



PO Box M59 | Missenden Rd | Camperdown NSW 2050
www.bikesydney.org | ABN 95939852367
Tel +61 2 8213 2437

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To:

Department of Infrastructure and Transport

activetransport@infrastructure.gov.au

Re: BIKESydney's submission to the Federal Department of Infrastructure and Transport's Walking, Riding and Access to Public Transport Discussion Paper

This is BIKESydney's submission to the Department of Infrastructure and Transport's Walking, Riding and Access to Public Transport Discussion Paper.

BIKESydney is an incorporated not-for-profit community organisation affiliated with Bicycle NSW that advocates on behalf of people who ride bicycles living and working in the central Sydney area. BIKESydney sits on several bicycle planning committees including the City of Sydney's Local Pedestrian, Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee and Leichhardt Municipal Council's Bicycle Advisory Committee.

We applaud the Australian Government for the release of the Discussion Paper which we view as a progressive template for activating cycling, and particularly in targeting those that presently are willing but concerned to travel by bike.

The Discussion Paper's key conclusion that an economic benefit of \$1.43 is returned to the community for each kilometre cycled crystallises the long-held view that expenditure on cycling is an opportunity to return economic value to the community and not a cost burden.

While the justification of investment in cycling on only economic grounds is limiting (it excludes consideration of other significant benefits such as "liveability", social cohesion, happiness and habituation to more sustainable practice), we think it an incremental step forward that the Government has now articulated the economic benefit possible from cycling.

Further, we feel the Discussion Paper correctly focuses on the themes of:

- targeting short trips presently taken by car that may be suitably walked or cycled;
- needing to much better integrate walking and cycling with public transport;
- acknowledging the need for network-centric planning of cycling infrastructure;
- working more with businesses to promote active transport;
- providing incentives (rather than relying on compulsion) to encourage active transport;

- requiring “positive provisioning” of walking and bicycling infrastructure within road infrastructure projects

That said, we think the Discussion Paper needs to be expanded to include consideration of:

- 1. Greenways:** Section 1.3.2 of the Discussion Paper appears to present the pre-condition that bike infrastructure must necessarily be attached to roads/road projects. In doing so, it misses the opportunity for developing much-preferred off-road cycleways through public parklands and adjacent to watercourses. The requirement of having to negotiate the road system is a primary disincentive to many - and in particular, prospective - cyclists. The City West Cycle Link concept for example (www.citywestcyclelink.org.au) presents a very significant opportunity for such a low cost/high utility off-road path that would connect very significant cycling catchments to one of the most significant trip generators in the country - the Sydney CBD;
- 2. A strategic framework of delivery** through all levels for government - particularly in light of the fact that most cycling infrastructure is presently delivered at the local government level. Key, is installing active transport officers within all levels of government and local traffic committees which presently preside over the delivery of local traffic and transport infrastructure;
- 3. Addressing existing institutional resistance to active transport** - presently, some State Government agencies responsible for the delivery of active transport infrastructure and programs regard active transport as incidental to their core function. The active transport initiatives outlined in the Discussion Paper will amount to nothing if their delivery is dependent on senior (State) government operatives whose Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) are prescribed in terms of maximising the throughput of motor vehicles, for example. We urge the Government to require that the performance of relevant government agencies at all levels and their senior managers to include explicit Active Transport targets;
- 4. the success of the initiatives outlined in the Discussion Paper will be necessarily dependent on their being explicitly funded. We strongly urge the Government to include Active Transport as an explicit line item in the national Budget.**

Again, we congratulate the Australian Government on the Discussion Paper which presents as a very progressive framework.

Please don't hesitate to contact us should you require further information. We would appreciate the opportunity to expand on the points made in our submission.

Yours sincerely

David Borella
BIKESydney
President

david.borella@bikesydney.org