

Andrew Barr MLA  
Chief Minister and Treasurer  
GPO Box 1020  
Canberra ACT 2601

Dear Chief Minister

## **PEDAL POWER ACT – 2018-19 BUDGET SUBMISSION**

Pedal Power ACT welcomes the opportunity to outline the most important active travel priorities that need to be addressed in the 2018-19 Budget.

With over 7500 members, Pedal Power ACT represents the interests of people who already ride bicycles and those who would like to. As well as organising bike rides and events, we work consistently with the ACT Government on all bicycle riding related matters to support the Government's active travel program. Pedal Power ACT encourages the community to be active and provides opportunities to do so through programs like New Horizons (cycling skills course to instil confidence on a bike) and Cycling Without Age (allowing elderly or less-able people to feel the wind in their hair).

In inviting our budget submission, you asked how can government better meet the needs of Canberrans and what can it do to make Canberra even more liveable? An October 2017 **survey of Pedal Power ACT members and the broader cycling community** drew over 500 responses. People overwhelmingly suggested the Budget needs to include a significant expansion in active travel investment, particularly:

- addressing missing cycling links in the community path network;
- more separated cycling paths; and
- better maintenance of the existing community path network.

**Pedal Power ACT is recommending that the Government provide approximately \$128 million over the next four years** for cycling infrastructure and related investments detailed in this letter's attachment.

Pedal Power ACT notes that **funding for active travel infrastructure and maintenance has fallen significantly over the last three years** (from around \$18 million in 2015-16, \$14 million in 2016-17; to around \$10 million in 2017-18 - major items in the 2017-18 Budget are detailed in Table 1).

This decline has led to:

- the continued deterioration of the path network;



*More Canberrans cycling, more often, for a better community*

*Cycling Advocacy*

*Recreational Rides*

*Five Peaks Challenge*

*Centenary Trail Blaze*

*Fitz's Challenge*

*Amy's Big Canberra Bike Ride*

*Ride to Work*

*Ride or Walk to School*

*Ride Safe to School Day*

*Cycle Facilities Rating*

*New Horizons*

*Bicycle Maintenance*



- compromises in active travel infrastructure standards to make limited funding go further;
- the failure to take expensive planning work to the construction phase; and
- the winding back of the scope of some projects to fit the funding available.

Pedal Power ACT is also concerned that the current reduction in the level of funding is not consistent with the Government's own commitment through the **Labor/Greens Parliamentary Agreement to provide an 'additional' \$30 million** over four years for active travel related measures. The 2017-18 Budget failed to address this commitment.

Pedal Power ACT and its members believe that to successfully transform the way Canberrans move as part of the active travel program, Government infrastructure initiatives over the next four years should deliver:

- better path maintenance (including a one-off special capital injection) - \$38 million;
- improvements to the off road cycle path network - \$51.3 million;
- cycling projects related to urban renewal - \$32 million;
- pilot projects for separating bike riders from pedestrians - \$2 million;
- expanded Active Streets for Schools - \$2 million; and
- the Belconnen bikeway and the town centre improvements for Gunghalin, Tuggeranong and Kambah as provided for in last year's Budget.

Active travel development measures Pedal Power ACT asks to be implemented over the next four years are:

- a Cycle Tourism Fund to adequately finance the Government's forthcoming Cycle Tourism Strategy and to develop cycle tourism in the ACT;
- make active travel more socially inclusive through Government and community projects that:
  - develop skills and confidence
  - encourage behaviour change, including safer riding and driving
  - increase active travel participation among women, children, youth and people who are socio-economically disadvantaged – \$2.5 million; and
  - active consideration of a bike share scheme for Canberra.

The business case for investing in cycling is simple and compelling. Every trip moved from car to bike has a net benefit for the ACT government and community. Canberra is now well-placed to build on our cycling heritage and reap the economic and social benefits of a healthier, more productive city. Civic leaders around the world are strongly supporting cycling because it makes economic sense; it is the quickest, easiest, cheapest and most popular remedy for a range of urban problems.

Further detail on Pedal Power ACT's 2018-19 budget submission is attached. Table 2 summarises Pedal Power's Budget recommendations.

Should your officials wish to discuss our submission, they can contact:

- Richard Bush, on infrastructure measures: [r.h.bush@bigpond.net.au](mailto:r.h.bush@bigpond.net.au) 0427 245 232
- Jeff Ibbotson, on other measures: [vp1@pedalpower.org.au](mailto:vp1@pedalpower.org.au) 0427 755 920

Yours sincerely

*Signed*

Jeff Ibbotson  
Vice President, Advocacy

24 October 2017

## **Pedal Power ACT 2018-19 Budget Submission**

### **Detailed Initiatives**

#### **1. Benefits of cycling investment**

The case for a strong active travel program has been well documented, including in the Government's own 2015 Active Travel Framework.

More convenient and safer cycling infrastructure encourages more people to travel by bike or to combine cycling and public transport. The Chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change said at the recent Urban Mobility Congress that 'infrastructure projects put in place over the next three years will literally determine the future of humanity'. Pedal Power ACT believes that the ACT Government can play its part in this through strategic infrastructure investment and active travel development programs.

This should support a higher active travel 'mode share' on trips to work (the Government's goal is 7% by walking and 7% by cycling by 2026). However, the National Cycling Participation Survey for 2017 showed that while the ACT leads the nation with higher participation rates than any other place in Australia, our cycling participation rates have been steady, but they have not risen. Indeed, participation by children is falling while overweight and obesity rates rise. In order for the ACT community to fully realise all the benefits of being the best place in Australia to ride a bike, we need to get more of our population riding regularly.

Increased active travel provides a significant net return to the ACT community through:

- savings on lifetime health expenditures;
- improved air quality and meeting our environmental commitments;
- increased workforce productivity; and
- reduced traffic congestion (which is forecast to cost the ACT \$400 million a year by 2030).

The ACT has signed the global 'Under 2' MOU. By 2020, 54% of Canberra's greenhouse gas emissions will come from the transport sector.

If more people cycle to work, to shops and to cultural and sporting events it will also help the uptake of light rail and make a positive addition to the Government's integrated public transport network. Better cycling infrastructure should not only be part of urban renewal of the inner city but should also improve connections from the suburbs to places of work and recreation, to local shopping centres and to and through town/group centres. Cycling should be seen as integral to achieving the '30 minute city' - a city of short commutes and journeys - the benchmark for a more liveable city. Investment in urban centre cycle hubs with end-of-trip facilities would encourage cycle commuting.

## 2. A Four Year Commitment to infrastructure and active travel development

In past budgets, the Government has shown some commitment to walking and cycling infrastructure improvements and participation programs, including in a number of town centres and Ride and Walk to School and Active Streets for Schools programs. Nevertheless, Pedal Power ACT has observed an **inadequate and piecemeal approach to active travel** in the Budget, such that:

- money spent in previous years on planning walking and cycling infrastructure in town centres had not been followed through to the construction phase;
- some projects were 'bitsy' – part of the infrastructure is built in the hope that a subsequent budget will fund the remainder, while standards are sometimes compromised;
- path maintenance remained seriously underfunded;
- work on piloting cycling infrastructure that is separated from motor vehicles or people who are walking has received minimal attention, with the announcement of the Belconnen bikeway being a laudable exception; and
- active travel development programs are limited – for example, Ride and Walk to School encourages active travel to school, but little attention is given to encouraging riding and walking for other travel.

To address this, Pedal Power ACT asks the Government to move beyond a year-by-year piecemeal approach to active travel, by using the 2018-19 budget to provide a longer term visionary commitment to active travel infrastructure and participation involving approximately \$128 million over four years.

## 3. Path maintenance and repair

The ACT's network of paths (totalling 2,870 kilometres) is a significant public asset, highly valued by the community. Nevertheless, as highlighted in a recent ACT Auditor-General report, Canberra's path network is rapidly aging, and is in need of urgent attention.

**Shared paths are becoming increasingly hazardous** and their condition is deteriorating to the point where reconstruction is sometimes required. The currently level of funding for path maintenance (around \$3 million per annum, down from around \$5 million in 2011-12) represents a poor management approach to an important public asset. As this infrastructure deteriorates, far greater funding will be required in the future to properly maintain/reconstruct the network.

In situations where repairs to paths have been undertaken, feedback from Pedal Power ACT members has raised issues about the quality and value-for-money achieved with some of this work, particularly bitumen repairs.

Analysis by Pedal Power ACT<sup>1</sup> in 2016 showed that around **\$12 million per annum was required to properly maintain the network. In addition, the backlog of maintenance was estimated to cost \$14 million to fix.**

Pedal Power ACT recommends a special capital injection of \$14 million over four years (\$3.5 million per annum) to address the backlog of maintenance. It is also recommended that the annual maintenance budget be progressively increased by \$1 million per annum, with the medium term goal of reaching \$12 million per annum.

As part of an increased maintenance funding regime, the ACT Government should undertake a more regular and comprehensive program of **inspection of the network** and early maintenance interventions (supported by appropriate asset management systems). As the Auditor-General report stated, 77 percent of paths in Canberra are not subjected to regular inspections, and the 'risk based approach' taken by Roads ACT is insufficient to cover all locations that require maintenance. Pedal Power ACT also recommends that a **more robust maintenance program** should establish public accountability measures, such as an annual resurfacing/resealing target (for example, 5 percent) and quality of repair work undertaken.

Further, while ACT Roads maintains a structured street sweeping program for roads, there is no **comprehensive sweeping program of the path network**. Pedal Power ACT would like to discuss the possibility of establishing a partnership with the ACT Government through the Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate concerning a cycle path cleaning program based on an 'adopt a path' scheme - the Government providing appropriate machinery and training to cycle path cleaning volunteers from Pedal Power ACT and the wider community.

#### **4. Improving the off-road cycle network**

##### Missing path links

A network of strategic paths that provide safe and attractive routes to where people need to go is essentially in encouraging greater walking, cycling and public transport use in Canberra.

The extensive path network is not complete, and that prevents the community benefiting from its full potential. There are numerous missing links connecting residential areas to schools, shops, businesses, parks, and other destinations. Linking the network to and through the town and group centres also needs to be addressed. The recent survey of over 500 Pedal Power ACT members and the broader cycling community highlighted missing cycling links as the clear and dominant issue with people.

Examples of missing links include:

- Heysen St to Devonport St – separated on-road lanes linking Lyons and Weston to form a northern route between Woden and Weston Creek;
- Grevillea Park on Lake Burley Griffin – the car park in this location was upgraded but the proposed new shared path was ignored;

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.pedalpower.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Pedal-Power-ACT-Addressing-Path-Maintenance-August-2016-Vfinal.pdf>

- separated on and off road cycling on the Hindmarsh Drive corridor between Woden and Fyshwick, linking Woden, Red Hill, Narrabundah, Symonston and connecting to the route to Queanbeyan;
- separated on-road lanes along Belconnen Way, between Coulter Drive and Kingsford Smith Drive;
- off-road path along Northcott Drive, Campbell, connecting Campbell Park to the existing on/off road paths along Fairbairn Avenue; and
- Haig Park – 2 way east/west cycle path on the southern edge of the Park as the redevelopment of the Northbourne Avenue corridor, and Lonsdale and Mort Streets gathers pace and attracts people to cycle or walk from ever-expanding nearby suburbs.

Roads ACT has a warrant system that ranks the importance of upgrading existing community paths and addressing missing links in the network. This system is endorsed by the Bicycle Advisory Group and forms a sound basis for prioritising projects against the limited funding available.

Pedal Power ACT recommends that the 2018-19 Budget provide \$9 million per annum over the first two years of the forward estimates for missing links.

#### Improving major path and road crossings

Safety at points where people riding on major path trunk routes cross major roads is an increasing concern. For example, in Woden the main (and busy trunk) community route crosses Theodore Street Curtin with no marked crossing, crosses Launceston Street with lights, then crosses Corrina Street with no marked crossing. This type of situation highlights the need for more crossings to be marked on major trunk routes so that people cycling have clear priority when crossing all roads on major trunk routes.

Pedal Power ACT recommends a four year program totalling \$0.8 million to add marked crossings on selected main community routes with high cycling traffic.

#### Molonglo to City bikeway – Stage 1

The section of this project between Liversidge Street and the City has been the subject of expensive planning. Pedal Power ACT asks for funding for construction to be provided in 2018-19. This is a much used commuter link to the city and will provide a bypass around the West Basin area.

For the construction of the remainder of Stage One, Acacia Inlet to the City, Pedal Power ACT recommends the 2018-19 Budget provide funding over four years. Total funding for Stage 1 is \$5m over four years.

#### West Belconnen to Belconnen Town Centre – Improved cycling connections

Following feasibility and planning work already undertaken, Pedal Power ACT recommends that the 2018-19 Budget provide \$4.5 million over four years for construction work.

#### Active Travel Streets East and West of Northbourne Avenue

For some time Pedal Power ACT has been involved in discussions with Roads ACT on its commendable Active Travel Streets proposal for inner Canberra's De Burgh - Forbes – Moore

Streets and for a similar route in the eastern side of Northbourne Avenue. If done well, these corridors could be a best practice example of providing a safe and efficient route, especially for people who would feel uncomfortable on Northbourne Avenue. The low speed active travel street approach can be achieved at low cost. Pedal Power ACT sees strong value in trialling active travel streets both east and west of Northbourne Avenue. If these trials are successful, the program could be rolled out into other suburbs through funding in the 2018-19 Budget of \$2 million over four years for such trials.

## **5. Urban renewal projects (active travel infrastructure in town and group centres, and capital upgrades)**

The ACT Government has previously highlighted urban renewal as the cornerstone of its economic and sustainable growth strategy. Past budget submissions from Pedal Power ACT have emphasised the need to improve cycling infrastructure in the neglected, dangerous town and group centres. The 2016-17 Budget provided some welcome funding for design and construct improvements at Gungahlin and Tuggeranong town centres and Kambah group centre. Nevertheless, while planning work for a number of other centres have been undertaken, funding has not been provided to move these projects to the construction stage. In the case of Woden for example, \$250,000 was spent in 2015-16 on translating Woden Master Plan ideas into detailed designs including for a separated cycle loop inside the town centre utilizing Corrina and Furzer Streets. This work has not been carried through to construction.

This ad-hoc, piecemeal approach is failing to deliver improvements that the Government could point to proudly as evidence of its commitment to active travel. A program of funding for town and group centres over the next four years is detailed in Table 2 below.

## **6. Pilot projects: separating bike riders from pedestrians**

A safe cycling and walking environment is an essential element in improving the take-up of active travel, particularly for women and children. The perceived, actual and potential conflict that arises between people on shared paths as well as on roads reflects a range of factors, including differing speeds and the current design of the infrastructure itself. Ultimately, the key to reducing conflict is to plan and design facilities to meet the needs of all people who use them and to fund programs which achieve behaviour change.

The Government's 2015 Active Travel Framework sets out a policy for separated cycle infrastructure. An initial trial in 2015 of low profile separators showed that they can change driver behaviour and may help convince more people to use the commuter routes.

Pedal Power ACT welcomes the 2017-18 Budget's commitment of \$4.75 million over three years for the design and construction of the Belconnen Bikeway. If constructed to a high standard, this project will set the benchmark for future separated cycle ways in Canberra.

Pedal Power ACT asks the Government to follow up this decision with trial separation projects involving the separation of cycles and pedestrians on our busy lake routes. With the increased

popularity of these routes, particularly on weekends, conflict between cycling and walking has become a safety issue that must be addressed.

Pedal Power ACT recommends that the Budget allocate \$4 million to plan and trial two separation projects.

## **7. Active Streets for Schools**

The Active Streets for Schools program helps make it easier and safer for children to ride or walk to school. Not only does it encourage children to be more active, but it provides parents with the peace of mind that riding and walking to school is safe and easy to follow. The program also helps alleviate some of the traffic congestion created by parents dropping children off at the school gate.

The 2016-17 Budget provided \$2 million over four years for the program.<sup>2</sup> While Active Streets is being piloted in four Belconnen schools to trial changes to existing roads and footpaths and is expected to be rolled out to 25 additional schools between 2017 and 2018, during the election campaign Labor promised to roll this program out to 50 additional schools. Pedal Power ACT recommends additional funding of \$0.5 million per annum to expand the program.

## **8. Other measures**

### *Cycle Tourism Fund*

Cycle tourism helps establish Canberra as the Australasian Cycling Capital - an international destination for cycle-related activities ranging from self-organised touring through to packaged programs or events that utilise cycling as the ideal means of discovering Canberra and the surrounding region. It is becoming popular worldwide, and the ACT is well placed to build this area of tourism.

However, the ACT needs to catch up quickly.

New Zealand is already well established as a cycling destination. Respondents to Tourism Research Australia's 2015 survey rated Victoria as the best destination for cycle tourism, with the ACT second last, just ahead of the NT<sup>3</sup>.

Tasmania's Premier recently committed \$6 million to establish a Cycle Tourism Fund to implement the Tasmanian Cycle Tourism Strategy and develop Tasmania's cycling trails, grow and promote experiences and events, and improve safety for all cyclists 'to make Tasmania the nation's leading cycle tourism destination'<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.act.gov.au/our-canberra/latest-news/2016/may/a-boost-for-active-travel-to-keep-children-healthy-and-safe>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.tra.gov.au/Research/View-all-publications/All-Publications/Destination-Visitor-Survey-results/Strategic-regional-research-reports/growing-cycling-tourism-in-victoria>

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.premier.tas.gov.au/releases/growing\\_tasmanias\\_cycle\\_tourism\\_industry](http://www.premier.tas.gov.au/releases/growing_tasmanias_cycle_tourism_industry)

Pedal Power ACT welcomes the Government's progress on its election commitment to develop a unified cycling tourism strategy involving the public sector, business and interested stakeholders, and looks forward to contributing its knowledge and research to the implementation of this strategy. Pedal Power ACT asks the Government to provide adequate funding for the implementation of the recommendations of its forthcoming cycle tourism strategy.

### *Socially inclusive active travel*

The Government's Healthy Weight Initiative has been working on improving active living environments to reduce the burden of chronic disease and demand on the health system. Through the Ride and Walk to School program, for example, the Initiative has enabled more children and parents to experience the benefits of riding and walking to school.

However, more must be done. It looks unlikely that the ACT will meet the Initiative's 2018 target of 67% of adults meeting physical activity guidelines. Indeed, the percentage of adults meeting the guidelines fell from 64% in 2015 to 59% in 2016<sup>5</sup>.

To meet the Initiative's target, and to reach the broader community, initiatives are required that go beyond school and work based programs. To fill gaps in the current approach there is scope, for example, for after-school programs and weekend programs that can involve parents and their children.

It is well known that obesity rates are highest in areas of socioeconomic disadvantage. Initiatives are required to help people in this area to become more physically active. Isolated community initiatives are developed from time to time. For example, the YWCA is currently funding Girls on Bikes, a program with which Pedal Power ACT is assisting, aimed primarily at migrant and refugee women, and aims to use bike riding to enable fitness, strength, independence and a sense of community. Government should work with the community to expand programs like this.

To make active travel more socially inclusive Pedal Power ACT recommends government work with, for example, multicultural community groups, young people, Housing ACT tenants and others who stand much to gain from the health benefits, social inclusion and financial savings that active travel brings. Funding of \$2.5 million over four years administered through Health and/or Community Services Directorates can:

- develop skills and confidence;
- encourage behaviour change, including safer riding and driving; and
- increase active travel participation among women, children, youth and people who are socio-economically disadvantaged.

### *Implementing bike share scheme*

Bike share schemes are an effective part of transport systems in cities around the world. Such schemes can help ease traffic congestion and improve levels of physical activity, providing a way for people to get around cities using active travel

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<sup>5</sup> Healthy Weight Initiative Progress Report to June 2016  
[https://www.act.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/885904/HWI\\_report\\_2016.pdf](https://www.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/885904/HWI_report_2016.pdf)

The ACT Government is currently conducting a feasibility study into possible arrangements. Pedal Power ACT looks forward to the results of this work, and community consultation, concerning the introduction of a scheme here in Canberra. We would welcome Budget funding to facilitate its establishment by the private sector.

*Transparency in Budget funding for cycling*

Government support for active travel falls across a number of directorates and programs/outputs. Establishing a sound picture of government funding commitments to active travel policy and infrastructure through budget and other process is problematic, and leads to less than informed analysis and debate. This is a matter that has been previously raised with ACT Government officials.

Pedal Power ACT recommends that each ACT Budget contain a comprehensive fact sheet on expenditure on active travel. By way of example, Appendix B to the ACT's 2015 Active Travel Framework offers a useful approach to detailing past and future funding commitments.

**Table 1**  
**2017-18 Budget Outcome – main Active Travel related initiatives**

Items	2017-18 \$m	2018-19 \$m	2019-20 \$m	2020-21 \$m	2021-22 \$m	Total
Belconnen Bikeway	0.25	1.25	3.2			4.7
Gungahlin, Tuggeranong, Kambah town/group centres improvements	4.0	4.0				8.0
Footpath and cycle way upgrades	1.2	1.0	1.0	1.0		4.2
Safer walking and cycling around schools	0.525	0.525				1.1
Canberra Brickworks – active travel	0.48	0.48				1.0

**Table 2**

**Pedal Power ACT - 2018-19 Budget Recommendations for Active Travel 2018-19 to 2021-22**  
(in addition to the projects announced in the 2017-18 Budget in Table 1 above)

Active Travel Items	2018-19 \$m	2019-20 \$m	2020-21 \$m	2021-22 \$m	Total \$m
<b>Path Maintenance</b>					
• Special capital injection for backlog	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	14.0
• Recurring maintenance	4.5	5.5	6.5	7.5	24.0
<b>Improving the off road network</b>					
• Missing links – new capital projects	9.0	9.0	10.0	10.0	38.0
• Major community path road crossings	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.8
• Molonglo to City – Stage 1	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	5.0
• West Belconnen to Belconnen Town Centre cycling connections	0.5	1.0	2.0	1.0	4.5
• Active travel streets starting with east and west of Northbourne Ave	0.5	0.5	1.0	1.0	3.0
<b>Urban renewal projects</b>					
• Woden Town Centre Cycle Loop	3.0	3.0	1.0		7.0
• Tuggeranong Town Centre		1.0	1.0		2.0
• Belconnen Town Centre		2.5	2.5		5.0
• Kippax Town Centre		1.0	1.0		2.0
• Gungahlin Town Centre			2.0	2.0	4.0
• Kingston Group Centre	1.0	1.0			2.0
• Weston Creek Group Centre	1.0	1.0			2.0
• TCCS Capital Upgrades Program for streets – additional funding for suburban improvements, footpaths, ramps, lighting	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	8.0
<b>Pilot projects for travel separation</b>					
• Bikes from pedestrians around lakes		2.0			2.0
<b>Active Travel for Schools</b>					
• Expansion to additional schools	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	2.0
<b>Other initiatives</b>					
• Cycle Tourism Fund					TBA*
• Socially inclusive active travel	0.5	0.8	0.6	0.6	2.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>28.2</b>	<b>35.5</b>	<b>34.8</b>	<b>29.3</b>	<b>127.8</b>

\* Awaiting the release of the Government's cycle tourism strategy