

The Hon. Daniel Mookhey, MLC
NSW Treasurer
52 Martin Place
SYDNEY NSW 2000

6th February 2025

Email: [via webform](#)

RE: BICYCLE NSW BUDGET SUBMISSION 2025-26

Dear Mr Mookhey,

Bicycle NSW wants to provide an advanced Budget Submission as a significant opportunity has been identified to grow the very effective Get NSW Active program.

Last year, we [submitted a list of 6 points to consider in the budget](#). Although each of these points was very important, and remains important, for advancing active transport in NSW, there is one priority we wish to emphasise in 2025.

This is the **significant expansion of the Get NSW Active grants** to fund much more local active transport infrastructure across NSW.

These grants have not been increased for some years. It is vital that the 2025-26 budget allows for a substantial increase in both the quantum and the scope of the program.

Background

The Get NSW Active program is achieving great results for the NSW Government in filling the gaps and reducing fragmentation in walking and cycling networks. However, it is highly oversubscribed and totally inadequate for delivering the step change in active mobility that NSW urgently needs - to address poor health, cost of living, climate change and road safety.

In the last budget, \$60 million was again allocated to the Get NSW Active program for projects to be delivered by local councils over the coming years. The program included \$10 million ringfenced for supporting active travel to schools with new crossings, paths and behaviour change initiatives. We supported this targeted approach to enhance children's mobility.

The insufficient funding is very apparent when you look at the [detailed list of winning projects](#) in 2024. 88 projects were awarded grants, but 258 high-quality projects, three-quarters of the applications, languish unfunded on council shelves.

The new \$5 million limit that has now been imposed for each council has further impacted the timeframe of important projects, as has the decision to separate design and construction funding. For example, the critical West Street cycleway in North Sydney will now take 3 funding rounds to design and construct, pushing completion out to 2029. And that is in the best-case scenario that each application is successful and other North Sydney priorities are sidelined.

In addition, there is a significant risk of many shovel-ready projects not being funded for construction. This is a serious waste of previous grant funding. It is also likely that the detailed design of projects waiting many years to progress will become outdated, again wasting NSW Government investment.

Recommendations

We propose a minimum **\$200 million Get NSW Active program fund** divided as follows:

- \$80-100 million to grow and strengthen the existing grants (currently \$50 million) which have proven success over many years.
- \$30-40 million to grow the existing active travel to schools project funding (currently \$10 million)
- \$80-100 million to fund aligned strategic cycleway and regional tourism-related projects. These have been identified in the current TfNSW Strategic Cycleway Corridors planning documents and most are situated on council assets. The regional tourism projects would include the development of rail trails and linkages which not only benefit tourism but the local community as well.

We also propose a number of improvements to the structure of the grants which we are happy to discuss directly with the Department. These include:

- Increasing the existing funding cap to allow for increased grant scope and larger strategic projects. This will avoid Councils needing to break projects into 4 stages which is expensive and inefficient.
- Explicitly allowing councils to jointly apply for a project when the link or path is across both LGAs. This will create better value for money and inspire more strategic infrastructure.
- Prioritising existing projects which have been planned and designed, especially those that have been funded in previous grant rounds and are at threat of becoming outdated.

We believe there is a significant opportunity for active transport to help transform NSW into a healthier, more efficient, equitable, sustainable and liveable place for everyone. In this context, we urge you to value active transport not only as a transport investment but equally as disease prevention investment, a cost of living buster and a key pillar of NSW Government plans to achieve net zero emissions.

Just a reminder about Bicycle NSW

Bicycle NSW is a non-profit membership organisation operating in NSW that represents the interests of people who ride bikes. Bicycle NSW has been promoting bicycle use, behaviour change and effective bicycle user environments since it was established as a member-based organisation in 1976. Since then, Bicycle NSW has been responsible for many active transport infrastructure outcomes and positively supporting thousands of people of all ages to safely utilise bicycles for transport and recreational purposes.

Bicycle NSW provides at least 50 high quality submissions and reports to the NSW Government and councils every year. Please take a look at previous [proposals and submissions](#) on our website which are publicly available.

Thank you for your consideration. We would be very pleased to provide further information and support to the NSW Government in refining their focus and investment in active transport both now and into the future.

Very best regards,



Peter McLean
Chief Executive Officer

cc: Hon. John Graham MLC
Hon. Jenny Aitchison MP

Minister for Roads & Acting Transport Minister
Minister for Regional Transport