

## Cycling in the City Project

### Summary Report – August 2005

#### Summary

The Cycling in the City project undertook a pilot program that promoted and supported cycling to work at three workplaces in the Sydney CBD: Lend Lease, Macquarie Bank and the City of Sydney Council.

The project recruited thirty-one (31) people who were not already cycling to work. The participants, called Ride2Workers, undertook Cycling Proficiency Training and bike maintenance training. For three months after the training the participants cycled to work and reported on their experiences. Twenty-six (26) participants completed the program.<sup>1</sup>

Cycling is a fun and healthy form of transport. Cycling is the most fuel-efficient form of transport and you can make a difference to climate change by cycling instead of driving. By replacing motor vehicle trips with cycling, there's less:

- traffic congestion
- noise
- air pollution
- greenhouse gas emissions
- water pollution.

With more people cycling, roads can be put on diets.

Over the course of the twelve weeks, the Ride2Workers:

- 🚲 cycled 8611km – most participants (21/26) had a journey of less than 10km (less than 30 minutes cycling) to work
- 🚲 saved 1894kg of greenhouse gases compared with driving an average car<sup>2</sup>
- 🚲 saved over \$6,372 in operating costs (compared with driving)<sup>3</sup>
- 🚲 improved their general fitness
- 🚲 burnt the equivalent energy of 3120 fun-sized Mars bars!<sup>4</sup>

The Cycling in the City program achieved its aims of increasing:

- 🚲 the cycling skills and knowledge of participants
- 🚲 the number of trips to work by bicycle, and
- 🚲 the number of people who cycle regularly to work in each workplace and to the CBD overall.

We concluded that the program is an effective solution for transport and greenhouse gas reduction.

#### Quotes from participants:

*An excellent project. Thanks for the experience. The project has helped me feel confident that I am cycling to work correctly (ie. following the correct road rules, using the correct cycling style, taking the correct route). I feel better at work. I feel healthier at home. I am helping the natural environment as well as helping free the city of cars. I am contributing to my local community.*

Ride2Worker A



Photos of Cycling Proficiency Training

#### About the project

The Cycling in the City project has conducted and evaluated a program offered to people at workplaces to encourage cycling to work in the City of Sydney Local Government Area. The project was funded jointly by the City of Sydney and a grant from the Department of Environment and Conservation's 'Our Environment: It's a Living Thing Education Program: Local Council Project Partnerships'. The project was supported by Bicycle NSW and by BikeSydney, the local Bicycle User Group who organised social twilight rides after work.

*First real ride to work last Saturday ... after the course on Friday. Using what I learnt in the second Friday session, I found a good back road that got me from my house ... to the Sydney Harbour Bridge without riding on the Pacific Highway. I also practised changing my inner tube using the tricks shown on in the lesson ... and found it really easy. Now I am much more confident to ride further away from home and know that I can change my a flat and still get home.*

Ride2Worker L

### **Some Highlights:**

*Being charged up the minute I sit down at my desk in the morning. Saving ten minutes each way on my work journey.*

Ride2Worker X

*Smells, sights and sounds. Interacting with courteous motorists, increasing levels of fitness and comfort in own body and stress reduction.*

Ride2Worker R

*Door to door traveling by bike is actually quicker than bus. Bus usually takes anywhere between 30 and 40 minutes. Bike takes 25 minutes. Pretty happy with that. Feel quite energised when I arrive at my seat for work*

Ride2Worker P

*Going across the bridge and through town with Valentines Day flowers strapped to my backpack*

Ride2Worker E

The aims of the project were to:

- 1) conduct a pilot program at City workplaces in order to:
  - increase the cycling skills and knowledge of participants
  - increase the number of trips to work by bike
  - increase the number of people who cycle regularly to work and from each workplace
- 2) assess whether the program method was effective and how it might be improved in the future.

The program was conducted between November 2004 and May 2005.

### **Program method**

The program sought to strengthen the capacity of workplaces to support people who cycle to work. From three committed workplaces, a select number of staff were invited to 'champion' cycling-to-work among their colleagues. These 'champions' became the seven Workplace Cycling Coordinators who were trained to educate staff about cycling and sustainable transport, promote cycling and how to be a 'bike buddy' (e.g. showing a new Ride2Worker a safe route on quiet streets).

At each workplace, the Workplace Cycling Coordinators and program staff raised awareness of the benefits and enjoyment of cycling to work and invited staff to participate in the program.

The Ride2Workers (staff who did not previously cycle to work) undertook Cycling Proficiency Training, including off- and on-road in traffic. They received a yellow vest, a cycle computer, a bag of cycling information and vouchers for discounts at participating bike shops. Both the Ride2Workers and the Workplace Cycling Coordinators participated in a Bicycle NSW bicycle maintenance workshop (road worthiness check; changing a tyre etc).



Photos of the Cycling Proficiency Training

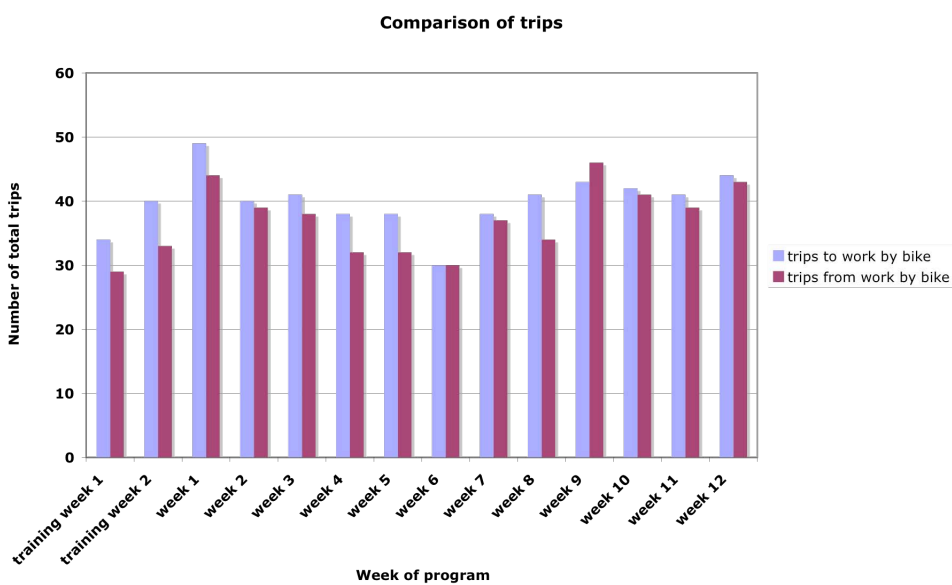
### **Project results**

The level of interest in participating in the program was high: at one workplace over 50 people expressed an interest in being a Ride2Worker. The people selected as Ride2Workers were required to have some cycling experience, although they were not necessarily confident at cycling on road in traffic. Thirty-one (31) Ride2Workers were recruited across the three participating workplaces. Some people who joined the program were regular recreational cyclists, but the majority did not cycle regularly for transport (to shops, University, etc).

Of the 26 Ride2Workers who completed the program, there were 18 men (69%) and 8 women (31%). Twenty-three were aged between 21-40 years and three were aged 41-50 years.

### Increased number of trips to work by bike

Over three months, a total of 940 trips were made to or from work by bike by the 26 Ride2Workers. On average, the Ride2Workers cycled a total of 36 trips to or from work over the 12 weeks or 3.0 trips per week. The trips per week varied over the course of the project as the following graph shows.



*The cycle to work project has been fantastic. It has increased my knowledge and skill base and increased my confidence considerably.*  
Ride2Worker I

Rainy weather made a noticeable dent in the number of cycling trips to and from work. Many of the Ride2Workers began cycling to work during the two weeks of Cycling Proficiency Training even though not required to do so.

### Increases in cycling skills and knowledge

During the program, the Ride2Workers significantly increased their cycling skills and knowledge. For basic cycling skills, for example, stopping and starting, cycling in a straight line, Ride2Workers rated their confidence levels. At the start of the program participants rated themselves fairly confident. After riding to work regularly for three months, their confidence in cycling skills had risen considerably (see table below).

*Was a very worthwhile exercise. For me personally it set off a chain reaction to regain my fitness. Along with the cycling I got back into touch footy and joined a dragon boat racing team. All in all the past 3.5-4 months I have lost about 10kgs and I'm feeling great. The riding experience was great. I am now confident to ride anywhere in any conditions. I also know how to maintain my bike properly to keep it in optimum operating condition. ... Would recommend this program to anyone.*  
Ride2Worker P

At the beginning of the program participants generally lack confidence with the cycle commuting skills needed for journeys to work in the Sydney CBD, such as riding through narrow spaces between a parked car and a moving car or making their presence known in traffic by using a bell or hand signals. After the Cycling Proficiency Training their confidence in these skills increased considerably. With the experience of riding each week for three months, participants reported a further increase in confidence of their skills to ride in traffic.

	Before Cycling Proficiency Training	After CPT	End of program
Cycling skills – average	3.3	4.0	4.4
Commuting skills – average	2.6	3.7	4.2

The higher the number, the more confidence in skill: 5 – very confident, 4 - quite confident, 3 – confident, 2 – fairly confident, 1 – a little bit confident

*It's been a great opportunity, well worth doing. I consistently recommend it to people both in and outside the COS (City of Sydney) as an achievable way of getting to work and enjoying yourself. My daily journey is something I once thought I couldn't do once, but have now been doing daily for the last three months. There is a great sense of achievement and opportunity, it's been an incredibly positive and empowering experience.*

Ride2Worker R

*Cycling is now my preferred choice for work travel as it is at least ten minutes faster than my previous journey time (walk + train). It also works better for dropping off and collecting my daughter from child care (I have a baby seat). Parking at work is secure and reasonably convenient. The project was very well conceived and conducted and succeeded in changing my commuting habits.*

Ride2Worker X

The program also resulted in a significant increase in participants' knowledge about cycling and cycling to work such as how to do a weekly bike maintenance check for road worthiness and how to carry gear for work by bicycle.

	Before Cycling Proficiency Training	After CPT	End of program
Average - all knowledge areas	2.9	3.9	4.4

The higher the number, the more knowledge:

- 5 – excellent
- 4 – good
- 3 – fair
- 2 – poor
- 1 – no knowledge

In all these skills and knowledge areas, women and men participants reported similar increases in confidence following Cycling Proficiency Training and by the end of the program. Women's self-ratings showed relatively lower confidence levels than men both before and at the end of the program.

### **Increases in the number of people who regularly cycle to work**

By the end of the program, one quarter of the participants (6/26) now regard cycling as their usual mode of travel to work rather than only once a week and two (2) others regard it as one of their two usual modes of travel to work. The other participants indicated that they are continuing to cycle regularly, many of them continuing to cycle to work once a week or more.

### **Other benefits – enjoyment and increased fitness**

By the end of the program, the participants reported an improvement in general fitness. The quotations from participants illustrate their enjoyment of the program and cycling. During interviews at the end of the program, several participants volunteered that they feel healthier and happier and they attribute their feeling of wellbeing, at least in part, to being involved in the program and cycling more frequently. We hope that their enjoyment of cycling to work provides the momentum to continue cycling and engaging others in this healthy, sustainable way of getting around Sydney.

### **Acknowledgements**

The City of Sydney would like to thank the Department of Environment and Conservation, the corporate partners: Lend Lease and Macquarie Bank; bicycle retailers: Cheeky Monkey Cycle Company, Clarence Street Cyclery and Woolys Wheels; community partners: Bicycle NSW and BikeSydney; Tanya Bosch and the Health Promotion Unit of South Western Sydney Area Health Service (Eastern Region).

<sup>1</sup> Of the five that did not complete the program, three changed jobs, one went on an extended overseas holiday and one decided the distance to work by bike was too far (over an hour each way) to ride regularly.

<sup>2</sup> Using <http://www.climatechangesolutions.com/individuals/transport/tools/ataob.html> and assuming replacing trips in a mid-sized car with fuel efficiency of 8.97 litres per 100km

<sup>3</sup> Using NRMA figures for an average medium car private operating costs new to five years of 74c/km – see [http://www.mynrma.com.au/operating\\_costs.asp#MediumCar](http://www.mynrma.com.au/operating_costs.asp#MediumCar)

<sup>4</sup> Equivalent to 963139 KJ – using Brisbane City Council conversion factors.