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MEDIA RELEASE

Mapping out Sydney's cycling future

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The Lemma Government is calling for community comment on a new NSW Bike Plan to promote and encourage cycling.

Minister for Roads Eric Roozendaal and Minister for Environment and Climate Change Verity Firth today said the Premier's Council on Active Living had been commissioned to start work on a new Bike Plan for NSW, with an in-depth study of current cycling patterns across the state being the first step.

"The NSW Government is committed to promoting cycling and improving cycling facilities as part of a balanced transport system for NSW," Mr Roozendaal said.

"The new Bike Plan will be the blueprint for the future of cycling in NSW.

"The Plan will map out the new events, new facilities and new programs needed to support the development of cycling as both a recreation activity and a commuting option.

"Since 1999, an average of 233km of cycleways have been built annually and today we have more than 4,100km of cycleways across the state, including 2,000km in Sydney."

Ms Firth said cycling had considerable environmental benefits.

"It makes sense to encourage more people to consider cycling as an environmentally-friendly and healthy means of transportation, particularly for short trips," Ms Firth said.

"Just one person who switches from driving to cycling to work during the week over a 10km trip each way saves around 1.3 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions a year.

"And cycling doesn't just help reduce pollution, it also cuts down on traffic congestion and gets people fit.

"Last year, NSW residents purchased around 430,000 new bicycles, outstripping the number of new vehicles registered in the same period by 75,000.

"In Sydney alone, bicycle use has grown by 23 per cent on weekdays and 58 per cent on weekends since 2001."

Mr Roozendaal said the NSW BikePlan would build on current Government commitments.

“The lemma Government is funding more than \$47 million of bicycle initiatives this financial year,” Mr Roozendaal said.

“Most cycling takes place on local roads, which is why the Government is contributing funding towards 91 local bicycle projects, matched by funding from local councils.

“The Government is also committed to building off-road shared paths, where possible, when new roads are built.

“For example, last financial year the Government provided \$14.8 million towards shared cycling/walking or on-road cycling facilities as part of major road construction projects including the construction of the Blacktown to Parklea T-Way and as part of the Great Western, Hume and Pacific Highway upgrades.”

Ms Firth said the NSW BikePlan would develop clear directions for future promotion and development of cycling across the state.

“Community consultation is a key component of developing this NSW BikePlan,” Ms Firth said.

“We want to hear from the community about ways in which people could be encouraged to take up cycling.

“The NSW BikePlan project team will be consulting widely with local councils, major employers, bicycle user groups, and other peak organisations with an interest in improving safe and sustainable transport options.”

Individuals are encouraged to put forward their ideas and views via email to Bike_Plan@rta.nsw.gov.au.