



Response to the

2010 NEW SOUTH WALES BIKEPLAN

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Overview and Scope

Overview

BikeSydney is pleased to provide its assessment of the New South Wales BikePlan.

We are supportive of the BikePlan and commend the government for developing it and look forward to the implementation.

About BikeSydney

Who we are

BIKESydney is an incorporated not-for-profit community organisation. We advocate on behalf of our members and people who ride bicycles who live and work in the City of Sydney local government area.

We are affiliated with BicycleNSW, whose mission is to promote cycling through engagement with governments, business, and the community to achieve more people on bikes, more often.

BikeSydney collaborates with neighbouring BUGs to pressure governments to take action to improve cycling facilities. BUGs that we work with are BikeEast (the BUG for the eastern suburbs), the Marrickville and South Sydney Bicycle User Group (Massbug) and the Leichhardt Bicycle User Group (LBUG).

Geographic focus of our activities

The City of Sydney LGA is large and has 167,000 residents (increased by over 50% in the last 10 years) and many more people coming into the area for work, entertainment, education.

What we stand for

BikeSydney supports development that is focused on integration public transport and cycling infrastructure and served by car sharing, as this encourages the greater use of more sustainable transport.

What we do

BikeSydney sees its role as an enabler and advocate and works to create a safer, more liveable Sydney for our members who prefer to ride bicycles rather than drive cars. We aim to help ensure that everyone can safely enjoy bicycling in Sydney, that streets in every part of town are bike-friendly, that bike parking and showers greet us where we work, and that bike paths throughout our city are improved and extended.

BikeSydney's activities are to:

- work in partnerships to encourage the development of safe, direct cycling routes in a network that connects the villages within the City area, public transport and the CBD
- participate in the City of Sydney's Bicycle Steering Committee to implement the Cycling Strategy
- participate in the City of Sydney's Traffic Committee
- advocate to decision-makers, asset managers and developers to include safe physical conditions for cycling at the planning stage
- promote the value of cycling as a means of personal transport
- organise and lead regular social rides
- provide services to the City, including bicycle-valet parking at City events and the auditing of street poles for bicycle-parking ring suitability
- produce a newsletter

Scope of BikeSydney's assessment

In assessing the BikePlan, BikeSydney has limited its scope to our geographic area, that being the City of Sydney local government area and higher-level issues regarding cycling in general. In our comments below, if we do not address a point it either means we are supportive of it or it is outside our area of interest.

History of bicycle plans in New South Wales

We note that this is the third in a series of bike plans. The previous two have been withdrawn with virtually nothing implemented and replaced with a new plan, supposedly because the older one is no longer suitable. BikeSydney will be seeking an assurance from the government that this plan will be implemented. We note that many governments are taking action around the world to present cycling as a safe and attractive alternative to travel by car but New South Wales never seems to get beyond the planning stage.

We suggest that you look no further than to the City of Sydney for inspiration. They developed a draft plan, sought community feedback, funded it and then moved to implementation in a relatively short period, ironing out the bugs as they went.

Bike Plan Assessment

General comments

While we are generally supportive of the plan, we have a number concerns that we would like to see addressed as a matter of priority.

No timeframe

There is no implementation timeframe. BikeSydney believes that the implementation of this plan should be subject to a project plan and it is impossible to measure the success of a project unless there are milestones.

No funding detail

There are no specific funding breakdowns. We fail to see how a plan can be managed without this.

Inequitable share of total budget

While we welcome \$158 million investment, we note it is only 0.316% of the \$50 billion to be spent on transport programs. We suggest that if the state target (5% of trips to be made by bicycle) is to be reached, and given the legacy of underspending in the past, then 5% of the total transport budget should be allocated to cycling programs in order to achieve the BikePlan's stated goal.

Audit processes required

We welcome the target of 4,000 km of new bike lanes, however we believe that there needs to be a proper audit process so that existing facilities are not counted. Any new bike lanes must be proper dedicated facilities for bicycles and not road shoulders and parking lanes. BikeSydney has never understood the purpose of painting bike symbols under parked cars.

Police issues not addressed

The plan makes no mention of specific training for police in regard to laws concerning cycling, nor is there any mention of programs to improve the relationship between the police and the cycling community.

Specific comments

In the following sections, BikeSydney provides commentary on specific points in the plan. For points where we do not comment, it means that there is either tacit support or it is outside the scope of BikeSydney.

Chapter 2 - Create connected cycling networks

Item	Comment
2.1a	We support the creation of a cycling network. The following details of the proposed Moore Park shared bridge are required: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• estimated completion date• project budget and funding• proposed location
2.1c	We welcome cooperation between the state government and local councils, but there is a lack of detail in the plan about how this will work.
2.1d	We do not believe that words such as “considering” should be used in an implementation plan. Would much prefer this point to read: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• incorporate cycling capability into the maintenance tracks alongside lines.
2.1e	This is great news. BikeSydney is very pleased that the RTA is being directed to work with local councils to accelerate construction of an inner city cycle network.
2.4	While we welcome increasing the dollar for dollar assistance, we note that there is no budget amount for this. We recommend that the amount allocated be tripled when compared to current levels. It must be noted that under the current arrangements, some councils do not apply for matching because they do not have a budget to start projects. More money from the government would mean that more projects will be undertaken.
2.5	There appears to be little evidence on the effectiveness of these events. We recommend that future funding for these types of events be reliant of setting and measuring goals to effect behaviour change. We recommend the Government publishes case studies of events that successfully achieve behavioural change goals. Every week should be Bike Week.
2.6	All very good, but it should be a given.
2.7	We support this, but should be a given. We believe the plan should go further and deal with problems concerning the poor inter-connectedness of all modes of transport. This must be addressed as Sydney’s performance in this area is the worst in the country. We welcome the RTA being directed to work with local councils to introduce lower speed limits and improve traffic regulations for bikes. We recommend that the following matters addressed immediately: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Central Station, the state’s premier rail facility, has no bicycle facilities.• Rail Corp confiscates bikes attached to rail property – this draconian practice must stop.
2.9	Excellent! We welcome that the RTA is being directed to do this.
2.11	We would prefer that the RTA facilitates the implementation of these programs and should review options regarding helmet legislation. We note that the Northern Territory provides exemptions to helmet laws for people riding shared or rented bicycles.
2.12	We support this, as a major reason people give for not cycling is not knowing how to get there safely and quickly. We believe that such a site would help to mitigate risk.

Item	Comment
2.13	Should be a given.
2.14	We support this very much.
2.16	This is a continuation of Bike Plan 2010 policy and we support this.
2.18	We support this but we require more details. For example, it is unclear how this sits with the JC Decaux contract. We suggest the RTA carry the financial the cost of buying-out advertising contracts where advertising signage is dangerous to cyclists.
2.19	Not consider, but facilitate. Furthermore, we recommend that the RTA fund the implementation because they are responsible for traffic signals and bike boxes must be considered an integral part of traffic signal design. The RTA's current practice is to charge local councils for so called engineering works associated with painting bike boxes on the road. This practice must stop as it only discourages implementation.
2.20	We support this, however it must be noted that the ANZAC Bridge is swept only once a year and as far as we know, the Anzac Parade path at Centennial Park has never been swept. Both of these are outside City of Sydney responsibilities.
2.21	We are generally support of this, but we recommend that an extra point be added: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> that planning controls for both the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority and the Redfern-Waterloo Authority be returned to the City of Sydney.
2.21a	Funding should be provided the enable the NSW Coastline Cycleway to be completed within 10 years. At the current funding level, we believe it will take 95 years to complete.
Case Studies	We would have liked to have seen some case studies where the NSW government's role has been a contributor to the success of projects concerned, but we appreciate that this is probably not possible.

Chapter 3 - Make bike-riding safe for all

Item	Comment
General	<p>We consider any initiative to encourage cycling to schools to be welcome, however, it must be pointed out that there is no program to discourage parents from driving their children to school. The success of this initiative will be determined by the reduction in the number of cars outside schools at pick-up and drop-off time.</p> <p>Other points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Department of Education should be the lead agency in installing bike parking in all schools. While schools have no authority outside school gates, some schools actively discourage children from riding to school. We would prefer that they actively discourage parents from driving children to and from school.
3.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All police should be required to undergo refresher training on all road users – especially cyclists. Police should be instructed to take violence against cyclists seriously. A cycling community liaison office should be established within the police. Anti-vilification laws should be extended so that they apply to cycling and cyclists.
3.8	Do not 'investigate'. Do something tangible. Replace with 'facilitate'.
3.11	Do not 'explore'. Do something tangible. Replace with 'implement'.
3.13	We support this; however BikeSydney seeks to review the evaluation of <i>Share the Road</i> as we have doubts about the program's efficacy.

Item	Comment
3.13a	There needs to be a serious campaign to educate motorists around vulnerable road users.
3.14	We strongly support this, but it has to be supplemented with police education and a willingness of them to change their current culture.
3.15	<p>We welcome this as we consider driver education to be a fundamental component in cycling safety and the following needs to be addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As young drivers tend to revert to behaviour of their parents, driver training needs to include information for the parents of learner drivers. • All drivers, regardless of age or experience, should be required undertake safety refresher training, in accordance with standard OH&S practices.
3.16	Helmet legislation was introduced in Australia without any proper risk assessment or safety benefit analysis and needs to be reviewed. We note that outside Australia, New Zealand and some states in the US, there are very few jurisdictions in the world that mandate helmets for cyclists.

Chapter 4 - Plan cycling–friendly neighbourhoods

Item	Comment
General	From a sustainability perspective, cycling, walking and public transport should be at the forefront of any planning decision.
4.3	We support this but more needs to be done to discourage car parking. We would also support increasing the car parking levy to provide end of trip facilities for cyclists.
4.4	We are very supportive of this, especially promoting training with traffic engineers and other relevant council staff.
4.5 4.6 4.7	Extra funding needs to be provided for retrofitting, especially at Central Station.
4.8	<p>This does not go anywhere near far enough. We recommend that there be a public review of all rules and regulations regarding carrying bikes on trains with a focus particularly on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • people living in city and commuting long distances for work • aim to make taking bicycles in trains easier • permit the carriage of folding bikes within reasonable dimensions on trains at any time • public submissions period to be included <p>We note that the government is yet to implement its 1995 election promise to provide bicycle storage on all rolling stock.</p> <p>Other points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where buses are used to replace trains during track work, they must be capable of carrying bicycles. • Country Link must remove restrictions and costs for carrying bikes on their trains and follow the example of European train operators who carry bikes without charge and without fuss.
4.10	Cycling facilities should be mandatory for maximising Green Star ratings.

Item	Comment
4.13	We recommend that this should be an EEO and OH&S requirement and be audited. We also recommend that there be a program to reward and recognise best practice amongst workplaces, perhaps with awards.
4.14	All state government departments should be required to exceed the BikePlan target of 5% and to report their progress annually. Reports are to be tabled in parliament.
4.15	We support this and recommend that a parking levy rebate be implemented to encourage retrofitting of facilities.

Chapter 5 - grow jobs in cycling

Item	Comment
General	We support cycling tourism initiatives as they are low cost and sustainable; and attractive to tourists from cycling countries.
5.1	We think that is all well and good, but the success is contingent on all of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> removing restrictions for travelling on trains with bicycles creating decent cycling access to and from Sydney airport completing the Coastline Cycleway with 10 years (at the current level of funding, it will take 95 years).
5.2	
5.3	
5.4	
5.5	The government promised in 1995 that all trains would have bicycle storage.
5.6	Carriage of bicycles on Country Link trains needs to be reviewed before this can occur.
5.10	While we support this, but prefer an emphasis on commuter cycling.

Chapter 6 - Get organisations working together to support bike-riding

Item	Comment
General	We support all of the action points in this chapter, particularly 6.18. To determine the success of the BikePlan, there must be car-usage reduction targets.
6.1	This should be a given
6.2	Needs to go further than having celebrity cyclists. We suggest a funded model and that you look to Chicago for inspiration with its <i>Mayor Daley's Bicycling Ambassadors</i> program.
6.3	There should also be a program to encourage health professionals to take up cycling.
6.6c	All reports related to the BikePlan should be public, i.e. tabled in parliament.
6.7	We recommend that you add another point. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> increase the sample size of the household travel survey to provide more representative cycling data
6.14	Needs to go further and remove favourable tax treatment for cars.
6.15	We strongly support this.
6.18	We strongly support this.
6.20	We reiterate that government departments and agencies should exceed the BikePlan 5% target to show leadership.
6.22c	All guidelines must be best practice guidelines.

Conclusion

BikeSydney welcomes this latest instalment in the New South Wales government's series of BikePlans and looks forward to its implementation. If there is anything we can do to assist with the delivery of the initiatives, please let us know.

In moving forward we have the following questions:

1. What are the implementation milestones? Please provide specific details.
2. How do you intend to audit implementation of the plan? What metrics have you developed to gauge its success?
3. How can you assure us that the plan is fully funded? Please provide a breakdown of budget amounts for each initiative in the plan.
4. As there are several agencies involved in the plan, who will oversee the implementation and fiscal governance?

BikeSydney extends an invitation to the premier, relevant ministers and senior department officials so that we can present our response directly and discuss how we can provide assistance.

We wish you every success in the implementation of BikePlan 2010.