



Bicycle New South Wales Inc.  
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[www.bicyclensw.org.au](http://www.bicyclensw.org.au)  
Established 1976 ABN 26 511 801 801

September 7th 2006

Morris Iemma MP  
Premier of NSW  
Level 40  
Governor Macquarie Tower  
1 Farrer Place  
Sydney NSW 2000

## **Re: Draft NSW State Plan**

Premier,

Please find attached the Bicycle NSW submission to the draft NSW State Plan

We at Bicycle NSW believe that any government that is interested in taking real responsibility for the long term health, transport and environmental sustainability needs of the community it governs must invest in infrastructure and social programs to encourage cycling.

Consistent with the "Whole of Government" approach to cycling that we advocate, and consistent with our policy to approach this in a non-partisan way, we have sent a copy of our submission to stakeholders across governments and the community, as listed below. In addition, we will be publishing the submission on our website and drawing it to the attention of our 10,000 members and supporters.

You might be interested in two upcoming events with which Bicycle NSW is involved. We invite you (and everyone listed below) to join us and show support for an activity that truly delivers better health, transport and environmental sustainability outcomes to our community

### **Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> October National Ride to Work Day.**

For the first time ever this event is truly national with groups in every state and territory planning activities as part of an ongoing program designed to encourage commuters to take up the bicycle as a means of sustainable travel to and from work on a regular basis. This will provide important community benefits, such as a reduction in peak hour congestion and pollution, as well as health benefits to individuals flowing from increased physical activity. With the generous support of Bovis Lend Lease we have a CBD breakfast scheduled at their environmentally leading headquarters "The Bond" on Hickson Road on the day. To register go to [www.bicyclensw.org.au/ridetowork](http://www.bicyclensw.org.au/ridetowork) and come along on your bike.

### **Sunday 22nd October Portfolio Partners Spring Cycle**

Now in its 12<sup>th</sup> year, this annual recreational ride from North Sydney to Sydney Olympic Park is a great opportunity for members of the community to experience the beauty of our city in a safe and fun social setting. We are making a number of enhancements to the event this year, including the introduction of shorter "novice" rides, particularly to encourage seniors and children to get on their bikes and join the fun! For details and registration go to [www.springcycle.com.au](http://www.springcycle.com.au)

We thank you for the support your government does give to encouraging bicycle use in our community.

We look forward to hearing from you,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alex S. Unwin".

Alex S Unwin  
Chief Executive Officer

Copies of this letter and attached available for download at: [www.pushon.com.au/downloads/BicycleNSWsubmission.pdf](http://www.pushon.com.au/downloads/BicycleNSWsubmission.pdf)

#### Copies to:

Peter Debnam, MP, NSW Leader of the Opposition  
Clover Moore, Lord Mayor, City of Sydney,  
Ian Cohen, MLC, NSW  
Tony Abbott, MP, Federal Minister for Health and Ageing  
Eric Roozendaal, MLC, NSW Minister for Roads.

John Hatzistergos, MLC, NSW Minister for Health  
Bob Debus, MP, NSW Minister for Environment  
John Watkins, MP, NSW Minister for Transport  
Sandra Nori, MP, NSW Minister for Sport, Recreation and Tourism, Minister for Women  
Frank Sartor, MP, NSW Minister for Planning.  
Carl Scully, MP, NSW Minister for Police  
John Della Bosca, MLC, NSW Minister for Ageing  
Carmel Tebbutt, MP, NSW Minister for Education and Training  
John McInerney, Councillor, City of Sydney  
Shane Mallard, Councillor, City of Sydney  
Marcel Hoff, Councillor, City of Sydney  
Chris Harris, Councillor, City of Sydney  
Bob Brown, Federal Senator for Tasmania  
Guy Barnett, Federal Senator for Tasmania  
Pat Farmer, MP Parliamentary Secretary to the Federal Minister for Education, Science and Training  
Julie Owens, Federal MP for Parramatta  
Jim Lloyd, MP, Federal Minister for Local Government Territories and Roads  
Peter Shmigel, NSW Liberal National Spokesperson on Cycling  
Phil Barressi, Federal MP for Deakin  
Jackie Kelly, Federal MP for Lindsay  
Kevin Andrews, MP, Federal Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations.  
Monica Barone, CEO, City Of Sydney  
Tanya Plibersek, Federal MP for Sydney  
Bernie Ripoll, Federal MP for Oxley  
Richard Walker, 10,000 Friends of Greater Sydney  
Graham Fredericks, CEO, Cycling Australia  
Graham Mulligan, CEO, CCT Consortium  
Tony Thirlwell, CEO, Heart Foundation  
Jim Clarke, Nuance Multi Media Australia,  
Gabrielle Kuiper, Investa Residential  
Steve Shallhorn, CEO Greenpeace Australia  
Libby Darlison, Chairperson, Premier's Council for Active Living  
Lee Rhiannon, MLC, NSW  
Cate Faehrmann, CEO, Nature Conservation Council of NSW  
Rosmarie Spiedel, Program Director, Cycling Promotion Fund  
Brian Newman, CEO, Sydney Olympic Park Authority  
Harry Barber, CEO, Bicycle Victoria  
Ben Wilson, CEO, Bicycle Queensland  
Arthur Chesterfield-Evans, MLC, NSW  
Chloe Mason, Bike Sydney  
Richard Kriedemann, Allens Arthur Robinson  
Phil Latz, Publisher, Bicycling Australia  
Richard Cogswell S.C., NSW Crown Advocate  
Craig Bingham, Managing Director, Portfolio Partners Investment Managers  
Michael Samaras, Westlink M7  
Fiona Campbell, Bike Sydney  
Adrian Boss, BIKEast  
Kevin Young, CEO, Cycling NSW  
Louise Markus, Federal MP for Greenway  
David Lloyd Jones, ABC Television  
Robert Whitehead, Fairfax  
James Rosenwax, EDAW Australia  
Christian Haag, Bicycle SA  
Chris Rissel, Sydney South West Area Health Service  
Adrian Bauman, NSW Centre for Physical Activity and Health  
Peter Strang, CEO, Bicycle Federation of Australia  
Tim McPhail, Communications and Public Relations Pty Ltd  
Stephen Hodge, Day & Hodge Associates  
Dennis Puniard, Pedal Power ACT  
Keith Jackson, AM, Jackson Wells Morris  
Melinda Jacobsen, CEO, Amy Gillett Foundation  
Phillip Black, City of Sydney Council  
David De Wolfe, Bovis Lend Lease  
Malcolm Turnbull, MP, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister



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NSW State Plan  
Premier's Department  
GPO Box 5341  
Sydney NSW 2001

Copies to:

Mr Morris Iemma MP  
Premier of NSW  
Level 40  
Governor Macquarie Tower  
1 Farrer Place  
Sydney NSW 2000

Dr Col Gellatly  
Director General  
Premier's Department  
GPO Box 5341  
Sydney NSW 2001

**Re: Draft NSW State Plan**

Cycling is an activity that relates to many areas of government interest. Cycling is environmentally friendly, good for health, a means of transport, a major commercial activity, a competitive sport and a pleasant pastime for many. Cycling requires a 'whole of government' approach and Bicycle NSW has been advocating for some time that to be effective, the NSW Government needs to adopt this thinking.

It was thus with some surprise and considerable disappointment that we at Bicycle NSW read the draft State Plan. Chapter 3 of the draft relates to health and welfare, chapter 4 relates to business activity within the state and chapter 5 relates to environmental and recreational questions. Yet there are only two references to cycling in the entire draft plan, both near the end of chapter 5. On page 41 cycling is mentioned as one of the ways "to reduce the pressure on roads" and on page 43 the very final words of the draft plan are to "promote increased use of existing cycleways" as one way of expanding recreational opportunities.

We note that this is the first reference of which we are aware to cycling being seen by the government as a part of the transport solution for our cities. For its part, the Federal government has already recognised the importance of cycling in its 'Sustainable Cities' report of 2005. Cycling has a key role to play in the livability and sustainability of our cities and communities. Indeed the latest round in the National Reform Agenda brings focus to the importance of these issues and to the human capital and related public health requirements for the future competitiveness of the Australian economy. At a time when the NSW economy lags behind the rest of the country there is a lesson here for the NSW government.

We were pleased, however, that the major photo to introduce Chapter 2 'Respect and responsibility' (page 15) should be of two police officers on bikes. Clearly the intention is to show that police officers on bikes are directly in touch with their community but are still capable of moving with some rapidity. This underlines the fact that cycling has a key role to play in the building of social capital in our communities, and it is clear that some changes are needed in the legislative framework to help achieve this. The irony is that your photo encapsulates so much of what is good about cycling, even though the rest of the draft so singularly fails to address these points.

I would like to mention a few reasons why cycling is important, why the NSW government should recognise it as such and why the government should develop and implement a serious strategy to improve cycling infrastructure and to encourage far greater use of existing and yet-to-be-developed cycleways.

- Almost every Australian cycles at some time in their life and many, many residents of NSW cycle regularly.

- Cycling is the fourth most popular physical activity for people over 15 years old. This puts cycling ahead of golf and fishing (ERASS 2005).
- More than 10% of the population cycled in 2004, while 44% cycled at least once a week. NSW has the lowest participation level of all states at 9.1%.
- Some 1.2 million bicycles are sold each year, while fewer than 1 million motor vehicles are sold each year.
- Almost two bikes are sold to adults for every one sold to a child. (Actual figure is 7:4.) Cycling is not confined to children.
- Some 30% more bikes are sold in Victoria than in NSW each year. The reason is known: better cycling infrastructure and greater encouragement to adult cyclists.
- Latest NSW TPDC figures show bicycles were the fastest growing mode of travel in 02/03 (9.2% yr/yr).
- RTA Bicycle Count data shows a 45% increase in bicycle traffic 2002 to 2005 into Sydney CBD.
- Cycling is now a one billion dollar retail industry. With events, repairs and maintenance, cycling is an even bigger business.
- Cycling is good for both physical and mental health, which are of course closely interrelated. Many aging baby boomers are increasingly concerned about their well being, as they come to the realisation that in order to enjoy the wealth they have generated during their working lives they need to be in good health.

These facts and figures take no account of two issues of immense importance to us all: recent rapid rises in oil and petrol prices; and the growing recognition of the seriousness of global warming.

### **Transport**

There is substantial anecdotal evidence that commuter cycling in Sydney has increased during the past few months. While hard evidence is yet to be available, it would be foolhardy not to see some causal connection to the oil price. We all expect oil prices to continue to rise and a consideration of the most elementary economic principles suggests that this will mean increased commuter cycling. Whether the government likes it or not, there will be more cyclists on the roads. We at Bicycle NSW hope that the government will be proactive in its response and help this change rather than hinder it.

### **Environmental Sustainability**

Global warming is very real. Any rational government is morally and ethically bound to do all that it reasonably can to reduce green house gas emissions. Cycling helps to do that. Indeed the recently released Al Gore presentation "An Inconvenient Truth" specifically recommends riding a bicycle as an important action that individuals can take to contribute to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

### **Community Health**

Sound financial management is a critical task of government, and for the NSW Government management of the health budget plays an important part in this. Chronic disease prevention is a key issue facing governments across the developed world, as the rates of obesity, heart disease, depression, diabetes and other conditions attest. Regular physical activity, such as cycling, has been proven to play a central role in the prevention and management of these and other conditions. Cycling has the potential to help reverse the childhood obesity epidemic if the government makes a real commitment to provide infrastructure and social programs that encourages children to be more active by riding to school. It follows that any financially responsible government should invest in infrastructure and social programs to encouraging cycling, as many other governments around the World and throughout Australia already do.

Bicycle NSW has worked for many years with the NSW governments and with the RTA and its predecessors<sup>1</sup>. We believe that our cooperation has been beneficial to each party. We would like to assure the government that Bicycle NSW will continue to cooperate wherever it can with the government and the administration. However, we have become increasingly disillusioned with the role that the government has chosen to play and the approaches that it has adopted. For example, the RTA

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<sup>1</sup> Bicycle NSW will work cooperatively with any organization that seeks to address the real problems that are faced by cyclists and the opportunities that increased cycling can deliver for the sustainability and livability of cities. For example, Bicycle NSW currently works not only with the RTA and a wide range of NSW Government agencies and NSW Local Governments in several respects, but also partners the private sector, eg for the Portfolio Partners Spring Cycle on 22 October 2006 and with Bovis Lend Lease as hosts for a Sydney CBD breakfast at their environmentally leading headquarters 'The Bond' on Hickson Road as part of the National Ride to Work Day Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> October.

removed its SES position with specific responsibility for cycling and pedestrians, the government's failed commitments to cycleways on various new roads (eg most recently the Lane Cove Tunnel, the M5 East, Cross City Tunnel and William Street developments) and now the deeply disturbing draft State Plan.

For all its shortcomings in respect of cycling, the NSW government, ably assisted by the Federal government, has successfully partnered the Westlink M7 organisation in the building of 40kms of quality off road cycleway and walking path adjacent to the M7 motorway in western Sydney. What is needed in western Sydney and indeed throughout NSW now is strong leadership by the State government in working with local and federal governments and other partners to create links to existing cycleways and to build cycleways in areas of emerging demand, such as centres of employment. In this way, the investment the government has already made will yield greater returns to the community in terms of improved health, transport and environmental outcomes.

I would like to demonstrate just how far the government has fallen in respect to cycling. A decade ago, the ALP issued its policy for bicycles which contained the following:

- "The community wants to cycle but the perception (and reality) is that the road environment is too hazardous."
- "... roads are still being constructed and modified in a manner highly dangerous to cyclists."
- Labor would seek to "reduce the number of cycling fatalities and injuries in traffic."
- The government would "commence the planning and construction of metropolitan and urban bicycle networks ..." and would promote its use.
- "Labor will guarantee sufficient annual funding to meet this target (the network)."

It is interesting to see how good policy can be undermined by indifference and short-sightedness. Ten years ago Labor had it right on cycling, but now it seems your government is completely lost.

In sharp contrast to the NSW government's poor efforts, the City of Sydney council has made considerable efforts to improve the liveability of Sydney through its City of Sydney cycle strategies. The 10,000 Friends of Greater Sydney have provided very useful feedback through their Sustainable Sydney Scorecard project and provided guidance through a Community Values survey.

Bicycle NSW, on behalf of the million cyclists in NSW, asks that your government take serious account of the interests of cyclists in the redrafting of your State Plan. Given the important ways in which cycling can contribute to making NSW a better place to live (health, transport, environment, etc) we would hope to see the final document contain clear and concrete plans, priorities and milestones together with the necessary commitment of resources to bring important benefits to the people of NSW and also ensure a high degree of government accountability. To that end, we would be happy to work with those who will prepare the next draft, so that the reality of cycling and its importance to the population of both the state and Australia more generally are adequately reflected.

Yours sincerely,



Alex S Unwin  
Chief Executive Officer  
Bicycle NSW