BICYCLE NETWORK®

VICTORIAN BUDGET SUBMISSION 2021/2022

FEBRUARY 2021

Prepared by Dr Nicholas Hunter, Bicycle Network

Who we are

With nearly 50,000 members, Bicycle Network is one of the top five member-based bike riding organisations in the world. 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 behaviour change programs such as Ride2School and Ride2Work
- providing services and insurance that support bike riders through nationwide membership
- running mass participation bike riding events such as the Great Vic Bike Ride
- being a key national spokesperson on issues related to cycling and physical activity

Bicycle Network can assist the Victorian Government in scoping and targeting achievable outcomes for bike riding and other forms of active travel. If you need our help to build bike rider patronage in Victoria, please contact us.

Nicholas Hunter
Public Affairs Advisor
nicholash@bicyclenetwork.com.au

Craig Richards
Chief Executive Officer
craigr@bicyclenetwork.com.au

Executive summary

The 2021/2022 State Budget is the key instrument for guiding Victoria's recovery from the COVID-19 crisis.

It will shape a re-set of the economy: public and private investment, employment, and community development.

It will capture the benefits that have flowed from the sacrifices Victorians made, and multiply them into the future.

It can reinforce the great things we want to keep, and stimulate the advances that will deliver us into the future.

Crucially, it can recognise the sudden, emergent burst of public participation in active transport, and with confident, strong investment, accelerate the trend towards the Government's long-desired goal of sustainable transport and a healthy, active community.

By investing in the programs listed below, Victorians will benefit from permanent, beneficial changes.

Therefore, as we move towards a better normal, we are asking the Andrews Government to increasingly consider the benefits of supporting active transport initiatives. Bicycle Network's Victorian pre-budget submission focuses on two domains:

Facilities: building the best infrastructure to support and promote active transport as a viable transport option; and

Facilitation: supporting our current and future riders with legislation and interventions that optimise their safety and confidence when riding on Victoria's roads.

Together, let's take advantage of Victoria's increased interest in bike riding to help build a better normal for the state.

Facilities

1.1 Deliver key bike projects announced for Melbourne and regional Victoria

1.2 Introduce a bike stimulus package to provide funds to local governments for bike projects

1.3 Build safer bike networks and infrastructure around key railway stations

1.4 Introduce a business grants scheme for bike parking and end-of-trip facilities

Facilitation

2.1 Fund educational campaigns and police interventions to support Victoria's new minimum passing distance laws

2.2 Invest in development and implementation of distracted driving technology

2.3 Expand the Ride2School and Mind.Body.Pedal programs

Budget impact summary

Facilities

Recommendation	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	TOTAL $m
1.2 Bike stimulus package	$100.0	$100.0	-	-	$200.0
1.3 Bike infrastructure around railway stations	$37.5	$37.5	$37.5	$37.5	$150.0
1.4 Business grants scheme	$3.25	$3.25	$3.25	$3.25	$13.0

Facilitation

Recommendation	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	TOTAL $m
2.1 MPDL police interventions	$1.75	$1.75	$1.75	$1.75	$7.0
2.2 Distracted driving technology	$7.5	$7.5	$7.5	$7.5	$30.0
2.3 Ride2School and Mind. Body.Pedal programs	$1.15	$1.15	$1.15	$1.15	$4.6

A mobility revolution in Victoria

The comfortable certainties of the transport field have shifted in the face of COVID-19. Public transport patronage has dramatically declined and is expected to remain low over the long term. If these daily trips shift to motor vehicles, Victoria's road network will be overwhelmed, our environment will suffer and the state's economic recovery will be stifled.

However, with this challenge comes the opportunity for a mobility revolution. For over a century, our national transport system has been dependent on motor vehicles as the primary transport mode. As we slowly move back into our urban spaces, we have a chance to build amore sustainable system around active transport. Research suggests that the benefits of investing in bike networks dramatically outweigh the costs[1]. Not only will we ease the pressure on our roads; Victoria will also have the chance to reap health, economic, and environmental rewards that will persist for the long term.

Now is Victoria's chance to really give active transport a fair go.

There is a bike riding boom in Australia

One of the positive aspects of the COVID-19 period has been the significant increase in bike activity on Australia's roads, trails and shared paths. In April 2020, a volunteer-led survey by Bicycle Network revealed that bike riding had increased by **270 per cent** on some shared paths (Fig. 1)[2]. Similar insights have been found using electric counter* and Strava trip data† (Fig. 2).

An Australia-wide survey distributed by researchers at the University of Canberra last year found that two thirds of respondents had increased their bike riding activity during lockdown, and a sixth of these respondents had bought new bikes[3] despite the critical industry shortage of stock. Interestingly, another third of respondents indicated they had reduced their bike riding activity, 45 per

* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AoYNgg9Z6jU&ab_channel=MetroCount
† https://www.autoblog.com/2020/09/23/bicycle-use-increases-coronavirus-fitness-tracker-strava

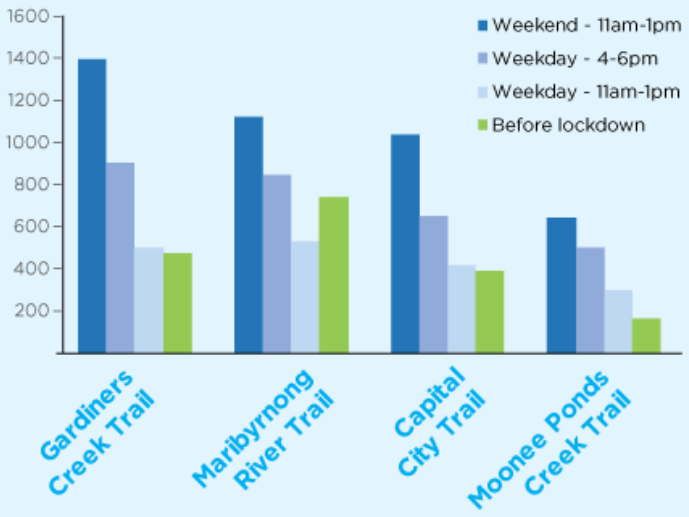


Figure 1 – Recreational users on major shared paths in Melbourne. Data source: Bicycle Network[12]

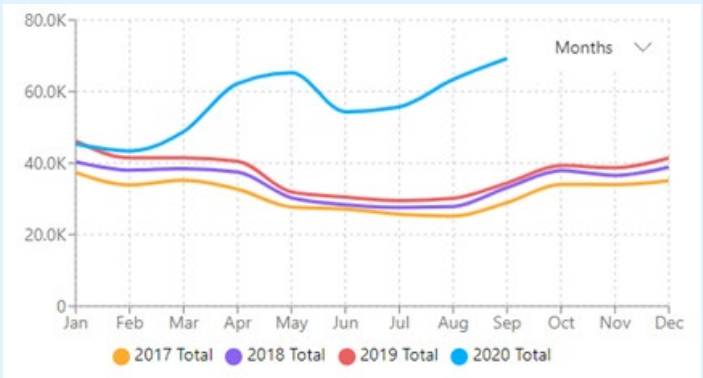


Figure 2 – Annual bicycle trip data for the years 2017-2020. Data source: Strava Metro

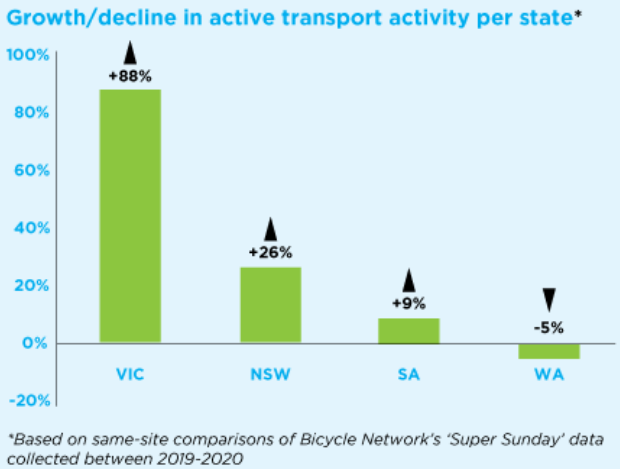


Figure 3 – State-based growth/decline in recreational activity (bike riding, walking, dog-walking, running). Data collected during Bicycle Network's 'Super Sunday' count.

cent of which indicated this was because there were too many people using shared paths. This finding suggests that the reported figures may have been even higher, had our existing bike infrastructure been able to accommodate them.

There is a great opportunity for the Victorian Government to seize upon this community led momentum.

...And when it comes to bike enthusiasm, Victoria is way out in front

State-based analyses reveal that overall recreational activity in Victoria grew **88 per cent** in 2020 when compared to the previous year, significantly higher than other states (Fig. 3). Both NSW and SA recorded modest increases in recreational activity, while WA experienced a decline of 5 per cent. It is worthwhile considering that Victoria experienced longer periods of lockdown than other states, and that this may have played a role in elevated recreational activity.

Simply put, Victoria's enthusiasm for riding bikes is at an all-time high. The majority of Victorians have the equipment, skills and motivation to ride a bike. Let's take advantage of this in planning an active transport future.

What is the Victorian Government doing to accommodate Victoria's new love for bikes?

In their 2019/20 Budget Overview, the Andrews Government announced its 'Suburban Transport Blitz', committing a $45.4 million investment to new bike and pedestrian paths. As Victoria's enthusiasm for bikes became clear, further promises were made.

In October 2020, the Minister for Roads and Road Safety announced 100 kilometers of new and improved bike routes across key inner Melbourne suburbs[4]. The Andrews Government announced that minimum passing distances will also be

mandated across Victoria, a law that is currently enforced in many other Australian states and territories.

Victoria's local councils are also improving their infrastructure. New 'pop-up' bike lanes have been installed across the Melbourne, Darebin, and Yarra local government areas. City of Melbourne have rolled out 'Little Streets', a street-calming project involving speed limit reductions (20km/h) and prioritised bike rider and pedestrian space across four key shopping streets. Many other bike facilities are in the works across other council areas.

However, there is more to be done

These efforts must be strengthened and sustained. If we want to build a strong bike riding community, we must recognise that there is more to be done than laying down the lanes. We should acknowledge that riding a bike for commuting purposes is not the same as riding for recreation, and often different facilities (e.g., bike parking cages, page 10-11; 'end-of-trip' facilities, page 12) are required. We should also understand that some bike riding groups, such as women and children, must be better supported in order for Victoria to build a more inclusive experience (e.g., the Mind.Body.Pedal program, page 18).

For this reason, Bicycle Network's budget recommendations for the 2021-2022 fiscal year consider both **facilities** and **facilitation** (Fig. 4). In our Victorian pre-budget submission, we provide key recommendations for each of these domains, and their associated budget impacts.

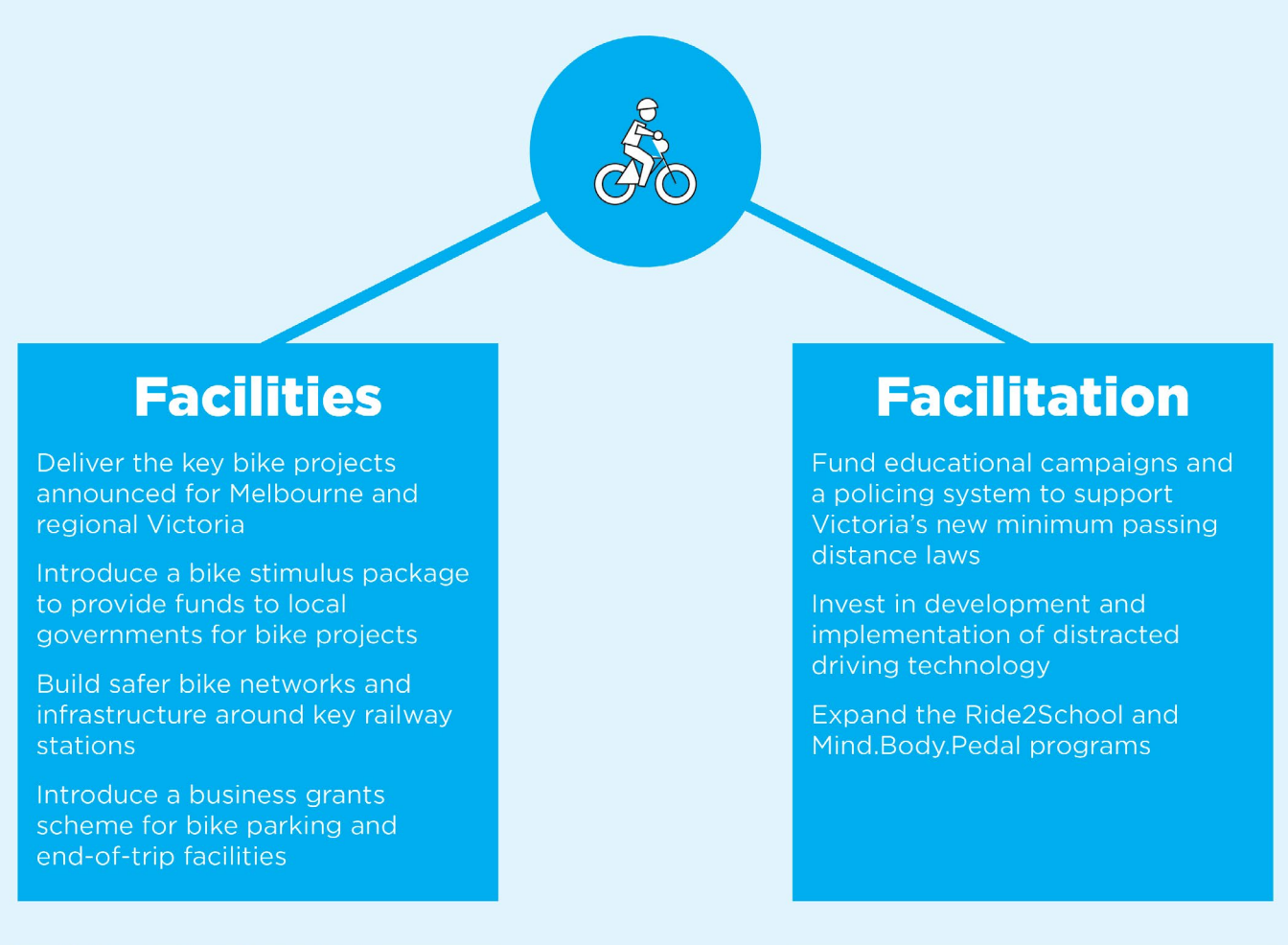


Figure 4 – Bicycle Network's key recommendations for the 2021/22 budget period.

1.1 Deliver the key bike projects announced for Melbourne and regional Victoria

The *Victorian Cycling Strategy 2018-2028*[5] addresses the need for safer, lower-stress, better-connected bike networks across Melbourne and regional Victoria. The Victorian Government, informed by the Active Transport Victoria unit launched in 2016[6], has been integral in the delivery of key bike projects, including the Dynon Road bike path upgrades in Melbourne and the 'Murray to Mountains' Rail Trail in regional Victoria.

A number of exciting projects have been announced since the 2019/20 Victorian Budget. Bicycle Network is calling on the Andrews Government to leverage Victoria's current enthusiasm for active travel and ensure that these projects are fast-tracked to ease traffic congestion, ensure safe passage for people riding bikes, and support an active travel future for Victoria.

1.1.1 Prioritise and deliver on inner Melbourne pop-up bike lanes

The Minister for Roads and Road Safety has announced 100 kilometres of new and improved pop-up bike lanes will be built across key inner Melbourne suburbs, a $13 million investment that will support over 40 local jobs[4]. It is anticipated that these bike lanes will provide much needed infrastructure for those living around and accessing Melbourne's CBD.

Bicycle Network asks that delivery of these pop-up lanes be fast-tracked to provide safe and sustainable transport options for Melburnians returning to their workplaces in 2021.

1.1.2 Prioritise completion of 2019/20 Victorian Budget walking and bike path upgrades

Bicycle Network is also asking the Andrews Government to prioritise construction and completion of major walking and bike path upgrades that were earmarked in the 2019-20 Victorian Budget, of which a total investment of $15.3 million was promised. Key projects included:

- Bike path upgrades connecting Heidelberg and Rosanna railway stations ($5m)
- Bike path upgrades along Woodland Street, Strathmore ($3.5m)
- Development of a bike path between Kings Road and Thompsons Road, Keilor North ($2.7m)
- Pedestrian infrastructure upgrades at Bayview Terrace and Maribyrnong Road ($600k)
- Pedestrian infrastructure upgrades at Hoffmans Road and Rosehill Road ($250k)
- Box Hill to Hawthorn strategic cycling corridor connection ($250k)
- Lighting upgrades on the Upfield Bike Trail, Brunswick ($250k)

1.1.3 Expedite delivery of bike path upgrades on St Kilda Road

The Andrews Government announced in the 2019/20 Victorian Budget that $27.3 million would be invested to deliver a range of improved bike infrastructure along St Kilda Road between Linlithgow Ave and Carlisle Street. These upgrades include central safety zone bike lanes, which would comprise a separated lane for riders in the middle of St Kilda Road; and protected kerbside bike lanes with separation infrastructure to protect riders from parked cars and traffic.

Bicycle Network is encouraging the Andrews Government to commission detailed design of the St Kilda Road corridor to synchronise with the completion of Anzac Station, so that a safe corridor is available for those returning to work.

1.1.4 Ensure active travel infrastructure is an integral component of current and future road projects

Bicycle Network strongly encourages the Andrews Government to continue framing active travel modes as integral components of current and future road projects, rather than subsidiary projects. The Department of Transport has made a commitment that every major new transport project includes new or upgraded infrastructure for bike riders and pedestrians[5]. This includes current projects such as:

- North East Link: 25km of new and upgraded paths including Eastern Freeway and Greensborough Road corridors, and Bulleen/Heidelberg links; and
- West Gate Tunnel: 14km of new and upgraded paths including Moonee Ponds to Maribyrnong River elevated ‘veloway’, and upgrades on Federation and Kororoit Creek Trails.

It is becoming increasingly important to recognise that people who ride bikes are legitimate road users, and that the inclusion of active travel options in future transport investments should be a condition rather than a consideration.

1.2 Introduce a bike stimulus package to provide local governments with funds for bike projects

As Victoria enters a state of 'COVID-normal', we should be cognizant that several changes may impact the way we move around:

- The Melbourne metropolitan area may experience significant congestion on roads and highways, due to public transport patrons opting for private vehicle commutes to avoid COVID-19 risks.
- Many Melburnians may move to complete or partial 'work-from-home' employment arrangements and thus their commuting needs may change substantially in the coming fiscal year.
- As working from home becomes more flexible, there is likely to be a marked increase in Melburnians relocating to outer suburbs and regional townships. New residents may bring higher expectations around local infrastructure, services and economic opportunity to these areas.

Bicycle Network is asking the Andrews Government to introduce a bike stimulus package that supports active travel projects and allows local governments to scope, plan and implement active transport solutions within their municipal areas.

Local governments already possess well-developed and feasible active transport infrastructure plans. A stimulus package would provide the necessary funding to accelerate delivery of these projects, whilst elevating the active transport mode share and bolstering employment opportunities during COVID-19 recovery.

An investment of $200 million over two fiscal years will ensure that key bike projects with strong business cases can be prioritised across Melbourne and regional Victoria.

Financial year	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	TOTAL $m
Budget impact	$100.0	$100.0	$-	$-	$200.0

1.3 Build safer bike networks and infrastructure around key railway stations

For Victorians in outer Melbourne suburbs, public transport is often the only viable commute option. It is an essential component of broader active travel, as patrons typically undertake a component of walking as part of their commute. A previous systematic review by Rissel et al.[7] found that people undertake between 8–33 minutes of additional walking as part of a public transport commute. In Australia, commuters walk a median distance of 750 metres to access trains[8]. For commuters who must access public transport outside this catchment radius a private vehicle is likely to be the mode of choice.

The Andrews Government has recognised the challenges with car parking congestion at railway stations across Melbourne, particularly in the outer western metropolitan suburbs[9]. In 2018, the government announced its $150 million Car Parks for Commuters Fund, many projects of which are underway .

However, the Victorian Government should strongly consider the role that active transport can play as a cost-effective solution to easing parking congestion at railway stations. In December 2020, Infrastructure Victoria published *Victoria's Draft 30-Year Infrastructure Strategy*[10], which, in part, highlighted the pivotal role that bike riding can provide to support congestion issues at railway stations. Bicycle Network are advocating for similar measures.

We know that further uptake of public transport will act to increase the proportion of Australian adults that are sufficiently physically active[7]. In other words, improving public transport access across Victoria is likely to promote better physical health outcomes for our communities and put the state on track with the Australian Government's *Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines*. We also know that improving public transport access encourages positive active travel behaviours. A recent Melbourne study,

Table 1 - Number of Parkiteer bike cages by usage (Feb 2019-Feb 2020). Source: Bicycle Network

Parkiteer site	Cage capacity	Average usage	Days over capacity
Sandringham	10	106.14%	126
Wyndham Vale	31	105.20%	136
Williams Landing	47	104.01%	127
Laverton 2	24	99.80%	-
Newport	26	93.74%	121
Tarneit	50	90.81%	74
Blackburn	25	80.60%	-
Bayswater	26	79.99%	-
Watergardens 1	26	76.80%	-
Yarraville	22	75.82%	-

for example, found that public transport accessibility around homes was associated with higher prevalence of walking and bike riding among adolescents[11].

It is time to take what we know and implement better bike facilities around our current and future public transport infrastructure. Bicycle Network is recommending two key approaches for Victoria.

1.3.1 Build safer bike connections to railway stations

We are encouraging the Andrews Government to make an investment into safer bike corridors within a 2–2.5 kilometre radius of each railway station, which will improve public transport access for local neighbourhoods and provide a cost-effective solution to congestion in outer suburbs.

Bicycle Network recommends the following immediate actions to enhance public transport access in the western outer suburbs:

- Prioritise completion of the Regional Rail corridor planned trail to provide an attractive route for riders getting to and from Tarneit station;
- Construct a safe bike corridor along Morris Road to access Hoppers Crossing railway station;
- Prioritise completion of the shared path along the south side of Ballan Road to access Wyndham Vale Station; and
- Develop a safe bike corridor along Cherry Street to access Werribee Station.

1.3.2 Improving bike facilities at key railway stations

Bicycle Network also recommends increasing the capacity of secure bike storage and external parking rails at existing railway stations. Bicycle Network's Parkiteer program provides secure parking facilities at numerous stations around Victoria. Our recent data reveals that the cage capacity for many of outer suburb facilities are continually exhausted, and in some areas are over capacity (>100% average usage; Table 1). This data highlights the need for expansion of these facilities, which will become increasingly important if we are to grow our state's active transport patronage.

Bicycle Network recommends the following immediate actions to ensure capacity at selected train stations:

- Construct a second secure bike storage facility on the south side of the Williams Landing station, and an additional bike storage facility on the Wallace Road route alongside the rail corridor;
- Construct a second secure bike storage facility at Tarneit station to service riders coming from the southern side of the railway line; and
- Construct an additional bike parking facility on the west side of Wyndham Vale station.

Financial year	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	TOTAL $m
Budget impact	$37.5	$37.5	$37.5	$37.5	$150.0

1.4 Introduce a business grants scheme for bike parking and end-of-trip facilities

Riding a bike to work comprises **less than 1 per cent** of commutes in our capital cities[12,13]. Driving remains the dominant method of travel, with over 79 per cent of Australians commuting in a private vehicle[14].

In addition to the roll-out of bike infrastructure across Melbourne, a small number of initiatives have been helpful in promoting a bike-based work commute, including Bicycle Network's annual Ride2Work events . However, to encourage and support a growing bike commuting cohort, employers must be in a position to provide adequate parking and facilities on site.

'End-of-trip' facilities refer to designated spaces and facilities that accommodate the needs of people commuting to work with a bike. Facilities may include showers, change rooms, lockers, repair stations and bike racks. The positive role that these facilities play in encouraging a bike-based commute has been known for over a decade[15,16]. Similarly, secure indoor bike parking spaces have been demonstrated to increase uptake of bike-based commutes[16].

A recent survey (n=448) conducted by Bicycle Network found that, among respondents who did not have an end-of-trip facility at work:

- 18.0 per cent of people rarely ride to work because there is no end-of-trip facility
- 63.9 per cent of people freshen up and get changed in a bathroom
- 24.6 per cent ride to work in their work clothes

Respondents who did have an end-of-trip facility at work reported general concerns regarding future health risks:

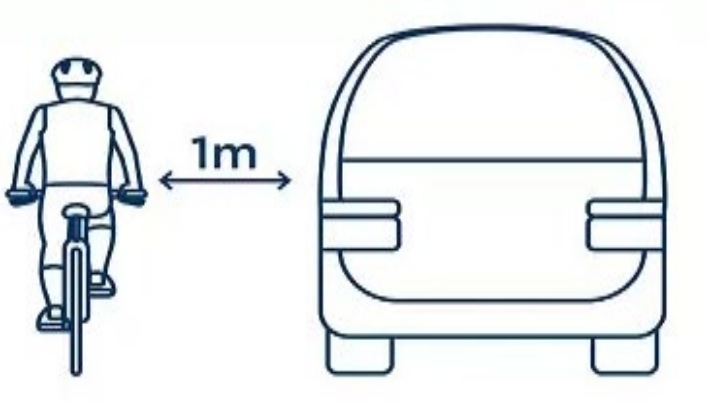
- 78.0 per cent of people were very likely to use end-of-trip facilities after COVID restrictions and 11.7 per cent likely
- 58.1 per cent of people thought improvements could be made to their end-of-trip facility to reduce the risk of virus spread

Bicycle Network is recommending that the Victorian Government introduce a business grants scheme that allows employers to provide appropriate parking and end-of-trip facilities for those riding a bike to work. An investment of $13 million over four years will allow businesses to build new or improve existing bike facilities on their premises. It is anticipated that such a scheme will not only contribute to increasing the active transport mode share but will empower businesses to support an active commute culture in Melbourne and wider Victoria.

Financial year	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	TOTAL $m
Budget impact	$3.25	$3.25	$3.25	$3.25	$13.0

2.1 Fund educational campaigns and police interventions to support Victoria's new minimum passing distance law

In October 2020, the Andrews Government announced that a minimum passing distance law (MPDL) will be implemented across Victoria. The new legislation, due to be rolled out this year, will make it mandatory for motorists to give bike riders a one metre clearance when overtaking on roads with speed limits up to 60km/h, and a 1.5 metres clearance on roads with speed limits above 60km/h.



Similar legislation in other states has been shown to significantly change driver behaviour. After a MPDL was introduced in Queensland in 2014, only **12 per cent** of passes on roads at low speed sites were non-compliant[17]. But perhaps the greatest benefit of MPDLs is their contribution to increasing the perceived safety of bike riding and thus to remove barriers associated with its uptake[18].

However, to ensure the effectiveness of legislation, we should also be cognizant of previously reported challenges. Enforcement of minimum passing distances is based on observation and requires careful judgement by a police officer. An evaluation of the Queensland MPDL noted that police officers often found the MPDL difficult to enforce[17]. Driver non-compliance is also typically associated with high speed roads, narrow roads, and curved road sections[19]. These findings suggest that targeted enforcement, as well as education for police, drivers and riders, may be beneficial with the roll-out of legislation in Victoria.

Bicycle Network is calling on the Andrews Government to fund police interventions that will complement the implementation of an MPDL in Victoria and strengthen driver compliance. An interesting example of such interventions is the successful 'Operation Close Pass' initiative implemented by UK police forces in West Midlands and Scotland[18]. The operation involves plain clothes officers on bicycles equipped with cameras that alert uniformed colleagues of close passes. The offending drivers are then provided with roadside education. A similar police intervention, which targets bike riding corridors with high-risk infrastructure (e.g. narrow or high speed roads), may assist in educating Victorian drivers on new laws. Specialised training for police officers on how to properly enforce the Victorian MPDL and recognise offences will also be beneficial.

Bicycle Network also recommends that the Victorian Government fund educational campaigns that inform both drivers and riders of appropriate passing behaviours, which

Financial year	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	TOTAL $m
Budget impact	$1.75	$1.75	$1.75	$1.75	$7.0

2.2 Invest in development and implementation of distracted driving technology

Our national road toll continues to decrease each year, but we are yet to achieve the same goal with our bike riders (Fig. 5). Unfortunately, around **85 per cent** of the serious bike crashes in Australia involve another vehicle[20]. If we are to build Australia's active future, we need to take action on road behaviours that place vulnerable road users at risk of serious injury.

One of the most prevalent behaviours affecting our roads is distracted driving. Each time a driver eats, drinks, or checks their phone, their driving abilities are compromised. When drivers are distracted they are effectively 'travelling blind', which causes significantly large areas of the road space to become hazardous for other road users (Fig. 6):

Distracted driving is driver-less travel

- Drivers distracted for 2 seconds on a 90km/h road are traveling blindly for **50 metres**, the length of an Olympic swimming pool.
- Drivers distracted for 5 seconds on a 60km/h road are traveling blindly for **83 metres**, the length of 18 cars.
- Drivers distracted for 10 seconds on a 100km/h road are traveling blindly for **278 metres**, the length of a staggering 62 cars.

The Victorian Government has addressed the issue of distracted driving in its *Road Safety Strategy 2021–2030*[21], and has announced its plans to enhance enforcement technologies that capture risky distraction behaviours. The strategy also acknowledges emerging vehicle

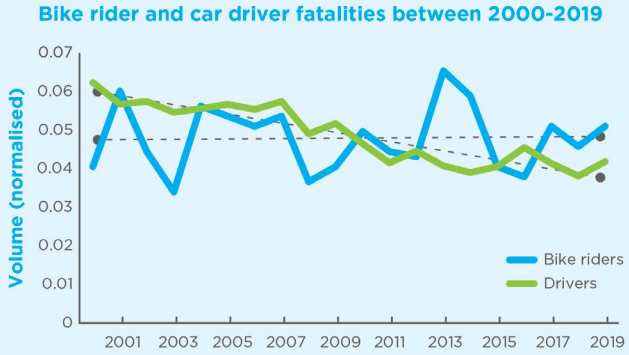


Figure 5 – Differences between bike rider and car driver fatalities over the last ten years. Data normalized for comparison. Source: Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics (BITRE).

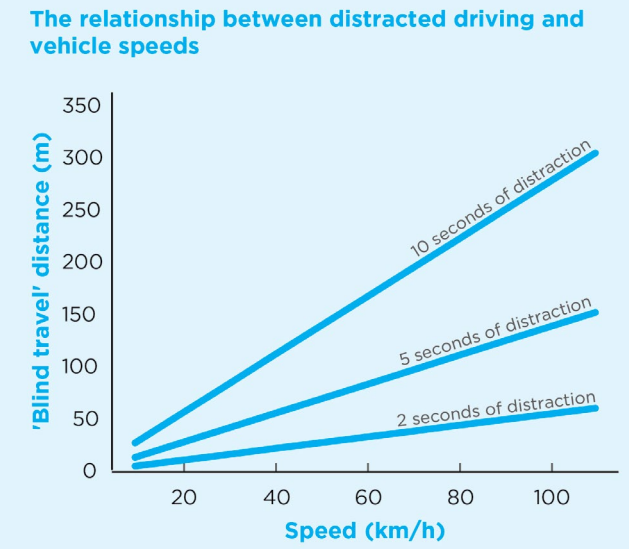


Figure 6 – Relationship between the total distance over which a driver is distracted ('blind travel'), and the vehicle speed.

automation technologies, including driver alert systems, autonomous emergency braking and lane centering, and driverless operation.

Bicycle Network commends the Andrews Government for taking the opportunity to invest in the development and implementation of distracted driving technologies. In addition, we recommend that the government invests in the following technology development:

1. Fast-track in-vehicle mobile phone blocking technologies with mandated implementation across all new vehicles sold in Australia.
2. In-built opt-out 'Do not disturb while driving' apps automatically activated in all smartphones sold in Victoria.

Financial year	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	TOTAL $m
Budget impact	$7.5	$7.5	$7.5	$7.5	$30.0

2.3 Expand the Ride2School and Mind. Body.Pedal programs

2.3.1 The Ride2School program

Unfortunately, Victoria is still far from reaching the physical activity guidelines set by the Australian Government (Fig. 7). In particular, one in four young Australians are classed as overweight or obese[22], a statistic that has increased significantly since than 1980's[23]. This places significant burdens on their health-related quality of life[24].

Over the same time period, the majority of Australian young people have been chauffeured to school[25,26]. By comparison, the number of young people engaging in active travel has decreased to between 25–35 per cent[27]. Not only are our young people losing an opportunity to get active, their lack of morning physical activity affects their ability to learn[28-30].

In 2006, Bicycle Network piloted the Victorian Government-funded Ride2School program in 13 schools. We have now expanded the program nation-wide, with 3,531 schools across Australia registered with the program (Fig. 8).

Our Ride2School program succeeds because our behaviour change methodology is proven to increase active travel in school communities.

We are recommending the Victorian Government invest in expanding the national Ride2School program, which has a track record for promoting active school travel. Not only will young Victorians lead happier and healthy lives, their active travel behaviours will also allow them to fully engage during school time and make the most of their education experience.

Victorians at risk of adverse health effects due to insufficient physical behaviour

Figure 7 – Physical activity in Victoria at a glance. Blue section represents the proportion of Victorians showing insufficient physical activity per week (84.7 per cent). Data source: Australian Bureau of Statistics[22].

Increase in school participation

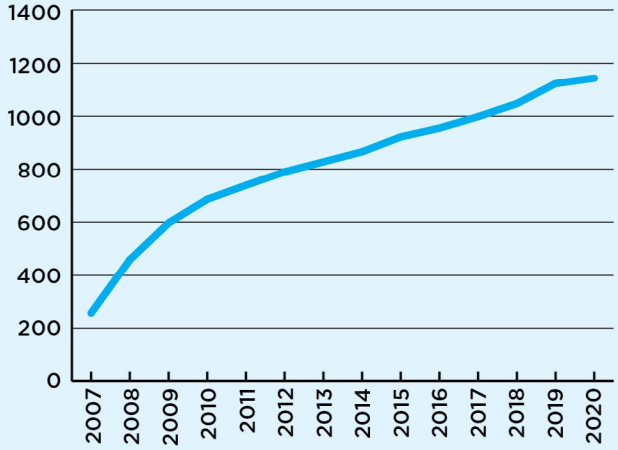


Figure 8 – Increase in Victorian Ride2School participation since 2007, based on Handsup! counts. Data source: Bicycle Network.

Financial year	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	TOTAL $m
Budget impact	$0.75	$0.75	$0.75	$0.75	$3.0

2.3.2 The Mind.Body.Pedal program

Only one in ten Australian 15–17 year-olds engage in 60 minutes of daily exercise[22]. Females, in particular, engage in less physical activity compared to males[31,32]. Many young women face unique barriers that prevent them from being as physically active as young men. Having worked closely with secondary schools for over a decade, Bicycle Network has consistently found that young women don't want to be ridiculed or judged and can be self-conscious about how they look during and after exercising. Research also suggests that females ride bikes less compared to males due to safety concerns[33].

Consistent with the objectives of the Victorian Government's *Change our Game* initiative, Bicycle Network's Mind.Body.Pedal program 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 time recommended for teenagers in Australia. Bicycle Network's 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 young women 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.

Program facilitators also work 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** of commutes;
- Walking to school rates increasing from 28 per cent to **38 per cent**; and
- **12 per cent** decrease in number of students travelling by car.

To support Mind.Body.Pedal's growing demand, Bicycle Network is asking the Andrews Government to make a $1.54 million investment over the next four years so that we can expand its reach and success.

Financial year	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	TOTAL $m
Budget impact	$0.4	$0.4	$0.4	$0.4	$1.6

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