

Imagine Better Facilities

Major infrastructure installed over the past 20 years has made it easy for people to ride a bike.

Following the successful establishment of the Civic Cycle loop, European style separated cycle lanes are now commonplace in our town centres.

Our public transport is integrated with cycling facilities with secure bike and ride stations, and bike racks on all buses.

The speed limit in residential and commercial areas is 40 km/h and people drive accordingly. This encourages people to treat our streets as shared community space.

Owners and developers of apartments are more interested in bike parking than car parking – it's cheaper to install and it's what the buyers are demanding. Car parks are now sold separately in apartment developments so that people can choose how many they want.

Bike paths throughout Canberra are signposted for wayfinding. Some are now also signposted for priority at intersections to prevent cycle to cycle conflict at the busiest times.

All the on-road, separated and off-road cycle paths and lanes form a continuous interconnected network suitable for riders of all capabilities. The missing links in the cycle network are gone. Since the decision was made to spend the transport budget in proportion to use, there has been no shortage of funds to complete and maintain the cycling network.

Most workplaces have voluntarily upgraded their bike parking and end of trip facilities to cater for the demand. They recognise the pay-off of happier and healthier staff and the numbers of cycle commuters have gone through the roof since bikes became a legitimate salary sacrifice.

Recognising that Civic, Tuggeranong, Woden, Belconnen and Gungahlin town centres are just a bit too large to walk around, most work places now also provide company bikes to allow employees to attend nearby meetings without the hassle of finding car parking.

Imagine Better Policies

When the old shared paths proved unable to cope with the demand, Roads ACT rewrote their design standards to introduce a second generation of cycle infrastructure. These paths are fully lit and wide enough for multiple bikes to easily overtake each other and stay clear of walkers.

The second generation bike roads installed to service Molonglo and the busiest routes elsewhere in Canberra have proven successful. With many routes carrying in excess of 2000 bikes per day they remain the most cost effective transport option for the government to provide.

Major new developments are now required to provide traffic modelling for cycling as well as private vehicles to ensure the local network can cater for the increased volume of cycle traffic. The ACT Government has sufficient data to support such modelling.

The ACT has always had a high participation rate for cycling but now most Canberrans use their bike for short, local trips. This simple change has dramatically reduced unnecessary car usage and, despite the increased population, our roads remain congestion free.

There continues to be bipartisan support in the Assembly for cycling initiatives and this enthusiasm flows down through the agencies that run regular bicycle awareness training for engineers, planners and community health workers. As a result catering for cycle based transport is fully integrated into government and private sector initiatives.

There is an internet based multi-mode transport mapping service with bus, bike, taxi and private car options that informs people of the quickest and cheapest way to travel between any two places in Canberra and Queanbeyan.

Imagine Better Attitudes

Attitudes have changed. The weight of numbers means that car drivers accept bicycles as traffic.

With a greater proportion of people riding our arterial roads still flow freely in peak hour and the average car driver is thankful for this fact.

Riders' attitudes have changed too. People riding on the road follow the road rules because they know it's best for everyone. The police are also more proactive in enforcing laws and increasing the awareness of riders and motorists.

Imagine a Better Life

Our streets are now safer because more people are walking and cycling, and people driving cars have slowed down to share the road. Even our community spirit is stronger because we get to meet each other in the streets rather than passing each other cocooned in our automotive shells.

The obesity trend in our children is reversed. Parents who were too scared to let their children ride to school for fear of other parents running them over realised that this was a self perpetuating problem. The kids are happier because riding to school is fun and gives them their first taste of independence. Teachers are happy because their pupils concentrate in class having had some morning exercise.

Adults are benefiting too. Through behaviour change programs, the bicycle has become an important weapon in the battle against obesity and mental illness.

Imagine...

A major reason for the change is the cost and scarcity of car parking in the city, parliamentary triangle and town centres. The cost of bus tickets has increased but bikes are still free to ride. As a result, the popularity of cycling has grown astronomically over the past 20 years.

Most members of the community reach for their helmet before reaching for their car keys and over 30% of trips are by bicycle. Many residents of inner Canberra don't own cars and most families can easily manage with just one car. The increased density of our city means that more people live close to their work, shops and community facilities.

Climate change and environmental concerns continue to be a motivator for many people who ride bicycles. After all of these years the humble bicycle continues to be a healthy and environmentally sound transport choice.

Private cars have changed. Since peak oil everyone buys hybrid, electric or fuel cell powered vehicles. Canberra is leading the country with the first city wide smart grid and battery swap network. As a result our air is cleaner and streets are quieter. Motorbikes and scooters are more popular and cycling is much more pleasant.

Electric assist bikes are readily available for the not so strong so that nearly everyone rides for most of their short trips.

Imagine Recreational Improvements

The cycle circuit around Lake Burley Griffin is widely recognised as the best half day cycle ride in Australia. On weekends it is filled with tourists and families.

The population is older and the many retirees are health conscious and looking for ways to socialise and enjoy their mornings. As a result Pedal Power's retirees' rides have become a mid week and week end social phenomenon.

10 years ago the Velodrome in Stromlo Forest Park opened. Canberra now has the full set of facilities necessary to train our representative cyclists.

The Centenary Trail, which opened in 2013, provides a rail-trail style opportunity to tour the National Capital, and is now one of our premier nature based tourist attractions. It takes riders the whole way around Canberra, primarily within nature park and also provides the corridors required by mountain bikers to connect their key single track areas at Majura, Bruce Ridge and Mt Stromlo.

Canberra is formally recognised as the best cycling city in Australia. People travel here to ride their bikes because we have the best network of recreational paths, the best road riding, the best mountain biking and the best touring roads in the country – all within riding distance from the centre of the city and all are depicted on high quality maps and mobile phone applications.

Cycling is now recognised as a major tourist attraction.

How do we get there?

Through Better Facilities

Filling in the missing links in Canberra's cycling network

Better cycle path signage so people get where they want to

More cycle paths and facilities in town centres

Calmer traffic in residential streets

Secure bicycle parking and good facilities at work

Integration with public transport

Through Encouragement

Well targeted marketing

Ride to work and ride to school programs

High quality cycling maps, guide books and applications

Better Training and Planning

Training for engineers and planners

Skills training for children and for adults who take up cycling

Bike awareness for drivers

Excellent engineering and design standards

Regular cycle counts to measure progress

Are you coming for the ride?

Pedal Power represents the interests of non-competitive cyclists. These are everyday people who cycle for transport, fitness and fun.

We share this vision because Canberra already has a good cycling network and a well thought out sustainable transport plan. The foundations are already laid.

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A Vision for Cycling in Canberra in 2030

Imagine what it could be like 20 years in the Future

- Setting a goal
- Providing a vision for the community
- Identifying actions to achieve the vision

More Canberrans cycling more often for a better community.

