

8 December 2009

Hon. Tim Pallas, MP
Minister for Roads and Ports
Department of Infrastructure
GPO Box 2797
Melbourne Vic. 3001

Dear Minister

Re: Cycling as part of mainstream Government business

One year ago today the Premier launched the Victorian Transport Plan, of which the Victorian Cycling Strategy is part. Last year we met on the 12th December and you wrote to us on the 18th December outlining an approach described as ‘mainstreaming’ after your statement in the letter that ‘the intention of all these initiatives is to make investments to support cycling as part of mainstream Government business.’

To follow up the discussion about mainstreaming at our meeting on 23 November this year, I write to ask for a formal reporting mechanism that would enable such projects to be identified and recognised.

A key section of this letter is the paragraph in which you say that a ‘key element of the Strategy will be the incorporation of cycling infrastructure into road investment, in most cases as a matter of course.’ You continued ‘This will mean that cycling facilities will be developed and upgraded during major road projects (as was the case for the Craigieburn Bypass and Eastlink); during upgrades to metropolitan arterial roads as part of the \$1.9m Outer Suburban Arterial Roads Program; and through the \$60m Urban Road Management Systems program.’

You made a verbal commitment at the meeting last year that you would ask the Secretary of the Department of Transport and the CEO of VicRoads to convey this approach to their respective staff. You reconfirmed that commitment at our recent November meeting.

I have complete confidence that you are standing by the commitments you have made during this past year. So far, however, neither the Department of Transport or VicRoads has indicated how your commitment has been and will be implemented, documented and communicated.

This important policy initiative deserves to be reported to the bike riding community so that your government’s achievements can be recognised.

I suggest the following:

- A retrospective review of the 2008 – 2009 investment program to identify which projects would have had a bicycle component under the mainstreaming guidelines. We recognise that the mainstreaming commitment was made after the projects for 2008-2009 had been committed.
- A listing of projects VicRoads and the Department have planned for 2009 – 2010 identifying those with a bicycle component. We recognise that there are works the Department and VicRoads undertake that would be unlikely to generate significant bicycle use even if a facility were provided. Where a project was excluded from mainstreaming, the rationale should be explicated stated.
- A ‘work-in-progress’ list of projects that are coming up in 2010 – 2011 that are likely to have a bicycle component and those that seem unlikely.
- A regular meeting with Bicycle Victoria, the Department and VicRoads at which the triage decisions are discussed and the process of decision making developed.

This would give us comfort that there is a method in place, that a rationale has been established and that your commitment will be implemented. The ‘mainstreaming’ policy is an important milestone and its contribution to improving bicycle infrastructure should be highlighted.

Yours sincerely



Harry Barber
Bicycle Victoria