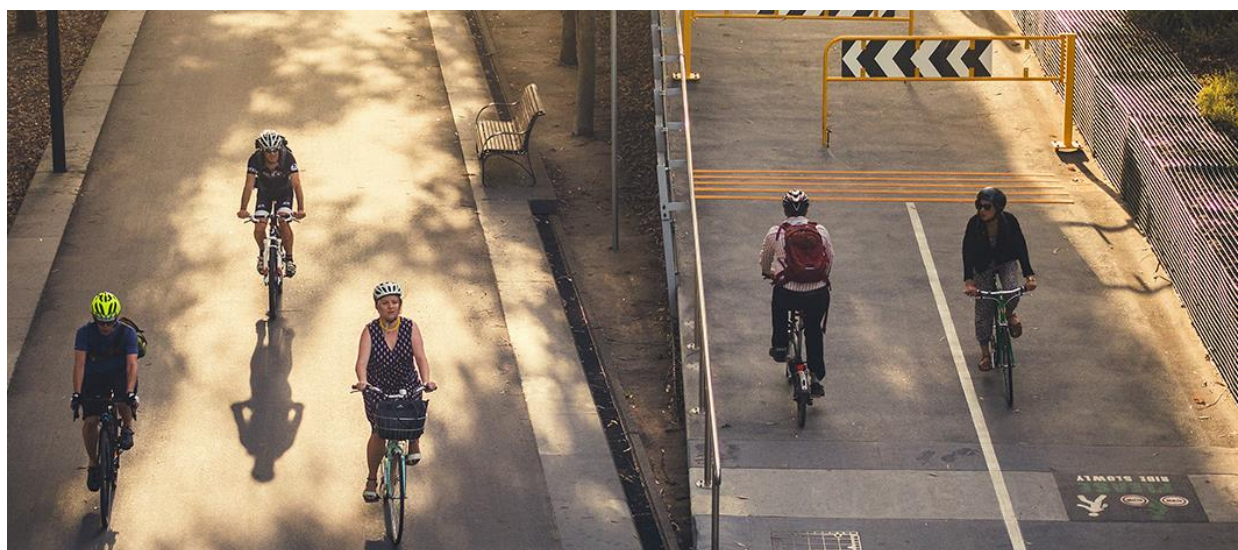
Given the ongoing population growth in Melbourne, this is simply an expensive band-aid fix. It does not address the underlying problem – that Victorians are too dependent on private vehicles. Victoria needs a different strategy and new approach.

With \$150 million committed to Victorian carparks by the federal government, we ask the state government to match this spending to improve active transport connections, linkages and infrastructure at some of our most congested commuter hubs.

This includes the provision of secure, safe bike parking and interchanges for people who want to shift transport modes to bike riding or walking.

Budget impact:

Financial year	2020-21 (\$m)	2021-22 (\$m)	2022-23 (\$m)	2023-24 (\$m)	TOTAL (\$m)
Active transport at commuter hubs	37.5	37.5	37.5	37.5	150





3.4.1 Expand Parkiteer cages at our busiest train stations

Public Transport Victoria's Parkiteer program, which is operated by Bicycle Network, is an instrumental tool in making it easier for people to ride to train stations. It provides a free and secure place for commuters to lock their bicycles while they commute to and from work.

More than 1,000 people use Parkiteer cages daily, and the program is experiencing continual growth, with a recorded 20.8 per cent increase in unique uses across the last financial year.

The Level Crossing Removal Project has seen the creation of nine new Parkiteer cages during the 2018-19 financial year, however the program requires facilities to be constructed where demand is the highest.

To meet the demand in areas where the cages are required, the program needs increased investment from the state government. At a fraction of the cost of traditional car parking, a regular Parkiteer cage of 26 can fit in the same area as three traditional car parks.

Demand for secure bike parking is outstripping supply at many train stations with the Parkiteer program already at capacity. The 2019 Parkiteer Yearly Report identified the following priorities to meet demand at the busiest Parkiteer cages. [8]

Priority train stations that need new or expanded Parkiteer facilities:

- Sandringham – expand current facility
- Williams Landing – new facility south of the freeway and expand current facility
- Newport – expand current facility
- Footscray – new facility
- Wyndham Vale – new facility

3.4.2 Build Parkiteer cages where they are most required

Alongside the expansion of existing Parkiteer cages at priority stations, many metropolitan train stations do not currently have secure bike parking facilities. Bicycle Network calls on the state government to fund and complete the network of secure bike parking at train stations across metropolitan and regional Victoria.

Based on research and requests received to Bicycle Network by members of the public, Bicycle Network recommends installing secure bike parking at the following locations:

- Richmond – high capacity, metropolitan facility
- Albion – new facility
- Box Hill – high capacity facility for the commuter interchange
- Fairfield – new facility
- Thornbury – new facility
- South Yarra – High capacity, metropolitan facility
- Aircraft – new facility



3.4.3 Invest in a network wide security upgrade for the Parkiteer program

Many of the existing Parkiteer cages are close to a decade old and subsequently require updates to their security as they are prone to break-ins due to the legacy design.

Bicycle Network asks the state government to fund a network-wide upgrade of repurposing and updating the metal panels on the cages with extra security that will prevent break-ins.

The South Geelong Parkiteer recently had the security upgrade completed with positive feedback from the users of the Parkiteer cage.

3.4.4 Build safe links around our commuter hubs

To encourage and facilitate people using different transport modes, accessible bicycle infrastructure needs to be constructed around commuter hubs.

Bicycle Network calls on the state government to build connections and separated paths at new and existing train stations, activity centres or commuter interchanges, particularly in Melbourne's growing middle and outer suburbs.

Building safe links for commuters to use, combined with having the facilities for commuters to either transport or store their bicycle on public transport, will reduce the commuter crush at stations' car parks.





3.5 Invest in a minimum passing distance policing unit

Victoria remains the only state without specific minimum passing distance laws (MDPL). Although there were recommendations from a 2017 Parliamentary inquiry, the Victorian Government opted for an information campaign rather than a law change.

Bicycle Network strongly encourages the Victorian Government to not only implement minimum passing distance laws but also support initiatives that help enforce and educate.

In Bicycle Network's 2019-20 Budget Submission we asked for investment in a specific policing unit to enforce MDPL.

Bicycle Network again calls on the government to invest in a policing unit, like the award-winning *Operation Close Pass* implemented by the West Midlands Police in the UK. The operation involves plain clothes officers on bicycles equipped with cameras that alert uniformed colleagues of close passes [9].

Since the launch of *Operation Close Pass* in the UK, the number of cyclists killed or seriously injured on the roads has dropped by a fifth, with 200 drivers stopped, 13 prosecuted and an additional 350 fined through a review of helmet and dash-cam footage.

Implementing this program would require Victoria 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-passing drivers.

The current educational campaign by the TAC to promote safe driving practices is a step in the right direction, but more needs to be done to protect riders. Bicycle Network also asks for the report to be published about the effectiveness of the safety campaign.

Budget impact:

Financial year	2020-21 (\$m)	2021-22 (\$m)	2022-23 (\$m)	2023-24 (\$m)	TOTAL (\$m)
Minimum passing distance policing unit	1.75	1.75	1.75	1.75	7



3.6 Expand the Mind.Body.Pedal program

Consistent with the objectives of the state government’s *Change our Game* initiative, Mind.Body.Pedal was developed out of the recognition that teenage girls are active for less than 30 minutes a day—less than half of the daily exercise recommended for teenagers.

Bicycle Network’s Mind.Body.Pedal program works to turn this around by addressing the unique barriers that prevent many girls from getting active. Piloted in 2016, the initiative has since helped more than 1,500 girls aged from 13-17 from 20 schools in Victoria and Tasmania get active.

Using a holistic and evidence-based approach, 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 in a fun, inclusive and supportive environment.

It also works closely with schools to address the environmental influences impacting the uptake of active travel by identifying feasible and long-term solutions to infrastructure barriers such as safe route planning and bike parking.

Participating schools have reported the following results after completing Mind.Body.Pedal:

- Twice as many girls riding to school, increasing from 7 per cent to 14 per cent
- Walking to school rates increased from 28 per cent to 38 per cent
- 12 per cent decrease in number of students travelling by car

With growing demand for the program in both metropolitan and regional areas, Bicycle Network is asking the government to invest specifically in Mind.Body.Pedal in addition to the current funding schedule for Ride2School so that we can expand its reach and success.

Financial year	2020-21 (\$m)	2021-22 (\$m)	2022-23 (\$m)	2023-24 (\$m)	TOTAL (\$m)
Mind.Body.Pedal program	0.385	0.385	0.385	0.385	1.54





References

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