

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

Dear Chief Minister

PEDAL POWER ACT – 2017-18 BUDGET SUBMISSION

Pedal Power ACT welcomes the opportunity to comment on the 2017-18 Budget. With a clear election mandate for world-class integrated transport, this Budget is a unique opportunity to fully fund your vision for a 'compact and competitive' city. To deliver this vision, **Pedal Power ACT is recommending \$120 million over four years** for cycling infrastructure and related investments – see attached Detailed Initiatives.

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.

To transform the way Canberra moves, the Government should deliver over four years:

- major infrastructure investments under the Active Travel Program - \$47.7 million;
- path maintenance (including a one-off special capital injection) - \$38 million;
- cycling projects under the Urban Renewal Program - \$30 million;
- pilot projects for separating bike riders from pedestrians and fast traffic - \$2 million;
- Active Streets for School - \$2 million; and
- non-infrastructure measures listed in attached Detailed Initiatives.

Investing in cycling infrastructure is necessary to deliver Government mode share targets and to complement significant public expenditure in the light rail project. There are **substantial risks in not investing in cycling infrastructure along the light rail route**, principally that people will not be able to get to stops. The Government **can achieve positive transport outcomes right across Canberra**, by



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*

announcing keystone investments to close the gaps in the network, fix deteriorating shared paths, and improve cycling in town centres.

Pedal Power ACT estimates that **funding for active travel infrastructure fell last year by around \$4 million** (from \$18 million in 2015-16, to around \$14 million in 2016-17). However, it is difficult to tell because reporting on cycling budget and spending is not transparent. This reduction led to a piecemeal approach to infrastructure investment. Pedal Power ACT is consequently recommending that **cycling spending be presented in a single budget statement**.

Further detail on Pedal Power ACT's 2017-18 budget submission is attached. We would be happy to discuss further with you or your officials.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Anderson", is placed over a light grey rectangular background.

Executive Officer
Pedal Power ACT

12 December 2016

Pedal Power ACT 2017-18 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 undertake a cycling commute or combine cycling and public transport in their daily commute. This will 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).

In addition, 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). We note that the ACT has just signed the global 'Under 2' MOU, and that by 2020, 54% of Canberra's greenhouse gas emissions will come from the transport sector.

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

In past budgets, the Government has reaffirmed a commitment to walking and cycling infrastructure improvements, including in a number of town centres, as well as an Active Streets for Schools program. 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' - some infrastructure is built in the hope that a subsequent budget will fund the remainder, some projects cater for people walking but do not cater for people who ride;
- path maintenance remained seriously underfunded; and
- work on piloting separated cycling infrastructure had not received attention.

To remedy this, Pedal Power ACT asks the ACT Government to move beyond a year-by-year piecemeal approach to active travel, by using the 2017-18 Budget to provide a longer term visionary commitment to active travel infrastructure involving \$120 million over four years. This

would be in keeping with the Labor/Greens Parliamentary Agreement to provide an 'additional' \$30 million over four years for active travel and would deliver projects on the ground as evidence of the Government's commitment to active travel. To be truly 'additional' in nature, the \$30 million should not be offset by reductions in other active travel program/ infrastructure expenditure. Moreover, the cycling infrastructure associated with the road duplications should not be funded from active travel but regarded as an integral part of the \$140 million election commitment to road duplication.

3. Path maintenance

The ACT's network of community paths (totalling 2,850 kilometres) is a significant public asset, highly valued by the community. Nevertheless, the paths are progressively becoming hazardous and their condition is deteriorating to the point where reconstruction is sometimes required. The currently level of funding for community paths maintenance (around \$3.5 million per annum) 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.

Recent analysis by Pedal Power ACT¹ shows that around \$12 million per annum is required to properly maintain the network. In addition, the backlog of maintenance is currently 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. This special injection should not come from the additional \$30 million for active travel contained in the Labor/Greens Parliamentary Agreement. The fund should not be used to remedy past failings to allocate sufficient recurrent expenditure for maintenance. Rather, it should be used for capital improvements to the cycling network. It is also recommended that the annual maintenance budget be progressively increased by \$1 million per annum, with the long term goal of reaching \$12 million per annum (in real terms).

As part of an increased maintenance funding regime, the ACT Government should undertake a more regular and comprehensive program of inspection of community paths and early maintenance interventions (supported by appropriate asset management systems). This program should also establish public accountability measures, such as the annual resurfacing/resealing target of 5% used for roads.

4. Active travel infrastructure program

Missing path links

As part of its objective to encourage more people to walk, cycle and use public transport, the ACT Government recognises the importance of improving strategic community paths and cycling facilities to provide safe and attractive routes in the ACT for people to use. This will help get more people riding bikes, particularly those who will not ride on the roads, and meet the goals of *Transport for Canberra*, the Ride or Walk to School Program and the Healthy Weight Initiative.

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

The extensive community 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 places people would ride to and linking the network to and through the town and community centres. Examples of missing links include:

- separated on-road lanes on Hindmarsh Drive 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;
- Heysen St to Devonport St – separated on-road lanes linking Lyons and Weston to form a new northern route between Woden and Weston Creek; and
- off-road path along Northcott Drive, Campbell, connecting Campbell Park to the existing on/off road paths along Fairbairn Avenue.

Roads ACT has a warrant system that ranks the importance of the missing links in the network. This system is endorsed by the Bicycle Advisory Group (BAG) and forms a sound basis for prioritising expenditure on missing links.

Pedal Power ACT recommends that the 2017-18 Budget provide \$8 million per annum over the forward estimates for missing links.

Molonglo to City

The first stage of this project (Liversidge Street to the City) is almost ready to proceed. Funding for construction should be provided in 2017-18. This is a much used commuter link to the city and will provide a bypass for future work on West Basin. In subsequent years, funding should be provided for the remainder of Stage One, Acacia Inlet to the City. Pedal Power ACT recommends the 2017-18 Budget provide \$5 million over four years for the Liversidge Street to the City section, and subsequent upgrades to other sections of the path in Stage One.

Belconnen Bikeway

Pedal Power ACT supports the Budget providing \$4.7 million in funding over three years as announced by Minister Fitzharris at its Election Forum, for a 3-4m wide bikeway linking the University of Canberra, CIT Bruce, Radford College and Belconnen Town Centre.

West Belconnen to Belconnen Town Centre – Improved cycling connections

Following feasibility and planning work already undertaken, Pedal Power ACT recommends that the 2017-18 Budget now provide \$4 million in funding over three years for construction work.

Active Travel Streets East and West of Northbourne Avenue

Pedal Power ACT has been involved in discussions for inner Canberra's De Burgh - Forbes – Moore Streets and for a similar route in the eastern side of Northbourne Avenue. 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 street approach can help achieve best practice without a high budget. Pedal Power ACT sees strong value in trialling active streets both east and west of Northbourne Avenue provided they fit within the context of the broader planning environment and that they are seen as a means to a higher and better standard of safety and convenience for the cycling public. If these trials are successful, the program could be rolled

out into other suburbs through funding in the 2017-18 Budget of \$2 million over four years for such trials.

5. Urban renewal projects (cycling infrastructure in town and group centres, and capital upgrades)

The ACT Government has 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 2015-16 Budget provided some limited funding under the Urban Renewal Program for feasibility and planning studies for the centres. However, no adequate provision has been made to move these projects to the construction stage. 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 1 below.

Transport Canberra and City Services Capital Upgrades of streets, lighting, etc

At Pedal Power ACT's election forum, Minister Fitzharris gave a commitment to increase the TCCS Capital Upgrades Program for footpath/cycling improvements. Pedal Power ACT recommends that this Program be increased from the current \$1.5 million in 2016-17, to \$2 million per annum over the forward period.

6. Pilot projects: separating bike riders from pedestrians and vehicles

A safe cycling and walking environment is an essential element in improving the take-up of active travel, particularly for women and children. The 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.

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 can help convince more people to use the commuter routes. In the initial trial of retro-fitting low grade separators, it did lead to an increased safety hazard for the cycling community at certain locations – leading to some Pedal Power ACT members hitting separators and were subsequently injured.

Pedal Power ACT sees significant value for longer term infrastructure development in the trialling of two types of separation projects – separation of people riding and pedestrians; and separation of people riding from motor vehicles. Specific details about appropriate sites for the trials can be established through a consultation and planning phase, particularly in light of the injuries noted above. Pedal Power ACT recommends that the Budget allocate \$2 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 broad health benefits of cycling investment warrant urgent attention. We note that:

- health authorities globally are increasingly alarmed about obesity, especially in children;
- a recent study rated overall physical activity for Australian children at D- (low/poor);
- cycling participation among ACT under-10s is one third below the national average;
- on 7 November 2016 the Australian Medical Association published a *Position Statement on Obesity 2016*, including: “The AMA strongly recommends that the national strategy include ... more and better walking paths and cycling paths as part of smarter urban planning”.

The 2016-17 Budget provided \$2 million over four years for the program.² 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

Active Travel Office

Pedal Power ACT welcomes the recent ACT Labor/Greens Parliamentary Agreement to ‘raise the profile’ of the Active Travel Office and, through the Office, coordinate the rollout of \$30 million in additional footpath maintenance, cycling and walking route upgrades and other suburban improvements. It is essential that this additional funding is not offset from existing active travel programs/infrastructure funding.

Importantly, the Government needs to ensure that the Active Travel Office has sufficient personnel and funding to properly fulfil its role in implementing the Government’s active travel policy and goals. Key elements of an effective active travel policy include: planning; delivery; encouraging and monitoring (including liaison with other jurisdictions to ensure the ACT is up with best practice); and community engagement programs to support a growing cycling culture. A further area of important work involves resourcing to enable active travel principles to be incorporated into planning codes and design guidelines. Pedal Power ACT is keenly aware of a number of recent instances where poor town planning outcomes have undermined the delivery of good active travel infrastructure.

Cycling Tourism Strategy

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 have cycling as the focal point. It is becoming popular worldwide, and the ACT is well placed to build this area of tourism.

Pedal Power ACT welcomes the Government’s election policy commitment to develop a unified cycling tourism strategy involving the public sector, business and interested stakeholders, and asks for it to be funded and implemented over the next four years. Pedal Power ACT looks forward to contributing its knowledge and research to the development of this strategy.

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

Cycling Hubs

Pedal Power ACT welcomes the Labor/Greens Parliamentary Agreement to facilitate the establishment by the private sector of bike hubs, and supports dedicated, stand-alone end-of-trip bicycle facilities for Civic and other town centres. This was also raised as an initiative in Pedal Power ACT's 2016-17 Budget submission. Pedal Power ACT understands that with funding of \$350 000 in 2017-18, the study would include a cost-benefit analysis and the identification of possible locations for the facilities.

Public health benefits

Pedal Power ACT welcomes the Labor/Greens Parliamentary Agreement to adopt the World Health Organisation's Health Economic Assessment Tool (HEAT) for budget assessment of active travel projects. This measure should facilitate better evidence-based decision-making, and provide more comprehensive cost-benefit analyses of transport interventions or infrastructure projects around the value of reduced mortality that results from regular walking or cycling. However, it focuses on estimating the value of reduced mortality. This is but one measure of the benefits of investing in cycling measures; others should be used as well.

More children cycling

In our submission to the last budget Pedal Power ACT asked for Budget funding for cycling programs for ACT schools to be reviewed, resourced and implemented, as the Vulnerable Road Users Inquiry recommended. In light of the points noted above under the Active Streets for Schools program, and their dire long term effect on all future health care budgets, the need for measures in this area, including after school and school holiday programs, is even more pressing.

Transparency in Budget funding for cycling

Pedal Power ACT supports Labor's statement during the Pedal Power ACT Election Forum to more clearly identify cycling funding in budgets. 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.

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

Pedal Power ACT
2017-18 Budget Recommendations for Cycling Infrastructure 2017-18 to 2020-21

Cycling Infrastructure Items	2017-18 \$m	2018-19 \$m	2019-20 \$m	2020-21 \$m	Total \$m
1. Path Maintenance					
• 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
2. Active Travel Program infrastructure					
• Missing links – new capital projects	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	32.0
• Molonglo to City – Stage 1	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	5.0
• Belconnen bikeway (election commitment)	1.0	2.0	1.7		4.7
• West Belconnen to Belconnen Town Centre		1.0	2.0	1.0	4.0
• Active travel streets starting with east and west of Northbourne Ave	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	2.0
3. Urban Renewal Program projects					
• Woden Town Centre Cycle Loop	2.5	2.5			5.0
• 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 (Labor election commitment (PP forum) to upgrade suburbs, footpaths, ramps and lighting)	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	8.0
4. Pilot projects for separation					
• Bikes from fast moving traffic		1.0			1.0
• Bikes from pedestrians			1.0		1.0

5. Active Streets for Schools					
• Expand rollout on the current program (Labor election commitment to add 50 schools) - additional funding	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	2.0
Total	27.5	30.5	32.2	29.5	119.7