



# Pedal Power ACT

2026-27 Budget Submission

## About

Pedal Power ACT is the largest cycling organisation in Canberra. Pedal Power has over 5,250 members and regular, direct engagement with more than 11,000 Canberra bike riders.

Our mission is to advance the health and wellbeing of our community through the promotion of the safe and convenient use of bicycles and other pedal powered vehicles. We provide a voice for the many thousands of Canberrans who ride bikes, and the many thousands more who might if cycling was more comfortable, convenient, connected and considered safe.

## Introduction

Pedal Power welcomes and supports the Government's ambitious strategies for improving the lives of ACT citizens. The ACT Government's Active Travel Plan, Climate Change Strategy and Wellbeing Framework all have the potential to improve sustainability, liveability and health outcomes. The Government is aware of the evidence that cycling can make a huge difference both to broader outcomes such as reducing fossil fuel use and increasing the efficiency of transport systems, and to individual wellbeing. There is ample evidence that cycling has population-level health benefits and can contribute to reduced morbidity and mortality. This can help contain growing ACT health costs.<sup>1</sup> There is also abundant evidence that lack of adequate cycling infrastructure is the largest impediment to more people cycling more often.<sup>2</sup>

Pedal Power asks the Government to invest in cycling infrastructure as one of the most effective ways to realise the Government's overarching strategies. The Government already has a strong record in this area. The addition of new bike paths, such as the first stage of the Garden City Cycleway, and the ongoing program of community path maintenance, are preserving and enhancing Canberra's leading position in Australia.

Pedal Power recommends that the Government should continue to build on this record by initiating or continuing significant cycle infrastructure projects which expand the existing network thereby offering more opportunities for cycling in Canberra.

Acknowledging the fiscal constraints currently facing the ACT Government, we note the potential for shared funding with the Commonwealth Government through the Commonwealth National Active Transport Fund (NATF), the Road Safety Program and Major Projects funding.

The ACT has a long and successful relationship with the Commonwealth Government for shared funding for large scale and high-cost road infrastructure. As the Commonwealth now has a significant active travel infrastructure grant fund, we suggest that the ACT would get better value for its taxpayer's dollar by seeking greater access to Commonwealth funding for cycling-related infrastructure. We strongly support the recent request by Minister Cheyne to the Commonwealth Minister for Transport to increase investment in the NATF, noting the clear community benefits in safety, liveability, connected local centres and emissions reduction.

---

<sup>1</sup> For example, Friel C, Walsh D, Whyte B, et al. "Health benefits of pedestrian and cyclist commuting: evidence from the Scottish Longitudinal Study". *BMJ Public Health* 2024;2:e001295. doi:10.1136/bmjph-2024-001295

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Lauren Pearson and Ben Beck, "3 in 4 people want to ride a bike but are put off by lack of safe lanes", *The Conversation*, 12 January 2022. <https://doi.org/10.64628/AA.qucx5vs63>

When cycling infrastructure projects traverse Designated Areas the National Capital Authority has approval responsibilities under the National Capital Plan. These areas have the ‘special characteristics of the National Capital’. The ACT should press the Commonwealth to contribute funding for cycling works in Designated Areas.

## Recommendations for new infrastructure investments

We recommend five major investments in initiating or continuing to develop new cycling infrastructure.

### 1. Development of the Northbourne Avenue cycling corridor

The development of the Northbourne Avenue cycling corridor would not only expand the practical scope of cycling in North Canberra, it would position cycling as an integral element of the Gateway to Canberra and make a statement about the importance of active travel in the ACT. The provision for separated cycle paths on Northbourne Avenue and adjacent active travel streets (east and west of the Avenue) was set out in 2018 in the [City and Gateway Urban Design Framework](#). Progress has been delayed because of building along the Avenue, but we have now reached the point where design for the cycling corridor could and should proceed. Pedal Power has had discussions with officials from the National Capital Authority, the City Renewal Authority and Roads ACT and they have indicated (at officials’ level) acceptance of the concept of the cycling corridor. The crash statistics more than justify a high priority for this project<sup>3</sup>. Northbourne Avenue between London Circuit and Dickson is the number one spot for cyclist accidents<sup>4</sup>.

**We recommend that:**

- a. **the outline planning and design stage of the corridor begin as soon as possible;**
- b. **as set out in the Design Framework, separated cycle-only paths be provided on both sides of the Avenue.** We anticipate when separated paths are constructed along the Avenue this will result in a marked increase in induced demand by bike riders wishing to use Northbourne Avenue for commuting; and
- c. **as set out in the Design Framework, active travel streets be developed on the roads parallel and adjacent to Northbourne.** These streets should be designated as “Low Traffic Neighbourhoods” for people who prefer a quieter journey and modified to be ‘to’ streets, not ‘through’ streets for cars.

### 2. Woden to Civic Cycleway

The Government has commenced planning to fulfil its promise for a separated Woden to Civic Cycleway along Yarra Glen, Adelaide Avenue and Flynn Drive. This project will be a major improvement to a critical part of the network, shortening commuter cycle times and improving safety by separating bikes from 80 km/hr traffic. A feasibility design was prepared in November

---

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.data.act.gov.au/Justice-Safety-and-Emergency/Cyclist-Crashes/n2kg-qkwj/data\\_preview](https://www.data.act.gov.au/Justice-Safety-and-Emergency/Cyclist-Crashes/n2kg-qkwj/data_preview)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-08-26/act-government-releases-cycling-hotspots-to-improve-safety/6724316>

2023. Since then, work has continued on the concept design and a business case for the first phase - the Commonwealth Avenue to Novar/Kent St section.

**We recommend providing funding for Infrastructure Canberra to finish the planning and proceed with construction of the first phase.**

### **3. West Belconnen Bikeway**

The Legislative Assembly recently passed a motion, with support from all parties, supporting a feasibility study to deliver a complete active travel network between West Belconnen and Belconnen Town Centre.

The Bikeway would link the Belconnen Town Centre to Kippax and Ginninderry and would serve approximately 40,000 Canberrans, who currently have no access to the main path network – the most significant broken link in Canberra’s cycle network. The bikeway would be 7.9 km long, starting at the junction of Lathlain St and Luxton St on the western edge of Belconnen Town Centre, with a reasonably easy link to the Belconnen Bikeway. The path could proceed alongside Southern Cross Drive to Kippax, and then onwards to where Southern Cross becomes Parkwood Road. From this point it would go south and west to join the Ginninderry path network. We look forward to its construction in the near term.

**We recommend providing funding for:**

- a. **the planning and design of a West Belconnen Bikeway which would link the Belconnen Town Centre to Kippax and Ginninderry.**
- b. **the design and construction of the priority missing link on the Bikeway route between Ratcliffe Crescent and Kippax Fair.**

### **4. Garden City Cycleway**

The first stage of the Garden City Cycleway has been a major new addition to Canberra’s bike path network. However, no funding has been provided to finish the connection between Braddon and the City (from Torrens Street to Bunda Street – the final element of Stage 1 of the Cycleway). In addition, the associated transition of Sherbrooke Street in Ainslie into an active travel street has also not been funded.

**We recommend providing funding to fill a significant gap i.e. the connection to the City and commence work on turning Sherbrooke Street into an active travel street.** The Government should also, in the near term, fund the sections of the Cycleway north from where it currently ends on Majura Avenue and fill gaps on Majura Avenue.

### **5. Principal Cycle Route C2 – Kings Avenue Bridge to Ipswich Street, Fyshwick**

The design for this important section of the path network is completed and construction could commence promptly. The existing path through that area is disjointed, in amongst areas with high

pedestrian use, adjacent to parked cars, and contains some areas with poor safety aspects for people riding bikes.

**We recommend that funding be provided for the construction of the new path.**

## **Recommendations for continuing infrastructure investments**

In addition to the infrastructure investments described above, it is vitally important that the existing path network continue to be well maintained and made safer. We recommend the continuation of three major ongoing programs of work.

### **6. Preventative and corrective maintenance of the existing path asset**

A well-maintained cycle path network delivers strong economic returns by supporting daily transport, recreation and tourism while reducing pressure on the road network. Adequate upkeep, repair and preventative maintenance of the local cycle path network is a cost-effective investment that protects existing public assets and avoids significantly higher reconstruction costs in the future. Like roads, drainage and footpaths, cycle infrastructure deteriorates steadily without regular attention. Small, timely interventions such as surface repairs, vegetation control, and drainage maintenance, extend asset life at a fraction of the cost of major rehabilitation or replacement.

While additional maintenance funding was provided some Budgets ago, current funding has been insufficient and the asset is deteriorating.

Maintenance should be preventative as well as corrective. Prevention should encompass a continuing inspection program and defect data should be accessible to the public so that there is a clear understanding of what the problems are relative to what measures are being taken.

**We recommend that**

- a. **funding should continue to be provided for adequate upkeep, repair and preventative maintenance of the existing cycling infrastructure** as that is prudent financial management maximising the return on previous capital investment and delivering ongoing economic and community benefits.
- b. **The pilot inspection program for paths should continue, and defect data should be made accessible to the public.**

### **7. Improve the safety of path users with priority crossing of roads**

The ACT Government's Active Travel Plan states, amongst other things, that for road safety and the protection of vulnerable road users and to encourage more active travel, and thus less car usage, the government would undertake path priority crossing improvements on all Principal and Main Cycle Routes.

**We recommend that there be a continuing budget allocation for the construction of raised road crossings** so that in a few years' time all road crossings on Principal and Main Cycle Routes are protected.

#### **8. Review Active Travel Infrastructure Standards**

The ACT Government's *Municipal Infrastructure Standards (MIS) 05 Active Travel Facilities Design* were published in 2021 and have since underpinned upgrading and improving cycling infrastructure. The Standards, which encompass policy guidance and detailed specifications, flow into the provision of community routes, bicycle-only paths, on-road cycling routes and active travel streets. Maintaining the currency of the Standards is a low cost, high impact way to continuously improve the quality of cycling infrastructure in the ACT to world best practice, and, given they are now five years old, it is timely to review them.

**We recommend that the *MIS 05 Active Travel Facilities Design* be reviewed and updated.**

3 February 2026

Cecily Michaels

**Executive Director | Pedal Power ACT**

**E:** [executivedirector@pedalpower.org.au](mailto:executivedirector@pedalpower.org.au)