



**BICYCLE  
NETWORK®**

# **NSW Budget 2020-21 submission**

*Prepared for the NSW 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. 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 2020-21 NSW Budget.

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

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# 1. Introduction

As our population grows, cost of living increases and housing densifies in urban areas, an ongoing and concerted effort is needed to shift commuters from an over reliance on cars to more space, energy and economically effective modes of transport.

Providing active transport infrastructure that improves and enhances connectivity and accessibility will help ease congestion woes and deliver the best mobility outcomes and greater transport choice for all of NSW.

The recommendations contained in this submission will serve to create more liveable communities by helping reduce the burden of congestion on our roads, while increasing transport choice, improving long-term health outcomes and reducing road trauma.

Bicycle Network is urging the NSW Government to fund separated cycling infrastructure, behaviour change programs and initiatives that make bike riding a low risk, convenient and enjoyable transport option.

We're also asking the NSW Government to consider boosting cycling tourism opportunities through rail trail development as a sustainable, cost-effective and meaningful way to support regions that have been impacted by drought, floods and bushfire.

Bicycle Network is recommending the following initiatives and programs be included in the 2020-21 NSW Budget:

<b>Build more places to ride</b>	<b>Get more kids riding</b>	<b>Protect people who ride</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Annual bike infrastructure fund</li><li>• Positive provisioning</li><li>• Increase secure bike parking at train stations</li><li>• Rail trail development fund</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• State-wide Ride2School program</li><li>• Mind.Body.Pedal program targetting physical activity among teenage girls</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• NSW Police enforcement program for minimum passing distance</li></ul>

## 2. 2020-21 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.

These recommendations are consistent with Bicycle Network's previous pre-budget submissions and support the acceleration of current funding commitments, existing transport plans and funding schedules.

Bicycle Network urges the NSW 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 NSW roads. They are based on sound evidence and support the normalisation of cycling for transport in NSW.

### 2.1 Budget impact summary

Financial year	2020-21 (\$m)	2021-22 (\$m)	2022-23 (\$m)	2023-24 (\$m)	TOTAL (\$m)
Bike Infrastructure Fund	237.7	240	242.2	244.4	964.3
Secure bike parking cages at train stations	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	30
Rail Trail Development Fund	25	25	25	25	100
Ride2School program	0.850	0.850	0.850	0.850	3.5
Mind.Body.Pedal program	0.485	0.485	0.485	0.485	1.94
Enforcement program for passing distance law	1.75	1.75	1.75	1.75	7





## 3. Budget priorities

### 3.1 Invest in an annual bike infrastructure fund

The NSW Government has a history of underspending on cycling infrastructure, allocating less than one percent of the transport budget towards cycling or active transport infrastructure. As a result, NSW suffers from the lowest cycling participation rate in the country.

Bicycle Network is calling on the NSW Government to increase spending on separated and connected cycling infrastructure to at least \$30 per head of the state's population.

While this may seem like a significant increase on current spending allocations for active transport infrastructure, Bicycle Network believes that it is necessary if we're going to proactively reduce congestion and risk for our most vulnerable road users.

An annual bike infrastructure fund will enable the NSW Government to rapidly deliver long-overdue key cycling projects and facilities in both metropolitan and regional NSW as well as the plans set out in the Future Transport Strategy 2056.

The outcome will be a strategic network of direct, quality and connected bicycle routes and cycling facilities that are accessible for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities.

#### Budget impact:

Financial year	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	TOTAL
\$m	237.7	240	242.2	244.4	964.3

#### 3.1.1 Fund bicycle priority projects and deliver election promises

There are many key bicycle projects in NSW that have yet to be built but require state funding. Many of these projects are consistent with previous budget submissions and are outlined below:

- Fund an east-west city bicycle path in Newcastle and rectify the government's failure to plan for active transport as part of the city's light rail network.
- Commit to a timeline to fix the Sydney Harbour Bridge steps
- Finish the construction of the City Centre Cycleway network planned in the 2013 Sydney City Centre Access Strategy
- Accelerate the delivery of the Future Sydney 2056 Principle Bicycle Network including the rapid delivery of connected cycling networks within 10 kilometres of metropolitan city centres and within five kilometres of strategic centres.
- Clarify and set out priorities, along with a timeline of delivery for the NSW government's dedicated \$330 million for active transport infrastructure, as promised during the election. This includes the additional \$285 million on paths through infrastructure projects such as South West Metro.
- Deliver the new fully separated cycleway along Centennial Park creating a vital link between Bondi and Sydney's CBD



### 3.2 Commit to positive provisioning as part of transport infrastructure development

The provision of new or improved active travel links should be a critical measure of success for all major state transport projects, upgrades, works and their ongoing maintenance.

Positive provisioning—or mainstreaming of bike infrastructure—ensures fair and balanced equity of access for all road users and ensures that transport infrastructure spending isn't skewed by political considerations.

The NSW Government should implement a framework, regulation or policy that requires active transport infrastructure and facilities be adequately prioritised as part of all state funded urban development and transport projects.

This will ensure that bike riding is integrated into the way communities and transport networks are designed.

### 3.3 Invest in secure bike storage facilities at railway stations and transport hubs

With rapid population growth, the demand for more parking at stations and interchanges will continue to increase. Bike parking is almost 10 times more space efficient and economical than car parking.

Integrating well-placed active transport networks and facilities with major transport interchanges helps to increase the catchment areas of public transport and serves to present public transport as a viable and attractive transport alternative.

While Transport for NSW's current Opal accessed bike parking cages are a great step forward and much more efficient than bike lockers, NSW needs greater investment in bike storage facilities at train stations.

Bicycle Network is asking the NSW Government to invest \$7.5 million a year, for the next four years, towards the provision of 50 new secure bike parking cages at railway stations and commuter hubs.

#### Budget impact:

Financial year	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	TOTAL
\$m	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	30



### 3.4 Establish a rail trail development fund

Unprecedented bushfires, droughts and floods have created a tough period for rural and regional NSW. This makes the development of tourism assets economically vital to our regions and cycling tourism can make a significant contribution.

Cycling tourism opens opportunities for people to meaningfully engage with our environments and communities in sustainable ways.

Small amendments to existing legislation and support from a rail trail funding program means that communities can reap the benefits of increased visitation and improved local amenity. This will help our communities flourish in the long-term.

The fund would provide 200 kilometres of trail per year and would be available for feasibility studies, planning and project construction of new rail trails to enable the development of a pipeline of prioritised and sequenced projects.

**Budget impact:**

Financial year	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	TOTAL
\$m	25	25	25	25	100



### 3.5 Invest in a state-wide Ride2School program

Children and young people in NSW are facing a crisis of inactivity with two thirds not getting enough exercise to maintain their health.

In the 1970s, eight out 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.

Using a proven model of behaviour change within a school community, Bicycle Network’s Ride2School program successfully implements interventions which have shown 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 actively engaged in the program report an active travel rate of 45 per cent, above the national average of 25 per cent. The program has also been funded in Tasmania since 2015.

Bicycle Network has previously consulted with the NSW Government about developing and implementing an appropriate state-wide Ride2School program. It’s time to make it happen.

**Budget impact:**

Financial year	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	TOTAL
\$m	0.850	0.850	0.850	0.850	3.5





### 3.6 Introduce a youth-focussed behaviour change program aimed at increasing physical activity among young girls

Teenage girls are twice as inactive when compared to teenage boys, with many failing to get the necessary levels of exercise they need to stay healthy.

Bicycle Network’s *Mind.Body.Pedal* program works to turn this around by addressing the unique barriers that prevent many girls from getting active. First 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.

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.

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

**Budget impact:**

Financial year	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	TOTAL
\$m	0.485	0.485	0.485	0.485	1.94





### 3.7 Invest in an NSW Police enforcement program for minimum passing distance laws

The success of minimum passing distance laws in NSW relies on widespread enforcement and education.

Bicycle Network recommends that the NSW Government invest in a close passing initiative that mirrors the award-winning program Operation Close Pass implemented by the West Midlands Police in the UK.

Since the launch of Operation Close Pass, 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.

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	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	TOTAL
\$m	1.75	1.75	1.75	1.75	7