



24 December 2015

Cycling Strategy Update
Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport
and Resources
cycling.strategy@ecodev.vic.gov.au

Ask for: Natalie Walker
Phone: 9932 1096
Our Ref: A2282336

Dear Sir/Madam,

Victoria's Cycling Strategy

Hobsons Bay City Council welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission as part of the consultation process for updating Victoria's Cycling Strategy. Council commends the State Government's commitment to cycling through the development of an updated strategy and the establishment of Active Transport Victoria. Hobsons Bay has led the development of the Western Metropolitan Regional Trails Strategy in partnership with the Cities of Wyndham, Moonee Valley, Brimbank, Melton and Maribyrnong. This regional plan identifies the regional trail gaps and priorities for future implementation. Road, and cyclist and pedestrian safety have been a key driver in the development of the strategy. This strategy has also informed the VicRoads Strategic Cycling Corridors Plan.

Key challenges for local government are the delivery of regional cycling corridors within a rate capping environment and coordinating the numerous responsible land managers and owners.

The remaining section of the Kororoit Creek Trail yet to be constructed (all located within Hobsons Bay) is estimated to cost \$14 million which is not a viable option for Council to fund alone. This trail is just one project ready example that addresses road safety, increases participation in active transport and contributes to economic uplift.

Victoria's Cycling Strategy needs to instil cross state and local government partnerships, together with other agencies and the private sector to realise its implementation. The state has been without a lead agency for several years which has impacted the development, implementation and maintenance of cycling infrastructure. This strategy needs to lead the backlog of strategy gaps and specifically the absence of funding to support the development of necessary infrastructure.

The following is provided specifically in response to the key elements of Victoria's cycling strategy as discussed through the consultation process:

1. Improving Cyclist Safety

The safety of cyclists should be paramount. Inadequate infrastructure has failed to protect active transport users from high speeds and high volumes of road traffic.

Road design is an important contributor to road safety and this includes separated paths on major roads and adequate paths for all users at all scales. Another important aspect of road safety is the skill of car drivers. Car drivers are poorly trained in road safety rules that relate to cycling and this should be corrected through a strong media campaign as well as by working with new drivers to ensure broad awareness of the rules that relate to cycling as well as appropriate behavioural responses when passing a person on a bicycle. Cyclists are vulnerable road users and poor bicycle riding skills can also hamper positive outcomes.

Personal safety (both perceived and real) plays a significant role in preventing road deaths and injuries whilst encouraging participation. Way finding is an important element in enhancing the comfort and safety on roads as this adds surety of direction and knowledge of road conditions. Bicycle priority lights at intersections are an important innovation as is adequate lighting along paths.

Shared trails and cycling path design is an important contributor to cyclist safety. There is currently a lack of state wide standards to guide the construction of local and regional trails including surface selection, traffic calming mechanisms and way finding signage. Consistency in signage and a focus on the personal safety of cyclists is an important aspect of achieving a 'safety' first cycling culture.

2. Encouraging Cycling Participation

Cycling suffers from a large number of indirect routes, narrow and uneven paths, all of which discourage greater participation in cycling. Emphasis at the local, regional and state level should be on creating a network of direct routes to major centres and areas of interest and investment in wide paths with ongoing maintenance to ensure an emphasis both on safety and behavioural change. Issues in relation to shared paths require further exploration and clear policy outcomes, particularly the role of bikes and pedestrians and dogs off lead, etc.

Another important element in enhancing the take up of cycling is the adequate provisions of bicycle parking. There is currently no funding available for bicycle storage facilities at train stations. This compares poorly to the availability of carparking spaces. Bicycle storage is a fundamental component to encouraging the integration of cycling and train commutes which leads to greater participation.

3. Promoting the health benefits of cycling

The promotion of the health benefits of cycling is supported by Council as we aim to provide a range of opportunities, including walking and cycling, that support people to

engage in healthy and active lifestyles. Council advocates for an emphasis on increasing the rates of active transport amongst ethnic minorities and people from lower socio-economic groups as they are currently under-represented in cycling.

4. Highlighting the environmental benefits of cycling

Council aims to reduce the car dependency of its residents through a reduction in car related expenditure aimed at lowering air pollution and placing emphasis on integrated transport outcomes, including more active transport. Council seeks to reduce its ecological footprint and ensure our community has the capacity to adapt to the effects of climate change. Cycling is a key component in reducing short-trips to neighbourhood centres as well as through an emphasis on riding to school.

5. Growing the cycling economy, particularly cycle tourism and regional development

Leadership is required to support the establishment of new cycling trails. There is currently a lack of economic analysis and participation statistics to forecast the benefits of establishing trails in locations where no trail currently exists. Developing robust business cases can be achieved with adequate data and the identification of potential benefits.

6. Strategically Planning Networks and Prioritising Investment

Network Approach

The current governance arrangements do not support a fully integrated transport and land use planning outcome for cyclists. A fully integrated system requires coordination between government agencies, local government and key stakeholders to improve outcomes for Melbourne's cycling network. Implementation of planning objectives outlined in *Cycling into the Future 2013-23* and *Plan Melbourne*, which seek high-quality cycling links between employment areas, national employment clusters and metropolitan activity centres, have not been achieved.

Council advocates for connectivity between housing, employment and activity centres and between modes of transport. To achieve connectivity for cyclists requires targeted resource allocation, particularly to local governments for infrastructure development, as they are most able to identify connectivity from local to regional centres. As local government plays a significant role in land use and transport planning, particularly building bicycle infrastructure and influencing behavioural change, regional alignments of local governments, such as the Western Metropolitan Regional Trails Strategic Plan, are essential in delivering strategic objectives.

Prioritising Investment

Council's cycling infrastructure priority is the Kororoit Creek Shared Trail. It requires additional funding and a whole of government approach to deliver this project, including

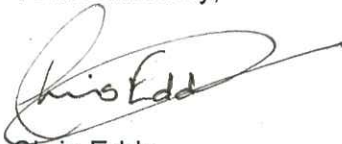
exploration of funding options that could align the benefits of the trail to a range of partners, including exploring the potential to build the trail as part of the road widening process being undertaken for the West Gate Freeway (the trail passes under the West Gate Freeway).

The Federation Trail is an important connector route for the western region of Melbourne as it provides a corridor from the western region of Melbourne to the CBD. There is currently a significant opportunity to link the Federation Trail to large redevelopment sites that include the Bradmill site in Maribyrnong and Precinct 15 and Precinct 16 in Hobsons Bay to Spotswood Railway Station, the river punt, industrial employment centres along Footscray Road and the CBD.

Council requires clarification in relation to the proposed \$100 million from the TAC Safer Cyclists and Pedestrians Fund. Questions on how funds will be allocated and a determination of priorities are required to ensure funding aligns with local, regional and state planning priorities. Whilst past funding has relied upon local governments, this is unsustainable given the current policy commitment to rate capping.

if you would like to discuss this submission further please contact Natalie Walker, Director Strategic Development on 9932 1096 or email nwalker@hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au.

Yours sincerely,



Chris Eddy
Chief Executive Officer

