

ITEM NO: 18

SUBJECT: BLUE MOUNTAINS BIKE PLAN 2020

FILE NO: F03719

Recommendations:

1. *That the Council approve the Draft Blue Mountains Bike Plan 2020 for the purpose of public exhibition and that the Plan be placed on exhibition for a period of one month seeking comments.*
 2. *That the Draft Blue Mountains Bike Plan 2020 be forwarded to relevant external stakeholders for comments.*
 3. *That submissions received in response to the exhibition be assessed and reported to the Council for consideration prior to the formal adoption of the Blue Mountains Bike Plan 2020.*
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Report by Group Manager, Community and Corporate:

Introduction

When considering a report on the Blue Mountains Bike Plan at the Council meeting of 19 February 2008, the Council resolved unanimously:

- "1. That this matter be deferred until discussions at the 2008-12 Management Plan Workshop between Councillors and senior Council Officers are completed on the 1 March 2008"*

(Minute No: 412, 19/2/08)

This report refers to the 19 February 2008 report following the above resolution.

Background

The Draft Blue Mountains Bike Plan 2020 (Enclosure 1) revises the "*Blue Mountains Bikeways Plan 1996*". It will complement other planning efforts in the City with particular reference to Council's Sustainable Asset Management (SAM) Plans.

It has been prepared in response to the community-endorsed 25-year vision for the Blue Mountains "*A Map for Action 2000-2025; Towards a More Sustainable Blue Mountains*". The vision expresses outcomes sought by the community. Out of the 15 outcomes, there are 10 for which an effective shared cycleway network is important.

The Blue Mountains Regional Tourism Plan 2004-2007 identifies 'Nature Based Experiences' as a key area of market appeal. Cycling has been identified as a key activity as part of this plan.

The Nature Based Recreation Strategy 2005-2015 identifies mountain biking as growing in popularity as an individual and competitive sport. The need to provide appropriate and

adequate trails, education and consultation with riders and management agencies has been identified for consideration.

Further evidence to support these claims is detailed in the responses to the Blue Mountains Cycling Survey 2005. We know that:

- 91% have access to a bicycle
- 2/3 bicycles get ridden at least 54% of the time (monthly)
- 35% of bicycles get ridden several times each week
- Riding for recreation (21%), to the shops (20%) and to the park are the most common trips made.

The plan guides the City in the development of new programs and facilities to encourage people to cycle, and to reduce their dependence on the car. It is a strategy based on extensive community consultation and is designed to be flexible, evolving over its lifetime.

The development and adoption of this strategy is essential to the ongoing pursuit of external funding necessary to enable implementation. Funding bodies such as the Roads and Traffic Authority and the NSW Department of Sport and Recreation require the Council to have a Plan to be eligible for funding grants.

This Plan also informs the Capital Works Program process, identifying short, medium and long term priorities for the implementation of the full delivery subject to availability of internal and external funding.

Purpose

This report recommends that the Council place the Draft Plan on public exhibition for a period of one month and sends it to relevant stakeholders seeking comments; the results of which will be reported back to the Council with a view to adopting the core policy and priority one delivery programme.

Primary goals of the Blue Mountains Bike Plan 2020

The Blue Mountains Bike Plan establishes a vision for cycling. It sets integrated principles, objectives and recommendations regarding safety, education and promotional programs whilst also securing the delivery of cycling related infrastructure, including a comprehensive cycleway network.

The primary goals of the Plan are:

1. To double the number of bicycle trips made in the City of the Blue Mountains, as a percentage of total trips, by 2020; and
2. To reduce the number of bicycle crashes and casualties.

The Plan is structured along seven key components, which is analogous to “seven integral spokes”. The seven spokes are integrated through a common implementation strategy, represented by the hub of a wheel. Like the spokes of a bicycle wheel, all seven spokes must work together to achieve the two primary goals and realise the vision of the City of the Blue Mountains.

The Seven Spokes are:

1. Bicycle Friendly Streets;
2. Bikeway Network;
3. Safety and Education;
4. Promotion;
5. Cycling and Transit;
6. Bicycle Parking; and
7. Tourism

Principles and objectives

The City's physical environment, when combined with social and economic factors, influences the ways people choose to get around. To achieve the vision of a more bicycle friendly City, the seven spokes detail a multi-faceted strategy to build both physical and social infrastructure to support cycling. The Plan is an important step in gaining significant environmental, economic, social equity and health benefits to individuals and to the City as a whole.

Transportation Efficiency

Transportation by bicycle is the most energy efficient mode of transportation, and generates no pollution, except in its manufacturing. In the Blue Mountains there are on average 149 bicycle trips for journey to work purposes on an average weekday. Cycling is often the fastest mode of transportation from door to door for distances up to 10km in urban areas and with over 1.5 million bicycles being sold in Australia in 2007 the increase in demand for infrastructure will continue to grow.

Environmental Benefits

Short distance motor vehicle trips are the least fuel efficient and generate the most pollution per kilometre. These trips have the greatest potential for being replaced by cycling and walking. Reducing car trips will mitigate ozone depletion, the greenhouse effect, ground level air pollution, photochemical smog, acid rain and noise pollution.

Economic and Social Benefits

Trails provide year round tourism attractions/ experiences and supports growth of related infrastructure and business supporting leisure activities e.g. cafes, equipment hire. During 2004/2005 total expenditure by cycle tourists in Australia was \$213,799,680 with the average cycle tourist spending \$258 per person per day. Importantly, cycling provides access and transportation to segments of the population who would not otherwise be able to travel independently

Implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Draft Plan

Public engagement on the Blue Mountains Bike Plan 2020 will not end with the adoption of the Plan by the Council. Consultation is seen as an important on-going activity that will support the implementation of the Plan. The Plan, as previously noted, is designed as a flexible document and will evolve over time in response to new and changing developments and priorities whilst also identifying new opportunities as these arise. Some of these changes will emerge through ongoing public consultation and from monitoring the implementation of the Plan.

Implementations will require continued collaboration between relevant Council sections, the Cycle Committee and the public. This is particularly important for delivering new bike lanes and off road paths, which can have significant impacts on adjacent properties and other users of parks and roads. The City's public consultation policy will be adhered to for all new cycleway projects.

Monitoring bicycle trends and particularly crash history will be an important part of measuring the successes of the Plan. A review of historic data undertaken for this study clearly indicates the need to improve the collection and collation of cycling data in the City. In addition, the Council's annual community survey should be used to monitor concerns as well as the progress of the Plan. The Council must also develop a new bicycle data collection program, when incorporated into existing annual data analysis this will:

- Use existing cycle travel demand information as a bench mark for assessing growth in cycling trips as the BMBP is implemented;
- Measure the progress towards achieving the City's sustainability goals and targets;
and
- Identify cycling issues and trends to influence implementation priorities.

The Blue Mountains Cycle Committee

The Committee is a community advisory group, formed to represent cyclists. The role of the Committee is to provide input into the whole range of cycling programs and services offered by the Council. The committee has been an invaluable resource in developing new and innovative policies and programs to encourage cycling and improve safety. The Committee will be a partner in implementing the Plan, and will continue to have a valuable role in representing the interest of all cyclists in the City. The committee may comprise of members from the Council's Traffic and Road Safety, Environment Management, and City Planning Branches, Police, Health, Blue Mountains Bicycle Group, RTA and other interested community members.

Resources required for delivery of the Draft Plan

The Draft Plan is an integrated body of components which requires a strategic approach for implementation, together with an ongoing funding commitment. Focusing efforts on individual elements of the Plan, in isolation of the others, e.g. funding new bike lanes in the short term but not the development of new programming or promotional programs, is not an efficient or recommended strategy.

The public input received throughout the process to date and the results of the cycle survey clearly indicate that the residents of the Blue Mountains support improving cycling facilities. The Council's leadership through this action will directly improve the liveability of our communities and result in a more sustainable future.

The Council's Capital Works Program will address funding priority projects that are consistent with the Sustainable Asset Management Plans. Capital Works Program proposals, including those generated by the Bike Plan will continue to be assessed using a triple bottom line methodology and be guided by the principles of sustainability, equity, access, effectiveness, efficiency and innovation in service delivery.

Sustainability assessment

There will be positive impacts on environmental, economic and social sustainability in the City of Blue Mountains. The major focus of the draft Plan is to create safe and accessible pathways of travel that improve our connections with our destinations and each other and encourage people of all ages to use their bicycles for everyday transportation and enjoyment.

Financial implications

The network components of the Bike Plan have been developed into three separate Delivery Programs. It is intended that these programs be implemented as per the funding commitment and prioritisation process detailed in the following section.

Implementations of the remaining recommendations of the Bike Plan, other than network improvements, are detailed in later sections.

Current network funding

Implementing Spoke 2, the network component of the Draft Plan requires the Council to confirm a continuation of its current financial commitment, being \$50,000 pa. This enables a continuation of the 50/50 annual funding arrangement which currently exists with the RTA. Subject to approval, this would provide a baseline figure of \$1,300,000 for the 13 year plan period.

Additional funding of \$50,000 for each of the next 2 years has been allocated from the Federal Government's (DOTARS) Supplementary Funding to implement the plan.

This funding commitment will be directed to completing Delivery Program 1 which includes all priority works identified in Enclosures 2 and 3 as outlined in Table 1. The funding for implementation is contained in Table 1(a).

Table 1: Delivery Program 1 - Priority Network. To be prioritised within 2008-2012		
Route Number	Location	Cost Estimate
L1 to M4 Link	Lapstone	\$3,860
L1: 1.7 – 1.26	Glenbrook	\$309,465** (<i>identified priority actions only</i>)
L2 to L1 Link	Glenbrook	\$26,860**
L2 Extension East & West	Glenbrook	\$38,970**
L2: 2.2 – 2.8	Blaxland	\$148,180
L6 Extension East	Faulconbridge	\$6,500
L6: 6.7 – 6.11	Faulconbridge	\$14,840
L7a: 7a.14	Faulconbridge	\$26,860
L7 Extension West	Faulconbridge - Linden	\$340,080
L8a	Woodford - Linden	\$255,060
L12: 12.1 – 12.6	Leura	\$204,540
Total		\$1,375,215
** To be delivered as part of the 2008 -2009 Capital Works Program		

Table 1(a) – Delivery Program 1 - Funding Sources	
Funding	
Council	\$50,000 pa over 13 years
RTA	\$50,000 pa over 13 years
DOTARS	\$50,000 pa over 2 years
Total	\$1,400,000

Asset Renewal - Enclosure 2

Enclosure 2 lists the asset renewal works required to complete the existing network to an approved standard. The priority works are contained in Delivery Plan 1 with the remaining works identified within Delivery Plan 2.

New Routes - Enclosure 3

Enclosure 3 identifies the missing links that are essential in completing a totally comprehensive network. The priority works are contained in Delivery Plan 1 with the remaining works to be considered for implementation as part of Delivery Plan 2.

Greater Blue Mountains Trail (Upper Section)

This component is identified within Enclosure 3 and is listed as Delivery Plan 3. . This project received Metropolitan Greenspace Program (MGP) funding in 2007/2008 to engage consultants to undertake the higher level of stakeholder consultation, detailed design, costing and works schedules. The process of engaging this consultancy commenced in April 2008 and is expected to take 3 months. Once this work has been completed a report will be presented back to the E& P working party. An application will be made to the MGP for the 2008/2009 round of funding grants to construct the trail. The Australian Tourism Development Program is a high potential funding source for this project as they have previously funded similar cross regional projects across the state. The 2008 funding rounds are called for in June of each year in which the Council would make application

The Greater Blue Mountains Trail component is a major visionary proposal and its inclusion in the Bike Plan allows for feasibility and funding to be explored.

Table 2 - Total Program Delivery Cost		
Delivery Program	Cost	Funding Source
1 - Priority Network (<i>Table 1</i>)	\$1,375,215	As per <i>Table 1(a)</i> and other external grant sources
2 - Enclosure 2 and 3 (<i>not include in Delivery Plan 1 & 3</i>)	\$3,091,955	As per <i>Table 1(a)</i> and other external sources to be identified
3 - Upper Blue Mountains Regional Trail	Subject to feasibility study	External grant sources
Total	\$4,467,170	

Network Maps – Enclosure 4

Enclosure 4 is the network maps combining the existing and proposed routes.

Funding commitment required to implement Delivery Plans 1 and 2.

The total cost of implementing the new infrastructure recommended in the Blue Mountains Bike Plan 2020 is \$4,467,170. The adoption of the Bike Plan does NOT commit the Council to the provision of its contents but establishes their adoption at strategic level and position the City to apply for major external funding.

Council's continual funding commitment of \$50,000 pa, when matched at source by the RTA, provides \$1,300,000 over the 13 years of the plan to 2020. This core funding will be combined with the DOTARS funding of \$100,000 over the next 2 years. Council's ability to complete the remaining program outlined in the Plan will be dependant on its success in obtaining other sources of income such as grants throughout the 13 year term of the plan.

Projects To Be Funded Based on Existing Resource Levels

The priority components of Enclosure 3 have been identified so that they can be combined with the priorities in Enclosure 2 which have been developed in to Delivery Plan 1 and would be submitted for inclusion as part of the annual CWP. The lower priorities from Enclosure 2 and 3 which have been developed in to Delivery Plan 2 would be funded from either external funding sources or proposals for additional allocation of internal funds.

Previous successful funding sources

Previously funding contributions have also been secured from NSW Department of Sport and Recreation Capital Assistance Program. In 2006/2007, \$15,000 was obtained for cycleways in Springwood and Valley Heights and in 1999/2000 \$8,385 was received for cycleways in Katoomba. Council will continue to make application to this program. Also indicated in Enclosure 3, \$30,000 has been secured through the Metropolitan Greenspace Program (MGP) funding grants.

Maintenance cost

It should be noted that maintenance associated with the proposed construction of the network will increase. Budgeted work quantities for maintenance activities are estimates only, actual work quantities can exceed estimates. This has to be offset by reductions in other activities.

Based on current maintenance cost it is known that for every \$100,000 of capital expenditure an increase of 2% to maintenance budgets would be required to maintain the infrastructure over its lifetime. It would be reasonable to assume that little or no maintenance would be required in the first four years of a new footpath section's asset life.

A calculation of asset maintenance activities indicates that the potential unit rate cost to maintain 1 metre of path over its projected lifetime is \$0.91. The maintenance required for new footpath sections will be dependant upon location & impact of trees.

It should be noted that a large percentage of the increased network is a direct result of the Great Western Highway Upgrade Projects. Whilst the Council does not have the construction cost for this part of the network it does however inherit the long term asset liability, which is the standard agreement as part of the handover process.

Table 3 - Proposed Network Development		
	Distance (metres)	Network increase
Enclosure 2 : Renewal Works	4,300	3.5%
Enclosure 3 : New Routes	20,360	17%
Upper Blue Mountains Regional Trail	Subject to feasibility study and funding	25%
Total	24,660	45.5%

Asset Planning

All new assets created as part of the implementation of the plan will be registered onto the maintenance and renewal programs as part of the 4 year cycle which is administered by the Assets Branch.

Recommendations implementation & resourcing

The Bike Plan contains a number of recommendations listed in the executive summary section. The network components of the recommendations have been identified and prioritised in this report. A review of the remaining recommendations indicates that the majority of actions required to implement the recommendations currently sits within existing asset management plans, branch business and action plans and their respective budgets.

The Council will take advantage of other funding sources as they become available, including public-private sector partnerships, such as the proposed Bicycle Safety Partnership.

Legal and risk management issues

The renewal and construction of new components of the network seeks to improve the cycle network across the mountains. By constructing the network to approved standards it will reduce the draft risks to cyclists, particularly in areas of conflict with motorists and pedestrians.

The draft Bike Plan contains a number of recommendations to improve the reporting and maintenance regimes of the network which should also decrease the number of incidents on the network. It also has an educational component designed to improve cyclist skills, knowledge and education. The 'Bike to School' and 'Back on Your Bike' programs are two community based programs that have already been implemented across local schools and the general community.

Reporting

The Group Manager Community & Corporate will prepare annual progress reports to the Council, in consultation with the Bike Plan Coordinating Committee documenting the progress of the Bike Plan and presenting implementation priorities and funding requests for the following year. The first report will be presented in 2008 outlining Bike Plan projects implemented during 2007/08 and to be implemented in 2008/2009.

External consultation

A community survey was completed during 2005/2006. This survey involved community groups, face to face interviews, special user groups and the ongoing consultation with members of the Cycle Committee.

Conclusion

The Draft Blue Mountains Bike Plan 2020 has been developed for the Council's consideration. The Draft Plan outlines a comprehensive set of principles, objectives and recommendations that address the need for education as well as the provision of facilities for the City of Blue Mountains.

The Draft Plan has been developed to assist the Council in achieving its adopted 25 Year Vision as articulated in *Towards a More Sustainable Blue Mountains – A Map for Action 2000-2025*. It will guide the development of the 2008-12 Management Plan.

It is recommended that the Council place the Draft Plan on public exhibition for a period of one month and send it to relevant stakeholders seeking comments. Following the exhibition, an assessment of submissions received will be reported to the Council for consideration, with a report seeking adoption of a final *Blue Mountains Bike Plan 2020*.

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ITEM NO: 19

SUBJECT: LOCAL TRAFFIC COMMITTEE

FILE NO: F01211

Recommendations:

1. *That the Council note the Local Traffic Committee Minutes.*
2. *That the Council adopt recommendations 2008.02, 2008.03, 2008.04, 2008.05, 2008.06, 2008.07 and 2007.08.*
3. *That the Council note recommendation 2008.01.*
4. *That the Council note that with regard to recommendation 2008.01, further consultation will occur with relevant stakeholders, with regard to consideration of urban design and broader Katoomba Street issues, and that detailed traffic engineering assessment will be made in relation to the major intersection and functionality and workability as a consequence of providing a roundabout and report back to the Council.*
5. *That the members of the Local Traffic Committee be notified of the Council's decision.*

Report by Group Manager, Community and Corporate:

Report summary

The enclosure to this report is the Minutes of the meeting of the Local Traffic Committee held on 26 February 2008. The recommendations of the Committee are now submitted to the Council for approval.

Discussion

Councillors should note that with regard to the Local Traffic Committee recommendation relating to the intersection of Waratah and Katoomba Street (reference 2008.01), further consultation with relevant stakeholders will occur. Further, it is noted that broader urban design and consideration of Katoomba Street issues will be investigated and discussed with relevant parties.

Sustainability assessment

Effects	Positive	Negative
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved guidance and safety for roadway environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources and energy used to provide and maintain traffic controls are considered minimal.
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved safety and access for road users. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No significant social impacts.

<p>Economic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced incidence of road crashes will reduce costs to community for property damage, personal injury and fatalities. • Improved traffic guidance will provide more efficient cost effective access. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs to provide and maintain traffic controls are within existing resource allocations.
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Financial implications

All actions will be covered by existing operational budgets or future CWP assessment processes.

Legal and risk management issues

No additional issues will be incurred.

External consultation

As per attendance list.

Conclusion

The recommendations of the Committee are now submitted to the Council for approval.

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