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Moving Canberra

Pedal Power ACT commends the ACT Government for reviewing its Transport Strategy and agrees that the ACT needs policies, infrastructure, programs and services to match our growing and changing circumstances.

Pedal Power endorses the goal of the ACT Government to *provide real alternatives to driving and owning a vehicle*, and the *Model Hierarchy of Prioritisation by Transport Mode*. However, Pedal Power's view is that although Moving Canberra sets out a clear Case for Change, the accompanying strategy is not sufficiently strong to alter Canberrans existing modes of travel.

Moving Canberra is a prime opportunity to engage our community in a discussion about what needs to change in order for us to lead the nation in active travel, to increase community health, to meet emission targets, and to reduce congestion.

In order to present the community with a charter for change, it should propose defined goals, requirements and KPIs including budget proportions and flagship projects. The Strategy should identify targets to be met at regular intervals, e.g. increases in women cycling; kilometres of separated path built in targeted areas; and other measures related to creating a safe and convenient on and off-road environment.

Our submission addresses the policies, infrastructure and programs that incorporate these elements as well as the need for goals, targets and budget funding. We consider all these elements to be important for our growing and changing Territory to have the 'smart, sustainable, integrated transport network' that the draft Strategy seeks.

Policies

Pedal Power ACT suggests focusing on these policy approaches to support the Strategy:

- a whole of government initiative
- link it to the Planning and Climate Change policies and strategies as proposed
- the modal hierarchy (p.13) underpins the Territory's approach to transport
- we need to change, catch up, and can no longer build our way out of congestion.

Given the number of ACT Directorates whose activities the Strategy affects, adopt the policy that the Strategy is a **whole-of-government initiative**. Accordingly, the Foreword should be by the Chief Minister and should include a strong statement of support for active travel. This would send a message that officials across Directorates need to work together on this priority. The *Infrastructure Plan Update 2017–18* which involves all Directorates took this approach. This would also signal to the community that real change is happening.

Active travel is an important element of the Strategy and should be emphasised as such early in the Foreword for the sake of Canberrans' health, our built and natural environment, and our economy. Because

of its importance, the challenges faced, and the number of Directorates and stakeholders involved, the Strategy should identify as an action a high-level ACT active travel summit to review progress, help with the change process and make decisions about future action. Such a summit was held recently by the Queensland Government.

Acknowledge that **Canberra needs to catch up to world best practice on cycling participation**, and that it will be a challenge. [This 2016 foreword by Boris Johnson](#), then Mayor of London (see extract at Attachment 1) gives a realistic account of the commitment, effort and political leadership needed to turn things around. Acknowledge in the Foreword that while higher than elsewhere in Australia, ACT cycling rates are low by world standards; and that there are particular **shortfalls among women and in outer suburbs**. State that it is Government policy to turn that around and that the Government is determined to commit the effort, leadership and funding to get more Canberrans into active travel.

It is important for the Strategy's success to embody the **modal hierarchy** that gives **priority to walking and cycling** over motorised forms of mobility. The draft says: 'The ACT Government has a vision for a future transport experience that ... provides real alternatives to driving and owning a vehicle.' (p.7) So that active travel is not lost in the broad canvas that the Strategy covers, proposed actions can be linked back to the modal hierarchy, noting the hierarchy is Government policy.

Make the modal hierarchy a goal of the Strategy. The [Calgary Transportation Plan](#) lists its goals upfront; it includes:

Transportation Goal #4:

Enable public transit, walking and cycling as the preferred mobility choices for more people. (p.1.6)

As a target for the Strategy it could be expressed as:

Public transport, walking and cycling are Canberrans preferred mobility choices

The Calgary Plan also links Implementation of the plan's goals with strategic investment:

Transportation planning priorities and investment decisions must be aligned and co-ordinated with the MDP Framework for Growth and Change, and the CTP [Calgary Transportation Plan] transportation goals (p.2.2)

The Strategy should adopt the Calgary approach – its table of contents is at Attachment 2.

Linking the Strategy to the **Planning and Climate Change policies and strategies** is sensible. Achieving Net Zero Emissions 'will require an unprecedented level of change in ... travel behaviour' (p.53). The response: 'Canberra is already Australia's leading bike city...' True, however, make more of the potential of cycling: if the whole ACT reached northern European (or even north Canberra) mode share, it could have a huge impact on emissions.

Pedal Power ACT applauds the observation:

We cannot "build" our way out of congestion. Continuously expanding the road network will create future operational, maintenance and renewal burdens. (p. 24)

Make this a call to action and for change on the ground by stating clearly that it is Government policy to not try to build our way out of congestion and implement that policy.

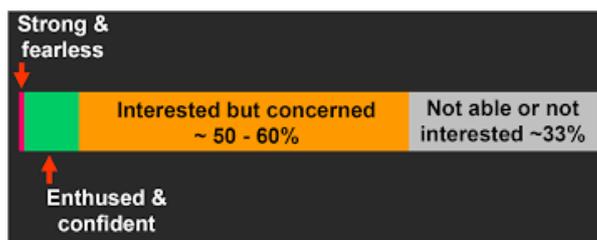
The application of the **movement and place framework** to integrate transport with land use planning is commendable. It will require investment in active travel as well as public transport.

Better Infrastructure

To achieve the Strategy’s goals Pedal Power ACT suggests focusing on these aspects of infrastructure:

- infrastructure that normalises cycling and enables Canberrans of all ages and abilities to make active travel their preferred transport choice
- a business case that supports investment in cycling infrastructure
- build an integrated transport network that prioritises active travel to connect to schools, shops, workplaces, public transport and places of recreation
- maintain current transport assets, particularly paths, to extend their economic life
- reduce speed limits
- phase out priority funding for roads to be consistent with the new modal hierarchy

Identify specific actions to **normalise cycling** in the community, otherwise it will remain unattractive to the 60% majority of ‘interested but concerned’ people (many of them female and in outer suburbs). Painted on-road lanes have improved the environment for the ‘strong and fearless’. We must do better and shift the focus to the ‘interested but concerned’ if we are to encourage **all ages and abilities** to use active travel.

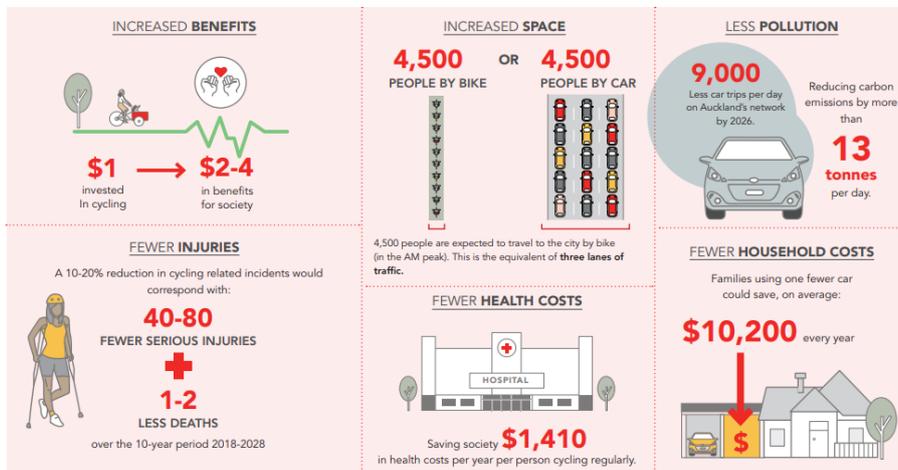


The Strategy should include as an explicit goal developing a **business case supporting investment in cycling** infrastructure in the ACT. This can be a powerful tool to demonstrate the tangible benefits of investing in cycling infrastructure. [Auckland](#) has adopted this approach with impressive effect:

13 Auckland Cycling: An Investment Programme

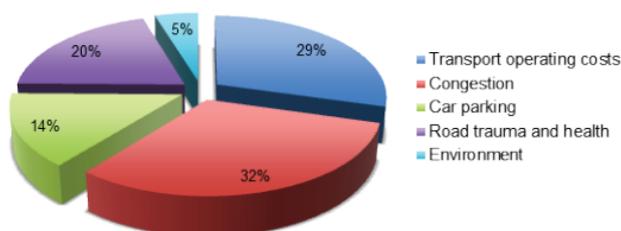
What Success Looks Like

The benefits of the programme have been derived using our cycle demand model and the NZ Transport Agency economic evaluation manual. Getting more Aucklanders on bikes will see the programme deliver:



Western Australia’s [Royal Automobile Club](#) has done likewise, showing where the benefits lie:

Figure 3: Cycling benefits by sector



The section on an **integrated network** needs more substance on active travel. Priorities and routes have already been identified through the work done over the last six years on the strategic cycle network plan and related projects. While it is dealt with subsequently, emphasise in this section the network's place at the top of the modal hierarchy. The **possible action on active travel** should read: 'As a priority, active travel infrastructure in all new and renewed developments ...'; and drop 'possible' (p.52).

To increase the proportion of cycle network projects, prioritise **separation** on roads and paths in the **Possible actions for active travel** (p.52), but drop the 'possible'. As an example of success, the upgrading of Sullivans Creek shared path has increased the comfort and convenience of cycling to Civic and the ANU. The bike barometer figures showed 10% more people using this path in the last 12 months – a clear case of 'build it and they will come'.

We support prioritising public transport and active travel users at interchanges.

The points on **barriers** to local journeys are well made (p.40):

The success of our future network requires us to pay attention to the barriers that impact journeys, with particular attention paid to local journeys. Footpath quality, inadequate lighting, perceptions of safety, difficulty transferring between services and lack of wayfinding are all issues that can stop a person participating in their community, getting more exercise, and connecting to the wider city.

The draft notes (p.49):

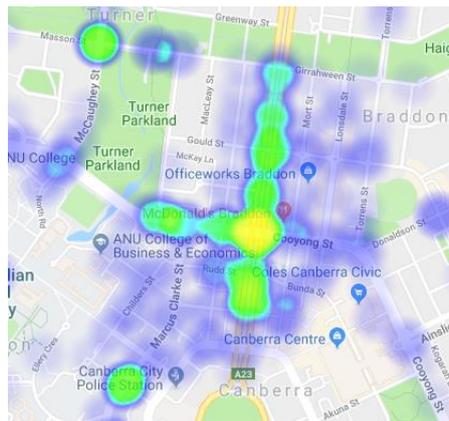
When asked, 60 per cent of Canberra residents said better off-road paths and cycleways would encourage them to cycle more often. **Connections to schools, shops, public transport and parks** were highly ranked, in that order, and almost half indicated that better wayfinding would encourage them to cycle

Pedal Power ACT has long been advocating for such connections. The Government is making good progress in making it easier to cycle to and through the town centres. The Strategy's Investment Plan should prioritise connections out from town centres to the suburbs (particularly the outer suburbs) as well as the page 49 connections.

Maintenance is missing from the draft. Include it in the Investment Plan. Assess the cost of fully maintaining the shared path network and develop a specific business case for funding to bring the network up to a standard that is suitable for all ages and abilities. Pedal Power ACT has, for several budget submissions highlighted the case for maintenance funding, and how the older parts of the city have been allowed to degrade and in some cases become dangerous, because of, for example, tree-root damage and pavement failure.

The point about reducing the risk of serious trauma by **reducing speed limits** is well made. Pedal Power ACT supports the proposed 40 km/h limit as an interim measure but proposes 30 km/h as the preferable goal. Studies show that 30 km/h does significantly less harm on impact, as the diagram on p.42 confirms. It has become the standard for residential areas in Europe, the UK and North America. It would add very little to vehicle journey times. 50 km/h is certainly too high.

As a short-term action apply a 30 km/h limit to Northbourne Avenue between London Circuit and Haig Park. Its high level of cycling crashes as shown on the ACT [Cycling Crashes Heat Map](#), demonstrates it is a prime candidate for a low limit. This should be a high priority action as people have become used to the current roadworks 40 km/h limit.



It is incorrect to say 'Our roads are primarily funded from fuel excise and motor vehicle registration charges' (p.43). They are funded from the consolidated revenue pool. The statement only feeds the specious argument 'cyclists don't pay for roads so shouldn't be on them'.

While the high-level aspiration suggests inverting the modal hierarchy pyramid, the Indicative Investment Plan (p.67) shows **priority funding for roads** dominating the short and medium-term projects: 10 duplications, 11 other road, 9 public transport and 5 active travel projects (p.70).

The Strategy should reverse those proportions and advocate that change to the community. It could say that we now have a road network which delivers superior infrastructure for motor vehicles, encourages driving as the quick, easy option (which promotes one of the highest rates of short-trip vehicle use in the developed world); and add that it is now time to provide similarly superior infrastructure for active travel.

Figure 24 (p.69) maps the location of short, medium and long-term projects, but the long-term are not listed. The Strategy should link to all projects.

Bike parking is a hot issue among Pedal Power ACT members. The Strategy's actions should provide for it in the public realm as well as in end-of-trip facilities.

A cycling network (p.49) that emphasises route planning and infrastructure to match different uses with **principal and main cycle routes** is commendable. However, with road duplication funding winding down it could be achieved sooner than 'over the next 10 to 15 years in line with future land development and urban growth'. A more active detailed timeline is required that meets current and rapidly emerging dynamics such as electric bikes.

Bicycles are zero emission vehicles. Australia will soon catch up to Europe, where e-bikes clearly outstrip sales of e-cars. E-bikes should be mentioned under Ensuring Canberra is Future Ready (p.58).

Provide in the Infrastructure Plan for the short to medium term **joining up of principal and main cycle routes** and for the **supporting infrastructure that e-bikes** are already starting to require, e.g. charging points and the additional transit space they will require to share with unpowered bicycles.

Cost-benefit analysis is mentioned only briefly in connection with light rail. This analysis should be a key element of the Active Travel Business Case that is developed as a goal of Moving Canberra. Cycling facilities are relatively cheap to build and yield significant economic gains. We are not aware of any cycling projects worldwide that have not returned a positive (often spectacular) cost-benefit ratio. Cycling facilities have been shown to produce a positive benefit of \$1.69 for every kilometre cycled, in contrast to a net subsidy of about \$0.45 for every kilometre driven. It should be made clear that active travel is one of the cheapest and most beneficial investments that government can make. The **World Health Organization's HEAT model** (Health Economic Assessment Tool) is not mentioned. The ALP/Greens Agreement says it should be applied to all active travel projects.

UN guidelines recommend allocating 20% of the recurrent transport budget on cycling and walking – see [here](#) and [here](#). Reflect these guidelines in the Investment Plan.

Better programs and services

To achieve the Strategy's goals Pedal Power ACT suggests focusing on these programs and services:

- active streets for schools who, safe cycling skills training and a school travel planning program
- behaviour change programs (as distinct from campaigns)
- travel demand management
- road user pricing and variable parking pricing

Spell out exactly what is going to change; and how the programs' concepts will be implemented – with examples and instances.

Measures to **manage parking demand**, as the Strategy says, 'encourages those with viable alternatives to switch from driving'. We support **variable parking pricing** (p.33) (or **demand-responsive pricing** as San Francisco did in 2010) and as flagged in the 2015 Parking Action Plan. Airline passengers have adapted to it; so people who drive cars should also be able to adapt.

Pedal Power ACT supports **road user pricing**. While it may be challenging to implement, advances in technology, research such as Transurban's [Melbourne Road Usage Study](#), and [political awareness](#) of it all indicate it should be high on the Strategy's agenda of actions.

The 'development and sharing of the **Active Travel Practitioners Tool** in the development process' (p.49) requires more than 'development and sharing'. Make it legally enforceable by cross-referencing it under the Territory Plan and keep it up to date.

Better Mindsets

Pedal Power ACT suggests broad cultural change is needed to achieve the Strategy's goals. As mentioned above active travel **behaviour change programs** (p.31) are an important action for the Strategy.

Achieving the practical application of the **modal hierarchy** will require cultural change and acceptance among officials, the commercial sector and the general community. Specify actions to achieve that.

Canberra's road crash rate is higher than it should be, given the best road system and most modern car fleet in Australia. It comes down to human factors, all of which put at risk people who cycle. The draft does

not mention the **behavioural risks of speeding** and other adverse road behaviours, or what to do about them.

The Summary of Possible Actions to be future ready (p.62) is commendable, though delete the 'Possible'. Add **bicycles** to 'individuals leaving their cars at home and getting on light rail or a bus' (p.62).

Monitoring and Evaluation

The **ACT Household Travel Survey** can provide valuable insights into travel behaviour. The graphic at Figure 1 mentions only bicycle ownership. Include in it the percentage of Canberrans who cycle. It is telling that the average trip distance is 7.9 km. More should be made of this in the Strategy to emphasise the practicality of active travel. There is a risk that the current invisibility of cycling will continue, dampening the commitment of effort and resources. This is counter to the approach taken on active travel in many overseas jurisdictions: London, Greater Manchester, Calgary, Seville. The Survey should be repeated regularly and used to help evaluate progress and to meet health, environmental and active travel goals.

The key issue of the evaluation framework is left open, to be agreed within a year of launch. However, it is promising that it will be reported on twice a year. It is also promising that the stated key indicator for active travel (p.74) is quite concrete: Increase in modal share for walking and cycling (journey to work and activity based travel)". This is expanded on p.75 as:

- Modal share for walking (journey to work)
- Modal share for cycling (journey to work)
- Total number of walk and cycle trips (Household travel survey)

The introduction should reflect these more concrete measures.

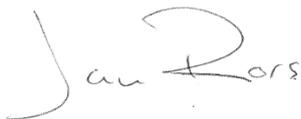
The draft should stipulate a minimum acceptable ACT cycling mode share from the five future Censuses expected over the life of the Strategy. The Census data on cycling to work will be made public and the Government needs to be able to say whether they are in line with expectations. Even if the Government is taking a holistic approach, the Census is hard evidence of whether change is occurring or not.

Conclusion

The Strategy is the Government's opportunity to show the community that it regards active travel as a high priority, and explain why it needs to appropriately fund it.

Pedal Power ACT looks forward to working with Assembly members and officials to ensure the network makes cycling as quick, cheap, simple and convenient as driving already is.

Yours Sincerely



Ian Ross
CEO
Pedal Power ACT

30 March 2019

FOREWORD BY BORIS JOHNSON MAYOR OF LONDON

Exactly three years ago, I unveiled my vision to make cycling in London safer, more popular and more normal. My single biggest regret as Mayor is that I did not do it sooner.

Our original painted lanes were revolutionary at the time. But knowing what I do now, we would have blasted ahead with our new segregated cycle lanes from the beginning.



Road space is hotly contested. According to a former Chancellor of the Exchequer, installing a cycle lane on the Victoria Embankment was “doing more damage to London than almost anything since the Blitz”. Many of my colleagues in Parliament share this view. The Superhighways have probably been one of the most difficult things we have had to do.

But there is already clear evidence that they will succeed. The first one to open, at Vauxhall, has in only four months led to a 73 per cent increase in cycling across Vauxhall Bridge. I have every belief that the same will be true of the further four Superhighways we have almost completed. In the suburbs, our mini-Hollands are starting to reshape car-dominated town centres into places that work for the majority who do not drive.

Calgary Transportation Plan 2009

http://www.calgary.ca/Transportation/TP/Documents/CTP2009/calgary_transportation_plan.pdf

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