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Dear Mr Garriock,

Thank you for sharing the Bicycle Network's 2022 Federal Election Policy paper with us, and for raising the important issue of active transport. We appreciate the opportunity to outline our approach on this important policy topic.

In relation to the issues you have raised, namely **1. active transport budget, 2. positive provisioning for active travel and 3. behaviour change for young people**, it is clear that only an Albanese Labor Government would address them with substance. In the wake of the pandemic, we believe the need for federal engagement with urban policy is greater than ever. We have a strong track record of delivering on urban infrastructure and, if elected, a Labor Government would bring a strong focus on urban policy back to the national stage. When Labor was last in government, we did just that.

### ***Labor's track record***

It was the Labor Government that developed the country's first National Urban Policy and created the Major Cities Unit, tasked with analysing data and developing policies to improve the productivity, sustainability, and liveability of Australian cities. The Labor Government had a strong focus on urban policy and active transport including:

- Release of the National Urban Policy – *Our Cities, Our Future* – a long term blueprint for Australia's 18 biggest cities and regional centres
- Development of *Creating Places for People: an urban design protocol for Australian cities*, a tool to improve the quality and useability of our public spaces and city buildings
- A commitment of more federal infrastructure funding for urban public transport than all our predecessors combined since Federation
- Establishment of a \$20 million Liveable Cities program to support high-quality demonstration urban design projects and better urban plans
- Requiring all state and territory governments to have strategic planning systems in place for their capital cities

- Publication of a regular *State of Australian Cities* report to monitor the performance of our 18 biggest cities over time so policymakers can measure and assess progress towards more productive, sustainable and liveable cities
- Establishment of the Urban Policy Forum to complement our earlier urban policy initiatives.

The Labor Government oversaw record investment in cycling and bike paths, as well as funding for the Australian Bicycle Council to develop the 2011-2016 National Cycling Strategy. As you may be aware, this strategy saw a number of improvements nationwide, which included the introduction of pedal-assist bicycles, consistency in design guidance for bicycle infrastructure, the publication of national metrics and reporting on cycling participation, safety, integrated planning and government investment in cycling.

The Major Cities Unit and its associated works were abolished on day one by the incoming Abbott Liberal National Government. The Morrison-Joyce Government has never reinstated it, nor has it put any focus on urban or active transport policy.

### ***An Albanese Labor Government policy focus***

If elected, an Albanese Labor Government would re-establish a Cities and Suburbs Unit within Infrastructure Australia. The new Cities and Suburbs Unit will recommend to Government the design of a new National Urban Policy framework, informed by expert evidence, industry expertise and community input. We would welcome the Bicycle Network's input as part of this.

It will produce an annual State of the Cities report, a report card on the progress and performance of our cities, helping to identify the specific initiatives of local councils and state planning authorities which are working effectively to create more productive, sustainable and liveable urban communities.

The Cities and Suburbs Unit would also function as an independent body tasked with assessing the progress of City Deals. We would refresh City Deals to take account of the impacts of COVID – impacts like technological change, new working and consumer habits, diminished migration and slowing population growth. Labor will honour signed City Deals. However, we will also offer councils, states and territories the opportunity to improve existing agreements, transforming them into genuine city-shaping partnerships. We will listen, and we will act.

We will also look to sign new City Partnerships that meet the needs of local communities based on local understanding and transparent criteria, including active transport policy.

When it comes to active transport, we will look to include positive provision where appropriate through our infrastructure projects. This would include cycling paths alongside road upgrades,

train lines or any other major projects. At the same time, Labor will fund specific cycling projects on a case-by-case basis.

The fact is too many cities, particularly regional cities, are being left behind by the Morrison Government. Good urban design and better functioning cities are critical to not only the economy, but also the general welfare of society.

***Future focus***

If elected, an Albanese Labor Government would work with industry and community groups to understand existing **4. bike incentive schemes as well as existing and potential improvements to 5. vehicle standards.**

Only Labor can be trusted to deliver urban infrastructure and the active transport policy Australia needs. We now have a once-in-a-generation chance to rebuild our cities, our economy, and our country for the better.

Labor intends to seize that opportunity, not to shirk it.

Yours sincerely



Paul Erickson  
National Secretary  
Australian Labor Party