

Transport for NSW  
PO Box K659,  
Haymarket NSW 1240

### **Draft Older Person's Transport Mobility Plan 2018-2022**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Older Person's Transport Mobility Plan. Bicycle NSW has been the peak bicycle advocacy group now in NSW for over forty years, and has over thirty affiliated local Bicycle User Groups.

We applaud the government's effort in this plan to articulate the priorities and concerns of the NSW Ageing Strategy 2016-2020 and Future Transport 2056 as they apply specifically to the needs of older people. We share the government's commitment to providing an accessible and affordable transport for everyone in NSW.

Part of our [policy platform](#) "Build it for Everyone" specifically calls on government to build infrastructure that is suitable for everyone "from 8 to 80" to ride on independently. We know that if infrastructure is built to suit young children and older people it will be of a quality that encourages everyone to ride a bike.

Of the 1.2 million people in NSW who are aged over 65, half have no known disability and less than 20% have a profound or severe disability. Many would fit into the 'Active Aging' cohort identified in the plan, but many people are not sufficiently active for good health, and risk becoming unwell or disabled as a result. There is a huge opportunity to help more people stay fit and healthy as they age by supporting more use of active transport.

It is crucial that this process begins now as the Baby Boomer generation retires, and well ahead of 2031 when one in three people in NSW is expected to be over 50. This supports the plan's first and fourth outcome:

- "Keeping active and connected with my community – Older customers are encouraged and supported to use walking, cycling, driving and public transport"
- "Maintaining independence – Older customers actively plan for their future transport needs and have suitable transport alter"

It also supports the active aging priority, maintaining the health and independence of people as they age for as long as possible.

In evaluating this plan it is worthwhile considering some facts from RMS and TfNSW publications:

- About 70% of people in NSW either ride regularly or would like to ride more, and say they would if bike riding was made safer for them.
- Bicycle sales exceeded 1.4 million in 2012-13 and have outstripped car sales for over a decade. This trend continues.
- The NSW Government has an aim of reducing cycling fatalities and injuries by at least 30% by 2021.
- Cycling infrastructure is a proven method of reducing cycling fatalities and injuries.
- The NSW Government also had an objective of doubling the mode share of active transport to 5%. A primary method of achieving this aim is to consider cycling safety in every infrastructure project.

- This strategy is included in the RMS's own Bicycle Guidelines policy (p5):

*“To improve the bike network by making comprehensive provision for bicycles on all new major road infrastructure projects with a strong preference for off-road cycling.”*

Bicycle NSW acknowledges the efforts of Transport for NSW to improve public transport accessibility, upgrade walking and cycling facilities, to deliver policy and programs. In order to achieve mode shift, the critical element is ensuring that safe, separated cycling infrastructure exists that enables older people to get where they need to go.

Unsafe, uncomfortable or poorly connected infrastructure will not be sufficient to entice older people out of cars, or to inspire them to incorporate bike riding into their lives and remain more physically active. Bicycles painted on road-ways and bike lanes in the door-zone of busy streets do not meet the needs of older riders.

Bicycle NSW welcomes the opportunity to work with government to promote road safety, cycling participation and the development of skills and confidence with older riders. We also highlight the need for cycling provision that accommodates different bike shapes such as tandem bikes, trishaws and recumbent bikes that enable people with disabilities and different age related conditions to access bike riding.

Transport for London [figures](#) have shown that 78% of disabled people are able to cycle, and 15% sometimes use a bike to get around. With the rising popularity of e-bikes bike riding has become and will remain accessible to more people as they age.

We commend the government on this draft strategy, and call for a focus on delivering safe, separated infrastructure of a suitable standard for older people as a priority, to promote active aging and public health.

Yours Sincerely



Bastien Wallace BA LLB  
General Manager, Public Affairs