

# The Greens NSW

March 2007



## **The 2007 Greens NSW Bicycle Transport Statement**

### **The Greens actively support a shift towards sustainable transport**

The Greens believe that all transport funding should be based on principles of equity, fairness and sustainability. Bicycling, walking and public transport make a huge positive contribution to the environment and to communities, yet for over fifty years, successive State Governments have led our society into a situation of heavy dependence on private motor transport.

For example under current methods of funding, the road builders – the Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) and local councils – are guaranteed their pool of funds to build roads, even though the road option may be the worst possible solution to providing for the community's transport needs. Public transport operators have been negligent in ignoring the huge potential for increasing their patronage by encouraging and facilitating access to their system by people riding bicycles.

To turn around this scandalous neglect of healthier and more sustainable forms of transport, The Greens will replace the current void in government policy and planning for bicycles with a state of the art active transport policy which gives priority to bicycling, walking and public transport.

The Greens are committed to:

### **A. Building and Funding the Bike Network**

- The development of a safe, secure network of on-road and off-road cycling routes, bicycle parking and end-trip facilities, which would cater for commuter, recreational, sports-training and school riders. The planning, design and maintenance of the network should be transparent, and informed by significant guidance from cycling groups and would cover both local, regional and interstate routes;
- Funding of bicycle infrastructure through a multi-pronged initiative:
  1. Creation of a common transport funding pool, from which projects will be financed on their compliance with principles of equity, access, sustainability and responsiveness to the needs of the community. For example, since the Transportation Equity Act for the Twenty-first Century (TEA-21) was introduced in the United States, funds previously spent only on road building are now available for cycling, walking and transit projects.
  2. Incorporating in the common transport funding pool a guaranteed base for the bicycle budget to make up for the neglect of the past 50 years and provide rapid catch-up specifically for constructing the bicycle network. The guaranteed bicycle budget should be at least 5% of the transport pool budget increasing by 1% per year thereafter to a reasonable level.

3. Councils and other institutions such as hospitals, universities, and corporations, will be provided with \$3 for every cycling support dollar they contribute themselves;
  4. Provision of bicycle facilities has to be written into all other infrastructure projects, so that, for example, if a road or rail line is built, bicycle network facilities have to be provided as part of the project.
- A specific government policy commitment to sustainable transport including a target for a modal shift from cars to cycling or rail trips of 7% by the year 2005, then 15% by the year 2010;
  - Increased funding to Councils for the implementation of existing bike plans and infrastructure to expand and give continuity to bicycle networks. Currently only 30% of LGA bicycle funding applications to the RTA are funded;
  - Creating a specialist government agency for active transport, that will secure funding and lead a whole-of-government approach to the development of infrastructure, facilities and educational programs that will make cycling and walking a more acceptable, comfortable, safe and viable transport option for the community;
  - Create a government program to develop cycling tourism throughout the State. This program would incorporate, and increase support for, the NSW Coastline Cycleway, and would work with local councils and rail agencies to develop rail-trails in urban and regional areas;
  - Developing jobs and expertise in state and local governments and their agencies, that will carry through the advocacy, development and operation of bicycle and walking transport systems.

## **B. Educational/Support Programs and Changing Attitudes**

- The Greens believe that the provision of infrastructure alone will not guarantee a widespread uptake in cycling. In order to encourage the community to use their bicycles (there are currently more bicycles in NSW than cars) the NSW Greens will implement a State-wide cycling strategy designed to promote cycling, help and encourage new usage, and train and educate the community to improve rider skills and safety. This strategy will include a wide range of programs through state agencies and local government. It will target schools and support the community initiatives of cycling organisations such as Bicycle NSW and its local bicycle user groups;
- Community and school education programs which encourage increased cycling and promote its value for improved health, sustainable towns and cities and cleaner air;
- Supporting increased and improved educational and recreational opportunities for young people and adults to learn and improve their cycling skills, including increased funding and support for the Community and Road Education Scheme (CARES); "Bike-Ed" classroom and on road instruction for all school students tailored for infants, primary and secondary cohorts; off-road, road. The Greens believe that track cycling should be recognised secondary sports;
- Provide increased training and educational opportunities for people working in the transport area, from managers to technicians, from Police personnel to local

government, with the aim of improving knowledge and understanding of the cyclists' needs as road users, and therefore, to provide the highest quality facilities and programs;

- Compulsory driver education regarding cyclist safety issues as part of the process of obtaining a driver's licence;
- Corporate and community based programs to encourage greater use of cycling, walking and public transport as the main means of getting to work
- Strengthen current government action on discouraging car use, through programs to educate, encourage and provide incentives to the industry, schools and the community to take up sustainable transport options and to replace current car trips by healthier transport;
- Ensure the NSW Government and local governments provide quality leadership in sustainable transport by offering their employees a range of incentives, such as replacing motor vehicle subsidies with bicycle purchase schemes and public transport periodical tickets; encouraging greater use of bicycles by employees through the use of bicycle pool vehicles, bicycle parking, showers and other associated facilities in buildings, and travel reimbursement for staff using bicycles in place of motor vehicles;
- Support and extend the use of bicycles as patrol vehicles by the NSW Police Force, as a general crime prevention initiative, and ensure that this program is properly embedded in the structure and the culture of the Force;

### **C. Public Transport and Bicycles**

- Make bicycling and public transport work better together by actively promoting the value of riding to public transport, and by providing a range of bicycle facilities, such as accessible, undercover racks and lockers at stations and wharves;
- Free carriage of folding bicycles on all Country Link services (bus and train);
- Greatly improved provision for bicycle carriage on long-distance and inter-urban trains, and the promotion and facilitation of the use of railways for tourism and active community recreation;
- Continuation of free passage for bicycles in off-peak periods in metropolitan Sydney, and free passage at all times for trains, buses and light rail carriages that have been altered to provide suitable storage facilities. Folding bicycles will be carried free on all City Rail services including peak times;
- Secure undercover bicycle storage facilities (to *NSW Bicycle Guidelines* recommendations) at train, bus, ferry wharves and light rail stations, and substantial enlargement of the existing Department of Transport Secure Locker Scheme to move towards accommodating 40% of the known one million bikes in greater Sydney;
- The carriage of bicycles is integrated across all operators and links to adjoining states;

- Trial of a scheme whereby people can hire bikes from modal interchanges and major stations and return them to any other station or interchange;
- Storage and access for bicycles on designated carriages of all trains;
- Evaluate the feasibility of providing storage and carriage of bicycles on light rail vehicles and buses.

#### **D. Making the Roads Safe and Convenient for Bikes**

- Introduce and enforce a General Urban Speed Limit of 50 km/hr, and move towards even lower speed limits in residential streets and neighbourhoods, in line with most European countries and in keeping with the recommendations of Bicycle NSW and the Australian Transport Safety Bureau;
- Legislation to ensure all new roads and bridges and any upgrades of existing roads and bridges include provision for bicycles to current best practice standards. The Greens believe that the Roads and Traffic Authority should upgrade its road standards, traffic signal designs and operating procedures to include safe bicycle access on its roads and signalised intersections;
- Rearrange the way our transport systems are managed to give priority to environmentally sustainable transport. For example, adjust the phasing of traffic lights to allow bicycles and pedestrians to have priority over motor vehicles at intersections;
- Increased penalties for drivers intimidating or inflicting damage on pedestrians or cyclists.

#### **E. Cycling Facilities**

- Fully adopt *State Environment Planning Policy 66 (SEPP66)* which requires provision for cycling and walking in new developments. Furthermore, The Greens will ensure that SEPP66 is extended to include provision for cycling and walking in redevelopments, shopping precincts, sporting venues and recreational destinations in accordance with the technical design standards in AS 2890.3 1993;
- legislation to require development applications relating to workplaces to provide secure bicycle parking, shower and locker facilities;

The Greens' are working for a whole-of-government and community approach to create the structures and programs that will give healthier, sustainable transport the priority it deserves and make urban and regional bicycle transport viable and attractive for people of all ages and levels of physical ability.