



To Emma Johnston  
Secretary to the Select Committee on Public and Active Transport  
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## Submission to Select Committee on Public and Active Transport

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### Prepared by:

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### Committee Terms of Reference:

- (a) The availability and quality of public transport, including:
  - i. infrastructure and services in metropolitan and regional areas;
  - ii. the impact of fares and frequency;
  - iii. the efficacy and impacts of on-demand public transport; and
  - iv. re-activation of passenger and freight rail lines in regional South Australia.
- (b) The role of government in enabling and encouraging active transport, including:
  - i. measures to enable more participation;
  - ii. the effect on community health and wellbeing;
  - iii. the effect on climate change mitigation; and
  - iv. measures to improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists.
- (c) The use of e-scooters and potential opportunities for expansion or further regulation.
- (d) Any other related matters.

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## **Executive Summary**

This submission discusses the role that improved access to and safety of public and active transport could play in addressing many issues facing SA families and the state as a whole; particularly the fossil-fuel and the climate crises.

There is a focus on safer cycling in this submission as this has been a lifestyle change that many SA families have adopted, or are considering to adopt to reduce community emissions, improve health and well-being, whilst also reducing exposure to Covid-19.

## **Introduction**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to the Select Committee's inquiry into Public and Active Transport in South Australia. SA Parents for Climate Action would be happy to provide further information or answer specific questions if requested.

SA Parents for Climate Action (SAP4CA) is the local group of Australian Parents for Climate Action, Australia's leading climate advocacy organisation for parents, carers, families and all who care about a safe future for kids. AP4CA aims to empower their supporters to make the climate safer for every child.

With over 400 supporters in SA and growing, SAP4CA represents families from across the political spectrum, in many SA electorates, and from diverse socio-economic backgrounds. We are specifically non-partisan in our approach.

We advocate for action from government and business to address climate change and its impacts.

Our vision is for our children to live safe, healthy, prosperous lives because Australian governments and businesses have implemented the solutions required to ensure a safe climate.

Founded in 2019 by six regional, rural and urban mums in four states and territories, AP4CA is a parent organisation, run by parents for parents, and we've grown rapidly to fill a critical gap in the climate movement.

Parents are a very large constituency reaching across all sectors of society and politics who together hold strong moral, electoral and purchasing power.

Together, we are motivated by love - for our children and families, for thriving cultures and communities, for the natural world and all species in it.

As parents, we are deeply concerned about our children's future – current global emissions levels are driving floods, bushfires, heat stress, droughts, storms, and sea level rise that threaten our children's safety, survival and quality of life. We are fighting for our children's future!

## *The case for #SaferCycling in SA*

South Australians are facing many interrelated and growing crises; a fossil fuels crisis, a cost-of-living crisis, a health and health-system crisis, a housing affordability crisis, and a youth mental health crisis. And on top of all of this there is the looming crisis of unmitigated climate change from the continued burning of fossil fuels.

Our community of parents who are especially concerned about the impacts of climate change for our families, are calling on our leaders to get behind innovative and shovel-ready projects that will benefit people of *all* ages, genders, and income levels, and help us to reduce our contribution to climate warming pollution.

***Improving cycling safety in our city and suburbs is an effective strategy to help address many of the crises facing South Australians in a relatively quick, simple and low-cost shift in transport policy focus.***

### *How can #SaferCycling help to address so many big issues facing our community?*

Compared to other forms of vehicle transport:

- **Bikes offer low/no-cost transport** (*freeing up more of an individual/household's income to spend in their local community, and reducing environmental costs too*)
  - ◆ Bikes require no petrol or diesel to run, and create no emissions
  - ◆ Bike servicing is free, or very low cost
  - ◆ Bike parking is free, or very low cost
  - ◆ Bikes do not need to be registered and they require no extra insurance (commonly added to a person's existing home and contents insurance)
  
- **Bikes offer quicker, safer and more equitable transport and exercise opportunities** (*particularly beneficial for women, children, recent migrants and busy parents*)
  - ◆ Bike parking is often much closer to the venue/location
  - ◆ Bike travel provides regular opportunity for low-impact physical activity
  - ◆ Bikes can travel to the front of traffic jams and take off-road routes
  - ◆ Bikes do not require searching and queuing for car parking
  - ◆ Bikes do not require a driver's licence
  - ◆ Bikes offer under-18 year olds a mode of self-sufficient local transportation
  - ◆ Bikes, even e-bikes can be obtained much more quickly than new cars which often have a delivery time of 12 months
  
- **Bikes require much less public and private infrastructure for use and storage** (*freeing up existing roads and parking for those who need it*)
  - ◆ Bikes take up much less space on the road
  - ◆ Bikes take up much less space when parked
  - ◆ Bike infrastructure is much cheaper to roll-out and maintain.

## But can a bike really replace a car?

For many, a common road bike, or an electric bike fitted with pannier bags could quickly, easily and cheaply replace a car journey for most every-day travel.

However, there are two significant barriers to bike riding that people in our community report;

1. People want to be able to transport all of the passengers, pets and cargo that they usually do in a car.
2. People want to feel safe travelling by bike as they usually do driving a car.

## Problem 1: Can a bike carry all the passengers and every-day things that a car can?

Short answer - yes!

For those with kids, cargo, pets, hills to climb and greater distances to travel, a sturdier, more powerful option is required; this is where electric-cargo bikes step up to the plate as true car-replacements.

Compared to common road bikes:

- **Electric Cargo Bikes (ECBs) can carry large cargo and passengers safely and more often** (*particularly beneficial for families trying to save money and reduce their car use*)
  - ◆ ECBs can carry between 60 - 200 kgs of passenger weight or cargo
  - ◆ ECBs are often designed to accommodate specialised child-safe and adult seating accessories (for carrying up to two or sometime three passengers)
  - ◆ ECBs have strong durable frames, and specialised tyres, suspension and braking systems for carrying larger loads
  - ◆ ECBs have adjustable pedal-assisted power, up to a safe speed of 25km/h (with motors limited to output of 200 watts)
  - ◆ ECBs can assist a person to travel on their bike more often, covering further distances, more easily travelling up/down larger gradients, against the wind, and all without requiring specialised clothing
  - ◆ ECBs and/or their batteries can be charged easily wherever there is an AC power source, and extra batteries can be carried for swapping if ever needed.

But, these higher-powered, cargo-carrying, car-replacement bikes come with a much higher initial price-tag than a common bike, costing between \$4,000-\$10,000 each. “*E-bike costs are one of the strongest barriers to adoption*” - Dillon Fitch, co-director of the Bicycling Plus Research Collaborative Research Faculty at the University of California, Davis ([link](#)).

Governments, councils and even private businesses have recognised the huge benefits that ECBs can bring to communities, and they have also recognised that despite the significant long-term savings, for many the initial price-tag is just too high. So in order to increase access to these versatile car-replacing options, many jurisdictions have set-up finance assistance programs, including bike libraries, no-interest loans, and subsidies to assist in the purchase of electric cargo bikes.

Examples of schemes to assist residents/business to try/buy electric bikes (including ECBs):

- [Australian Capital Territory](#) - to help achieve their goal of net-zero emissions by 2045, residents can borrow a bike for free as part of a 'try-before-you-buy' scheme.
- [Manchester, UK](#) - E-bikes are being made available to use for free in Greater Manchester after the Department for Transport (DfT) provided Cycling UK with £8m in funding. The 'cycling made e-asy' scheme is also set to be rolled out in Leicester, Luton, Hull and Sheffield. The scheme will provide free e-bike loans for up to three months for eligible residents. The aim of the programme is to dispel common myths about e-bikes and also to build awareness of them as a viable mode of transport. Cycling Minister Trudy Harrison reports "we understand that taking the first step to start cycling can be a difficult prospect for many people. This project will allow them to access an e-cycle without obstacles holding them back, to help them make real changes to their travel habits."
- [Italy](#) - Any Italian company or business activity that has invested in the purchase of a cargo bike for its daily activities in 2021 will now be able to receive up to 30% of the total expense. According to a decree published in the Italian Official Gazette, the incentive will be "in the form of a tax credit" and is up to a maximum of €2,000. The Italian government has allocated €2million to the scheme, which applies to the purchase of cargo bikes and power-assisted bikes.
- [New Zealand](#) - Employer e-bike purchase support schemes have been set up to help many employees to purchase e-bikes by addressing the key barrier of the upfront cost. Encouragement and support is provided to employers to negotiate a discount from an e-bike supplier and then to provide a wage advance or loan to staff, paid back through salary deductions over a set period.

## **Problem 2: Can cycling be a safe mode of transport for more people?**

When we think of countries that have safe cycling lifestyles, we think first and foremost of The Netherlands, but cycling was not always the preferred method of transport, so how did they transform their city and their people to encourage cycling to be so safe in their cities and suburbs?

In response to Covid-19 and the threat of worsening climate change, governments around the world have announced measures to improve cycling safety. From hundreds of miles of new bike lanes in Milan and Mexico City, to widening pavements and pedestrianising neighbourhoods in New York and Seattle, action is being taken “to help people move around without the congestion, pollution and ill-health that comes with car use” In the UK, Insurer to cyclists and motorists Direct Line has delivered research that places a link between cyclist safety on the roads and recent cycling infrastructure investments. Vincent Guadagnino, Communications Manager for Direct Line Cycling Insurance said: “It is great to see local authorities investing in cycling infrastructure. As well as encouraging more people to cycle frequently, our analysis suggests that this is also helping to save lives, with the number of accidents occurring in cycle lanes falling considerably in recent years.” ([Link](#))

And a newly published study of Denmark’s cycling infrastructure and the associated benefits attached to safe cycling has cemented links to improved health, reduced congestion and ever increasing numbers taking to bikes. ([Link](#)).

Being able to get on a bike and feel safe riding wherever we need to is a gift that we should be aiming to give back to everyone in our community, regardless of age, gender, fitness or income level.

## **Benefits of action: Can more people cycling bring benefits to the broader community?**

#SaferCycling and more people riding bikes has benefits even for those who are not regularly riding a bike, including:

- a decrease in air and noise pollution
- a reduction in congestion
- a reduction in travel time
- a reduction in road accidents
- a reduction in demand for parking, and
- a reduction in demand for health services as a result of an increase in physical activity in the community.

Increased uptake of active transport in the community also means increased business opportunity, with a recent study by [Transport for London](#) revealing that people walking, cycling and using public transport spend 40% more than motorists in local shops. So not only does car free travel create healthier and happier neighbourhoods, it can strengthen local economies too!

## A case study - a mum on her electric cargo bike!



“My husband and I have always loved riding our bikes, but after having kids and riding with them on the back of our road bikes, or in a trailer, or on their own little bikes, riding just became too hard to go very far or very often.

Then we watched the movie [Motherload](#) which is about a mum who feels trapped by her reliance on a car and her life-changing discovery of cargo bikes, and we were off searching for our own next set of wheels!

We were blown away by the range of options for cargo and kid-carrying bikes, and the pedal-power that an electric cargo bike could give the rider even against the wind and up hills, all with loads of up to 150kg on the back! But we were also blown away by the price...

After much soul searching, a very hefty annual parking bill, and an intense desire to get-active and reduce our contribution to climate pollution, we sat and did the sums, and weighed up the pros and cons. It turned out that if we replaced our second car with two electric cargo bikes we would not only be saving a huge amount of money on parking, fuel, insurance, servicing and rego, we would also be saving time, our health, \*and\* we would be reducing air and noise pollution in our local area too - it was a win-win-win-win!

We have now had our 2 car-replacing electric cargo bikes for just over a year and a half and have found it to be one of the best life decisions we have made for our family. We ride to drop the kids at school, and then ride on to work, picking up groceries in the panniers, against the wind, in the rain, and up a slight hill all in our usual work clothes (with rain gear when needed). We have found that we get places quicker (especially during peak hour!) we are having more fun with the kids on our ‘commute’ listening to and watching nature as we ride and smiling/waving to people in our neighbourhood, and we feel we have given our family a sense of being part of a solution to address climate change, which is particularly important as our kids (and us adults) begin to fully understand the seriousness of not acting on this global problem. We have also loved being able to explore our state by bike, taking them on trains to get further - particularly valuable during Covid when overseas and even interstate travel was off the cards.

We do wish we could recommend riding electric cargo bikes to more families, but the two barriers - cost and safety - are significant for many. If state and local governments could change their focus from solving road congestion by widening roads and building bridges to instead supporting strategies that would get more families out of cars and onto bikes, this would have huge benefits for all South Australians, particularly during this time of high fuel costs and other cost of living pressures. And whilst electric cargo bikes are hefty in price, they are substantially cheaper outright and in the long-run than an electric car.

Bikes are indeed a form of ‘[constructive hope](#)’, but our community needs support to access more versatile options to cater for their transport needs, and our roads need to be safer to ride on every day for everyone.”

- Andrea, mum of 2

## RECOMMENDATIONS for state and local government from SA families

To address the growing crises in cost-of-living, health system demand, and climate change, we are asking the SA Government to embark on a **'Safer Cycling in SA' infrastructure, access, and awareness campaign** over the next 12 months :

### 1. Infrastructure investment - **"build it, and we will use it (if it's safe!)"**

To ensure more South Australians feel safe riding our bikes, we recommend that Greater Adelaide undergo a city and suburb-wide transformation for safer cycling with the SA Department for Transport working with Councils to provide the following strategies;

- **30Please:** 30 km/hr default speed for local streets at all times. For more information on the 30Please initiative, you can view this [presentation](#) by Lena Huda, the initiative's founder.
- **Safe Routes 2 School:** All secondary roads within 500-1500m of a school should be reduced to 30km/hr between 8am and 6pm weekdays, with designated 'no drop-off' zones adjacent to or within school grounds to enhance safety for all students.
- **Cycling Infrastructure Prioritisation:**
  - Commit state funding to critical missing pieces of Adelaide cycling infrastructure including the East/West City Bikeway and an uninterrupted Circular Parklands Bikeway.
  - coordinate with LGAs on existing active transport plans and priorities and fast track state funding to enable critical bikeway development to be fast-tracked and implemented before 2025.

### 2. Access investment - **"improving access to car-alternatives"**

To ensure more South Australians use the safer cycling infrastructure to replace their car-trips, we recommend that the SA Government develop and deliver the following:

- **Electric Cargo Bike Rebate:** A 25% rebate up to \$1000 for families with children towards the purchase of an Electric Cargo Bike.
- **Public and Active transport integration plan:** enabling people to use the train/tram and bus networks to get further on their bikes will ensure more SA families can access their destinations using public and active transport more often. Allowing people with bikes to utilise public transport also provides a back-up plan in cases where they can no longer safely ride, eg. the weather turns bad or an injury /sickness occurs.
- **Upgrade of SA's Cycle Instead app** - a user-friendly app with hands-free functioning would make it a lot easier for people to navigate the suburbs and city on our bikes. Ensure users have use of the same route options as Cycle Instead currently allows, including "maximise paths" for those who would prefer to mainly ride on off-road bike paths.

3. **Awareness campaign - “we all have a part to play in making cycling safer for 8 to 80 year olds, and there will be benefits for everyone!”**

To support the infrastructure investment, we recommend that the SA Government develop and deliver a

■ **“Safer Cycling in SA” awareness campaign** highlighting the following benefits of safer cycling for 8 to 80 year olds who wish to ride their bikes:

- **Messaging on benefits of #SaferCycling for individuals;**
  - mental and physical health,
  - monetary and time savings,
  - and of course, fun!
- **Messaging on benefits of #SaferCycling for our community, e.g.;**
  - *“This initiative for increasing accessibility and safety for cycling is ambitious, but in these times of significant and growing crises, people in our community need urgent, innovative and relatively cost-effective action to address the issues in an equitable way”.*
  - *“This is bang for your buck congestion-busting as it has a much smaller impact on our state budget and our local communities compared to bridges and road-widening”,*
  - *“Safer cycling provides a significantly cheaper, more accessible mode of transport which will lead to a healthier community more willing and able to participate in, contribute to and spend money in their local community”.*
  - *“In spite of the recommendation for reduced speeds, the package of recommendations for improving cycling safety and accessibility will mean that whenever car-travel is required, travel times will be shorter because there will be less cars on the roads. This will be particularly evident during peak-hour times”.*

We also ask the State Government to **review the state’s road design guidelines** for consistent design standards. There is currently no consistency in these guidelines except for various minimum widths, and these are applied mostly to off-road bikeways, seldom to on-road bikeways.

As part of a review of SA’s road design guideline, we urge the government to **consider the following recommendations to assist SA families to feel safer riding bikes on the road:**

- All main and secondary roads in Adelaide should be clearly marked with bike lanes.
- Parking should no longer be allowed in bike lanes at any time. Where designated parking bays are needed, measures to ensure the safe travel of bikes around them should be implemented.
- Where bike lines are adjacent to on-road car parking, the bike lane should be situated next to the footpath, allowing riders to be separated from traffic.
- Whenever a bike lane crosses an intersection, that section of bike lane should be clearly marked with solid green.
- All main road intersections should have green painted **‘bike-boxes’** to allow cyclists to ‘be safe and be seen’ whilst waiting for light changes.

These recommendations have been informed by the Bike Adelaide [Policies to Improve Cycling in Adelaide](#) and the [Three Transport Priorities](#) initiative, which is a partnership between the Asia Pacific Society for Physical Activity, WeRide Australia and an alliance of 13 public health, transport, education and climate organisations.

## **The main takeaway message from SA Parents for Climate Action**

We know that transport is the fastest growing source of climate warming pollution in our community, and we know that much time has been wasted without clear action. Now that South Australia has declared a climate emergency, it is time for our community to see some tangible action which *all* South Australians can participate in and benefit from, particularly children.

Whilst public and active transport may not be a preferred or even a possible mode of transport for all members of our community, there are increasing numbers of SA families who are wanting to use our cars less and ride our bikes more in response to many of the crises facing our community right now.

This new appetite for car-alternatives reflects a global trend where efforts to increase people's access to safer cycling infrastructure, coupled with access to more versatile electric bike options, is leading to travelling by bike becoming a more attractive transport option for families, especially with the associated monetary savings and better health outcomes.

*But SA families need active transport to be safer and better integrated with public transport.*

State and local government investment in public and active transport will give our community a gift of agency and “active hope” at a time when many SA families are in need of innovative and resourceful options.

And, more specifically, with a shift in transport policy focus towards providing #SaferCycling infrastructure across Adelaide city and suburbs, along with improved awareness of the benefits of cycling, and improved access to more versatile bike options, many more South Australian families will choose to ride, with *all* Adelaide residents and businesses benefiting from our beautiful city becoming the *bike riding capital of Australia!*