



...making cycling better in northern Sydney

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Michael Daley
Minister for Roads
NSW State Parliament

Dear Minister Daley,

Greetings for the New Year 2009, which should be a good year for cycling following your welcome statement in the New NSW bike Plan media release of 23 December 2008. You stated that you are '*committed to getting more people out of their cars and on to bikes as a clean and healthy way to travel*' and that you need to '*double our efforts to double the commuter cycle trips from 0.8 per cent measured in 2006 to 1.5*'. We at Bike North welcome your published recognition of the value of cycling in its potential contribution as healthy, sustainable transport.

We were therefore disappointed to learn during discussion with your Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) engineers this year, that the proposed bus layover at Cammeray on the Warringah Freeway would not include the build of the appropriate section of the Shared Use Path (SUP) which is within its geographical scope. We were told that a design for this SUP, which complemented the bus layover had been done, but it would not be built as part of the project. This is contrary to established precedence, where a SUP has been built as part of all major transport infrastructure in the recent past, including the Liverpool-Parramatta and North West T-ways, M7 and Lane Cove Tunnel project.

In order to contribute to meeting your goal to double commuter cycle trips we urge you to direct your RTA to include the build of the SUP within the Bus Layover project.

This SUP would form one more section of the Harbour Bridge to Chatswood and North Ryde regional route and improve connectivity. Seven km of this route were recently completed as part of the Lane Cove Tunnel project. While that new SUP is an excellent section of cycling infrastructure, which is already proving very popular with local commuters, its use is still limited and cannot meet anticipated demand, as cyclists are abandoned at Naremburn in the middle of the Warringah Freeway. The residents of Sydney need this SUP to continue to a major commuter destination such as North Sydney or the City CBD.

This regional route was part of BikePlan 2010 published to be built in 2004 and we at Bike North reasonably expected this route to be completed by now. This expectation was based on correspondence with the then Minister for Roads Department in 2004 (attached) assuring us that '*LCT, Chatswood to Harbour Bridge and the Macquarie University connections project ... considered more feasible and better interests .. to construct these three projects together*' (copy attached). Unfortunately, severe

reductions in funding for bicycle regional routes over the last three years have left this SUP long overdue.

Since 2005, according to publications on the RTA website, the meagre funds allocated for bicycle regional routes in Sydney have been directed at developing the design for the Chatswood to Sydney Harbour Bridge regional route. This has led us to believe that this route must be the main priority for RTA regional route construction, just waiting for an adequate allocation of funds.

While completion of the SUP within the scope of the bus layover would only constitute a small section of the SUP, piecemeal construction of the SUP section by section is still far preferable to no construction at all.

We have been told that this SUP, although designed to fit in with the bus layover project, will not be built, as funds have not been allocated. This makes no sense, as obviously it would be cheaper and more efficient to build the SUP and layover at the same time. There is also real danger that critical RTA land required for this SUP could be sold if this build is work does not commence on the SUP soon. **We urge you to only approve this bus layover project if it includes the build of the corresponding SUP.**

The reason given to us for non allocation of funds is that the bus layover project is funded by the Ministry of Transport from funds gathered under the Parking Space Levy which, under legislation must be directed towards public transport. This legislation states in Section 18.3.a that it be used *'for the construction and maintenance of car and bicycle parking facilities and other infrastructure which facilitate access to public transport services to and from the City of Sydney and any other area prescribed under section 6'* . While it is clear that this legislation would be better updated to include public and active transport, even under the existing legislation an argument can be made that **providing a SUP to encourage more bicycle use would facilitate access by taking the pressure off public transport use for shorter journeys, thereby providing greater capacity for Sydney residents journeying greater distances.**

Minister Daley, we ask that you make representation to the Minister of Transport to allocate funds from the Parking Space Levy so that the appropriate section of the SUP is built as part of the bus layover project.

If you are unsuccessful in your representation to the Minister of Transport we further request that you ensure adequate funds are budgeted in 2009/2010 to allow for the completion of at least this section of the SUP connecting Naremburn to North Sydney.

We also request that you initiate an update of the Parking Space Levy Act so it more clearly contributes to the funding of active transport as well as public transport.

We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

Carolyn New
Advocacy Officer
Bike North