

ITEM NO: 22

SUBJECT: BLUE MOUNTAINS BIKE PLAN 2020

FILE NO: F03719

Recommendations:

1. *That the Council adopts the Blue Mountains Bike Plan 2020.*
 2. *That the Council notes that \$50,000 p.a. was included in its adopted rolling four year Capital Works Program for 2008-2012.*
 3. *That the Council encourages all appropriate funding opportunities to be investigated to seek the ongoing delivery of the total program identified in the Bike Plan 2020.*
 4. *That the Council receives an annual update on progress made in the 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 22 April 2008, the Council resolved unanimously:

- "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 two months 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."*

(Minute No. 481, 22/04/08)

This report details the responses from the consultation process, together with the amendments consequently made to the Bike Plan 2020.

Background

The draft Blue Mountains Bike Plan 2020 (Enclosure 1) revises the "*Blue Mountains Bikeways Plan 1996*". It complements other planning frameworks in the City, particularly the Council's Sustainable Asset Management (SAM) Plans.

It has been prepared in response to the community-endorsed 25-year vision for the Blue Mountains and the supporting plan, "*A Map for Action 2000-2025; Towards a More Sustainable Blue Mountains*". The vision expresses outcomes sought by the community.

The draft Bike Plan is critical in achieving a number of the Outcomes and Objectives in the ‘Map for Action’ including:

- Key Direction 1 – Looking After the Environment (Strategic Objective 1.1.3)
- Key Direction 4 – Moving Around (Strategic Objectives 4.1.1.; 4.1.2; 4.1.3; 4.2.1; and 4.3.2).
- Key Direction 5 – Working and Learning (Strategic Objective 5.2.1).

Primary goals of the Blue Mountains Bike Plan 2020

The Blue Mountains Bike Plan establishes a vision for cycling and incorporates a comprehensive range of initiatives; from the ongoing support of well-established programs through to more aspirational components that require further investigation. 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.

Summary of works

The Plan builds upon the framework established through the Blue Mountains Bikeways Plan 1996, which has delivered notable success, including the network improvements listed below.

Works scheduled and completed over the past 4 years		
	Route Number	Location
2005-2006	L16	Katoomba – Victoria Street
	L2 and L4	Blaxland – Wilson Way and Old Bathurst Road
2006-2007	L6 and L6aa	Valley Heights – Tusculum Road
2007-2008	L16	Katoomba – Victoria and Camp Street
	L6a	Valley Heights – Tusculum Road
2008-2009	L17,L18, L19	Blackheath –Valley View Rd; Govetts Leap; Evans Lookout; Wentworth St; Gardiners Rd; GWHY and Hat Hill Road.
	L20	Mt Victoria – GWHY and Station Street
	L2	Glenbrook – Levy Street – Currently under construction.
	L9b	Lawson Town Centre – Currently under construction.

Public Exhibition

The draft Plan was on exhibition between 19th May 2008 and 14th July 2008 at the following locations:

- Katoomba and Springwood Council offices;
- Blackheath, Katoomba, Wentworth Falls, Lawson, Springwood and Blaxland Libraries; and
- The Council's website

A Public Notice was placed in the Blue Mountains Gazette dated 21 May 2008.

Correspondence advertising the exhibition of the Plan was sent to key stakeholders, all schools in the Blue Mountains Local Government Area and to Bicycle NSW.

Submissions

Received: Council received a total of 25 responses:

- 3 Postal;
- 20 Emails; and
- 2 Telephone.

Responses: In general there was overwhelming support for the Plan. Key points raised were:

- The need for increased funding to deliver cycling related infrastructure.
- Requests for specific links to be made as a priority;
- Higher standards of infrastructure;
- Dedicated mountain bike tracks/courses;
- Greater promotion;
- Completion of an off road regional route; and
- Safer work sites.

Response to submissions

In response to submissions a number of amendments have been made to the routes identified in Attachments 2 and 3.

Financial & Legal Implications

The Bike Plan is much more than a network alone. It includes various components and one of these is the overall delivery program. The network components of the Bike Plan have been developed into three separate Delivery Programs. The delivery programs are not a commitment by the Council to expenditure but a forward plan to coordinate planning to seek grant funding and to assist in Capital Works Program submissions.

Following the assessment of the submissions received relating to Attachments 2 and 3 the total delivery cost has increased and is reflected in the total cost as indicated in Table 2. The additions to the network have also increased the total proposed network development as listed in Table 3.

These variations DO NOT affect Delivery Program 1 – Priority Network as indicated in Table 1 or 1(a), as originally reported to the Council on 22 April 2008.

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 provides 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 is available from the Federal Government's (DOTARS) Supplementary Funding to implement the plan.

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

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

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/Lapstone	\$309,465 High priority actions only: 1.11 – 1.16; 1.20-1.22; 1.24-1.25. 2009/10 - actions L1.7 -1.8.
L2 to L1 Link	Glenbrook	\$26,860** Currently under construction.
L2 Extension East & West	Glenbrook	\$38,970** Currently under construction.
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		

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 required to complete a 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 has been listed separately as Delivery Plan 3. This project received Metropolitan Greenspace Program (MGP) funding in 2007/2008 to engage consultants to undertake a higher level of stakeholder consultation, detailed design, costing and works schedules. The process of engaging this consultancy has commenced and is expected to take 3 months. Once this work has been completed a report will be presented back to an appropriate Council briefing session. The 2009 MGP Guidelines and Application form will be available through the Department of Planning webpage from February 2009. It is anticipated that an application will be made at this time for funding to construct the trail or stages of 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 Greater Blue Mountains Trail component is a major proposal and its inclusion in the Bike Plan allows for feasibility and funding options to be explored.

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 included in Delivery Plan 1 & 3</i>)	\$3,332,150	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	\$4,707,365	

Network Maps – Enclosure 4

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

Table 3 - Proposed Network Development		
	Distance (metres)	Network increase
Enclosure 2 : Renewal Works	4,300	3.5%
Enclosure 3 : New Routes	25,360	21%
Upper Blue Mountains Regional Trail	Subject to feasibility study and funding	25%
Total	29,660	49.5%

Funding required to implement Delivery Plans 1 and 2.

The total cost of implementing the new infrastructure recommended in the Blue Mountains Bike Plan 2020 delivery programs 1 and 2 is currently estimated at \$4,707,365 (This amount does not include delivery program 3 – Greater Blue Mountains Trail – Upper Section). The adoption of the Bike Plan does NOT commit the Council to the provision of its contents; it does establish their adoption at a strategic level and positions the City to apply for major external funding.

The Council's continual funding of \$50,000 pa, when matched at source by the RTA, would provide \$1,300,000 over the 13 years of the plan to 2020. This core funding will be combined with DOTARS funding of \$100,000 over the next 2 years. The 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 Enclosures 2 and 3 have been combined into Delivery Plan 1; these will be included for consideration as part of the annual Capital Works Programme nomination and approval process. The lower priorities from Enclosure 2 and 3 have been developed into Delivery Plan 2; it is intended that these would be funded from either external funding sources or proposals for additional allocations of internal funds.

Prior Funding

Previously funding contributions have been secured from NSW Department of Sport and Recreation's 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, as identified in the enclosure 1, \$30,000 has been secured through the Metropolitan Greenspace Program (MGP).

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, and have 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 and the impacts of other impediments, such as trees.

It should be noted that a large percentage of the increased network is a direct result of the Great Western Highway Upgrade Projects. The marked bike/breakdown lanes on the Highway, as well as any off-road facilities, contribute positively to the network. Whilst the Council does not bear the construction cost for this part of the network, it does inherit the long term asset liability for any new off-road facilities, which is the standard agreement with the RTA as part of the handover process.

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, administered by the Assets Branch.

Recommendations implementation & resourcing

The Bike Plan contains a number of recommendations listed in the executive summary. These outline a comprehensive range of actions including: bicycle friendly streets, bikeway network, safety and education, promotion, cycling and transition, bicycle parking, and tourism. The network components of these recommendations have been identified and prioritised in this report. A review of the remaining recommendations indicates that the majority of actions required to implement them currently sits within existing asset management plans, branch business and action plans and their respective budgets.

The Council will seek to maximise other funding sources / arrangements to secure the Plan's delivery as these become available, including public-private partnerships, such as the proposed Bicycle Safety Partnership.

Sustainability Assessment

Adoption of the Blue Mountains Bike Plan 2020 would contribute to positive impacts on environmental, economic and social sustainability in the City of Blue Mountains. The major focus of the 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.

Effects	Positive	Negative
Environmental	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.	Nil

Effects	Positive	Negative
	<p>Reducing car trips will mitigate ozone depletion, the greenhouse effect, ground level air pollution, photochemical smog, acid rain and noise pollution.</p> <p>Transportation by bicycle is the most energy efficient mode of transportation, and generates no pollution, except in its manufacturing.</p> <p>Cycling is often the fastest mode of transportation from door to door for distances up to 10km in urban cores.</p> <p>On a bicycle you can travel four times faster than you can walk using the same amount of energy.</p> <p>On a bicycle you can travel up to 1030 kilometres on the energy equivalent of one litre of petrol and 1500 kilograms of greenhouse gas emissions each year</p>	
Social	<p>Cycling provides access and transportation to segments of the population who would not otherwise be able to travel independently. Including those who cannot drive or do not own a car and those who do not have access to public transport.</p> <p>Cycling contributes to personal health by enhancing fitness and providing an enjoyable, convenient and affordable means of exercise and recreation.</p> <p>Cycling benefits one's health regardless of the age at which one takes up cycling including reduced risk of obesity or diabetes.</p> <p>Regular cyclists can expect to be as fit as an average person 10 years younger.</p> <p>The inclusion of physical activity as part of children's daily routine has been highlighted in the Australian Physical Activity Recommendations for 5-12 year olds.</p>	Nil
Economic	<p>Nationally, the annual direct health cost attributed to physical inactivity is estimated at \$377 million a year.</p> <p>Cycling 10 kilometres each way to work saves about \$1,700 per person annually in transport costs (including all running costs and depreciation).</p> <p>Strengthen the tourism industry as cycle paths and trails provide year round tourism attractions and experiences.</p> <p>Cycle paths and trails support growth of related infrastructure and business supporting leisure activities.</p> <p>Ten bicycles can be parked in the spaces required for one car.</p>	Nil

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 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; these should also decrease the number of incidents on the network. The Plan 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 with great success across local schools and the general community.

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.

Reporting

The Group Manager, Community and 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 future years.

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 both for now and into the future.

The Draft Plan has been developed to assist the Council in achieving it’s adopted 25 Year Vision as articulated in *Towards a More Sustainable Blue Mountains – A Map for Action 2000-2025*. It will assist in guiding the development of the 2009-13 Management Plan. It is recommended that the Council adopt the *Blue Mountains Bike Plan 2020*.

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Enclosures – Blue Mountains Bike Plan 2020