

WALKING AND CYCLING

INTRODUCTION

The ACT Greens want to create a sustainable, connected city, replacing the congestion of the 20th Century with a green, active 21st Century city.

Critical to this vision is a walking and cycling network that gives everyone the option to walk or ride in comfort, no matter where they live or how far they need to go.

Canberra has the foundation of an excellent walking and cycling network, but the network is full of gaps, leading many neighbourhoods to miss out, and many Canberrans to drive when they would rather walk or ride.

Canberrans love walking and riding around our city - the current path network is heavily used and growing in popularity, especially since COVID-19.

However, research shows that women, older people, and families with children are much less likely to walk or ride when they are forced onto the road or unlit paths. To become a truly active, 21st Century city, we need to construct large-scale, segregated cycling corridors, and connect the gaps in our existing neighbourhood path networks.

THAT'S WHY THE ACT GREENS WILL BUILD A WORLD CLASS WALKING AND CYCLING NETWORK, KICKSTARTING A CYCLING REVOLUTION IN CANBERRA AND CREATING A WALKABLE CANBERRA, BY:

1. Building seven large-scale cycling corridors
2. Over 100 small upgrades to connect the gaps in our existing walking and cycling network, based on extensive community feedback
3. Allocating a minimum 20% of the roads and parking capital upgrade budget to walking and cycling infrastructure (with a minimum \$20 million per year)

To begin this process, the Greens mapped the current network, and included the wishlist items from peak cycling organisation, Pedal Power. We then asked the community for their feedback, and have had hundreds of suggestions over the past month. Feedback from this process has been incorporated into the actions outlined below.

1. BUILDING SEVEN LARGE-SCALE CYCLING CORRIDORS

The seven priority areas requiring major investments in cycling corridors are:

1. Woden to City
2. Molonglo Valley to Civic
3. Northern Molonglo Valley, Belconnen and Civic
4. Improving connections to the Belconnen Town Centre
5. Upgrading the existing shared path on Gungahlin Drive
6. Improving the cycling connection between the Tuggeranong Town Centre and Chisholm
7. Improving cycling access to the City from Ainslie, Hackett, and Watson, and make Ainslie safer

PRIORITY 1. WODEN TO CITY

Based on community feedback, the Greens' immediate priority for cycling infrastructure is upgrading the Woden to City cycling corridor. There are a number of issues with the current cycling link between Woden and the City, which have long needed to be addressed. Just getting in and out of the Woden Town Centre itself on a bike is not ideal at present.

The development of light rail stage 2 provides an ideal opportunity to address many of these issues and improve the speed and safety of this cycling corridor.

At the same time, we would improve the connections into Woden Town Centre from surrounding areas, to ensure people can conveniently use active travel to safely access shops, services, and buses and light rail.

PRIORITY 2. MOLONGLO VALLEY TO CIVIC

The Molonglo Valley is growing rapidly, but its cycle connections are not. There is an opportunity to build a high quality east-west cycling "superhighway", connecting a new Molonglo Town Centre to the city. A feasibility study for such a cycle highway was undertaken due to the Greens including it in the 2012 Parliamentary Agreement - now we believe it's time to build it. Residents of Molonglo should have a convenient and safe option for commuting by active travel, and in this newly developing part of Canberra we have the opportunity to ensure this is high quality, prioritised infrastructure.

PRIORITY 3. NORTHERN MOLONGLO VALLEY, BELCONNEN AND CIVIC

The new suburb of Whitlam, currently being built, is on the other side of the Molonglo River from the rest of the newly developed parts of the Valley, and requires a dedicated connection to link to the existing cycle network near Bindubi St and William Hovell Drive. A segregated cycle lane running alongside Coulter Drive would help connect suburbs in the Molonglo Valley to the Belconnen Town Centre.

PRIORITY 4. IMPROVE CONNECTIONS TO THE BELCONNEN TOWN CENTRE

For example, a segregated cycle path along the length of Benjamin Way would connect up the existing shared path network, through the Town Centre and to the new Belco Bikeway. In addition, cycling connections to Page, Scullin, Weetangera, and Hawker could be improved.

PRIORITY 5. UPGRADE THE EXISTING SHARED PATH ON GUNGALIN DRIVE

Improving this path to remove gaps and make it safer will make this route a direct and safe route that is usable by a wide range of cyclists.

PRIORITY 6. IMPROVE THE CYCLING CONNECTION BETWEEN THE TUGGERANONG TOWN CENTRE AND CHISHOLM

The current path network that runs between the Tuggeranong Town Centre and Gowrie, Faddon, Chisholm and Macarthur is in need of upgrading. Although certainly scenic, this path network is not an efficient way of travelling any distance by bike. The main arterial east-west road in this part of Tuggeranong - Isabella Drive, does not have a cycle lane for almost its entire length.

PRIORITY 7. IMPROVE CYCLING ACCESS TO THE CITY FROM AINSLIE, HACKETT, AND WATSON, AND MAKE AINSLIE SAFER

Despite its proximity to the city, and the high rate of cyclists in the area, there is no clear safe cycleway - either on-road, or off-road, to enable cyclists to ride from these eastern suburbs into the city. Limestone and Majura Avenues do not have cycle lanes or paths of any kind, and connections to North Ainslie Primary School and Ainslie Primary in Braddon are also unsupported.

2. OVER 100 SMALL UPGRADES TO CONNECT THE GAPS IN OUR EXISTING WALKING AND CYCLING NETWORK, BASED ON EXTENSIVE COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Through our mapping feedback, we have also identified more than 100 small upgrades that for a small investment would connect the gaps in our existing network. This shows once again that bringing path users into the policy process leads to better outcomes for the community.

3. ALLOCATE A MINIMUM OF 20% OF THE ROADS AND PARKING CAPITAL UPGRADE BUDGET TO WALKING AND CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE OVER THE NEXT FOUR YEARS

Although the figure varies substantially from year to year, the roads and parking upgrade budget in the ACT is typically over \$100 million per year. We want to ensure that walkers and cyclists get a fair share of this funding. If the roads budget increases, we think it's reasonable that a proportionate amount is spent on healthier forms of transport. Setting a minimum proportion of 20% of the roads and parking capital expenditure budget, with a minimum of \$20 million per year over the next four years would provide a much-needed boost to improve our walking and cycling infrastructure.

These funds will be directed toward a range of walking and cycling priority projects, as identified through our community consultation process with Canberrans giving specific feedback on our [walking and cycling path network map](#).

HOW TO GET THERE

DEVELOP A TEN YEAR WALKING AND CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE PRIORITY PLAN

The Greens want a strategic, community-driven ten year walking and cycling infrastructure priority plan. This plan will provide a long-term vision for walking and cycling infrastructure and will enable residents and path users to make their future plans for transport and location of residence. The plan will outline the location and timeframes for major network upgrades.

The plan will include actions to:

- Fix missing links in local path network
- Install lighting to improve safety, particularly near public transport
- Better connect bus stops to people's houses
- Add footpaths as necessary in busy areas of Canberra
- Identify roads that should have separated cycled paths
- Manage local traffic to improve safety for walkers and cyclists, for example lowering speed limits or installing traffic calming measures
- Continue to roll-out infrastructure upgrades to create age-friendly suburbs
- Install new seating to assist walkers to have breaks, especially at bus stops.

Many of our existing shared paths are in need of maintenance, and some are so well used that they would benefit from being widened to 4 metres, or having a dedicated walking path built alongside them. As well as this maintenance work, and the ongoing work to fix missing links in our shared path network, the Greens believe that every region of Canberra requires new investment in cycling infrastructure.

The Greens believe that active travel should be thought about locally, and include local voices through community participation. Community input, including from school communities, local business owners, and local residents, to identify gaps in the current cycling and walking network and to evaluate community needs and public safety is key to identifying priority areas. Path improvements should be based on users' feedback, and reflect local conditions, such as existing infrastructure, demographics, and geography. Other changes that improve walking, cycling and safety in neighbourhoods, such as lower speed limits, pedestrian crossings, speed humps, or signage should also be identified through this consultation.

ESTABLISH AN ACCESS COMMITTEE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES TO GUIDE GOVERNMENT ON ACTIVE TRAVEL, URBAN PLANNING AND TRANSPORT DESIGN PROPOSAL ISSUES

Universal access in urban areas enables all people to get where they need to, regardless of their age, gender or ability. It is about ensuring that people can move about the city freely and with independence. This includes walking and cycling, use of the bus and light rail network, as well as other transport services.

Those who struggle to get around our city are the people who can offer the best insights into how to make it better.

The Greens will establish an Access Committee, to provide advice and feedback to the ACT Government on urban planning, transport design, and active travel issues. The Committee's membership will include women, people with a range of disabilities, people of diverse ages, and representatives from other groups needing better access to transport options. This will improve the level of community involvement in infrastructure planning and ensure a greater diversity of community input.

AGE-FRIENDLY SUBURBS

The ACT Greens will also ensure more 'age-friendly suburbs' are rolled out across Canberra, which are designed to meet the special needs of older and younger people, who move around neighbourhoods in a different way and are more vulnerable. Design that is good for walkers and cyclists also tends to be good for older and younger people.

ADOPT WORLD'S BEST-PRACTICE CYCLING AND WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE STANDARDS

The ACT Greens will ensure the ACT Government adopts world's best practice cycling and walking infrastructure standards. The ACT, like the rest of Australia, lags behind the world's leading cities when it comes to the design of urban active travel infrastructure. Renowned 'cycling cities' like Copenhagen or Amsterdam provide an abundance of safe, separated cycling infrastructure; cycling 'superhighways'; intersections and other treatments that prioritise cyclists; and other best practice designs that have made it comfortable, safe and efficient to travel by bicycle.

The ACT Government continues to design Canberra predominantly for travel by car.

The Greens would adopt the best practice active travel standards into the ACT Government's infrastructure design standards, and make corresponding changes to the Territory Plan, to **ensure that Canberra is designed to support and prioritise active travel and '20 minute neighbourhoods'**, in line with standards used by leading sustainable cities. This would include standards that support a rapid uptake in the use of e-bicycles.

This initiative would take the form of an immediate review of ACT active travel design standards and leading international standards, with the adoption of best practice standards from July 2021.

IMPROVE END OF TRIP FACILITIES

A lack of adequate end of trip facilities - such as showers, change rooms, storage, etc - remains a significant obstacle faced by people who are considering commuting to work by active travel, especially by bike.

To address this issue the Greens would:

- commence a market sounding exercise to bring 'bicycle hubs' to Civic and other town centres. A bicycle hub is a dedicated, staffed building that contains showers, bicycle storage, and potentially other facilities such as bicycle repair, laundry facilities, coffee, and other services. An example is Brisbane's successful [cycle2city facility](#). Following market sounding we would seek to engage private partners in the design, construction, and management of a facility, with the first facility to open by 2023.
- implement a best practice 'bicycle parking code' to ensure all new buildings provide quality bicycle parking for residents and visitors, and change room facilities. Existing buildings will be required to retrofit these facilities when any major upgrades are made to the building.