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by email to:

council@canadabay.nsw.gov.au..... Pages (inc this one): 8

Submission on 2017 – 18 draft operating plan

This is a submission by Canada Bay Bicycle User Group (“BayBUG”) on behalf of all those who cycle in Canada Bay. The actions in the plan most directly to do with active transport and cycling are in the Thriving and Connected “TC2” table of actions and activities at page 42 of the plan. “TC2” is headed:

“Goal: I can walk or cycle on designated paths to a range of commercial, recreational and community spaces around the City

Direction: We will develop, enhance and promote walking and cycling facilities in the area”

While this submission is focussed on the references to cycling on that page and on page 44, TC4, “promote the use of bicycles for transport” and TC5, (bike rack programs), we note that many other aspects of the Futures Plan 20 vision will be furthered by actions that get more people on bikes more often – for example the green city, the healthy city and the moving city. TC3 “I can get where I need to go safely without too much delay” should be just as much about cycling as motorised road use. An investment in encouraging cycling has many pay offs.

Six general comments are:

- a) that the activities stated are too often vague and not measurable. We’d like to see a plan with more accountability built in. Where we can think of more measurable outcomes we mention them below. We think that part of the problem is lack of a comprehensive active transport plan, including a Bike Plan.
- b) that some of the more specific activities mentioned are much the same as those listed at least as far back as 2014 – 15, suggesting lack of budget or resources to do these things. BayBUG would like to see some discussion as to why progress is limited and slow. For example the water bottle filling, the collaboration with local Councils and BayBUG
- c) BayBUG could not see in Appendix B Capital Program 2017-18 any reference to cycleway related

expenditure other than the Zoeller Street to Exile Bay path concreting, \$120,000. So what is being done about planning to implement and improve the 2005 Bike Plan as reviewed in 2014? And as noted below, this expenditure is not BayBUG's pick for the next most important piece of cycling infrastructure. Let's spend it on the dangerous roundabout Barnstaple Rd, Ingham Ave and/or the access across Timbrell Drive/Henley Marine Drive to the BayRun Cycle path.

- d) previous plans have had an action "Work with Council's Traffic and Transport team to identify opportunities to promote cycle and walking paths where appropriate". Now missing. The lack of promotion is most obvious in Canada Bay's lack of a web accessible "Cycling in Canada Bay" map.
- e) BayBUG is still waiting for Council to implement its resolution 4 on M 4675 of 18 August 2015 "THAT the long term [bike] plan be reviewed in consultation with Bay BUG, to identify future works that may be possible to be constructed as part of the future works program within Canada Bay. This plan is separate to Council's short term plan but would assist with active transport throughout the City. This plan is to be reported to Council within the 2015 calendar year."
- f) The plan does not refer to relevant State Government planning guidance, in the context of active transport and cycling, the State Government's (Transport for NSW's) *Sydney's Cycling Future* and The Greater Sydney Commission's (draft) Central District Plan.

Comments on Cycling aspects of the Plan

TC2 row number	Council's Activities 2017 – 18 Operating Plan	BayBUG comment
1	Undertake necessary capital works to complete Bay Run. Seek Grant funding for way finding and safety signage for the Bay Run.	The key issue for way finding and signage for the Bay Run cycle way is how to get to and on it safely. Access from surrounding areas of the City has not been thought through at the level of the Bike Plan. Ramps suitable for cyclists are few. There are only two access points in Canada Bay where pedestrians and dismounted cyclists have priority over motor vehicles when crossing roads. We note that Council's recent response to BayBUG's Timbrell Drive submissions will require Council/RMS funding.
2 & 9 (& 10)	Manage cycleway renewal and maintenance programs. Audit parks to develop program of water bottle filling sites. Undertake annual maintenance/renewal programs and respond to community requests.	What does "renewal" mean? We'd guess something more than maintenance? Concept of water filling stations is good. Should be accompanied by a role out of signage and a consistent bike lane and path pavement marking plan. BayBUG is available to consult on those matters. Will be facilitated by having a comprehensive bike plan map. Hopefully the maintenance "cycle" will be published so that there is accountability.
3 & 4 & 7 & 8	Footpath renewal & maintenance programs	Where appropriate – for example within 2km of primary schools, footpaths and kerb lips should be upgraded to facilitate shared used by 12 year and under cyclists. We note that an opportunity to do this near the Victoria Avenue Public School was missed.
11	Collaborate with neighbouring areas on connected cycleways Undertake a communications campaign in partnership with Bay Bug to inform the community about	Collaboration with neighbouring areas should be done as part of the updating of the Bike Plan. BayBUG 's comments on how to update the plan are copied below. BayBUG would love to help communicate an updated bike plan and cycle way connections. A good way to do this would be to document and publish preferred cycling routes through Canada Bay. These could be

TC2 row number	Council's Activities 2017 – 18 Operating Plan	BayBUG comment
	improvements to cycleway connections and public transport links to surrounding areas.	updated whenever some improved cycling infrastructure is created. If the proposed bikeplan works program allows the completion of a complete high standard route in Canada Bay other than the Bay Run cycle way, we could generate a lot of publicity through openings, arranging rides and so on. The issue for a list of planned measurable activities like this plan should be is – will the bike plan be updated? Will a significant route be finished?
12	Canada Bay Bike Plan - Implement the actions in the Bike Plan review	Unfortunately this action assumes the adequacy of the reviewed Bike Plan. While the Review that was completed in April 2014 has suggested a works plan, it hasn't suggested the aims and objectives that the Council intends to achieve, so it isn't "measurable", and it needs updating and reprioritisation. BayBUG's suggestions for furthering the bike plan beyond the 2014 Review's works plan are set out below. BayBUG's suggestions for Bike Plan aims and objectives and performance indicators (copied from a letter to John Osland in 2014) are also copied below. BayBUG's assessment of the 20 items in the Review's Table 5.3 Short Term Priority Works (2014/15 to 2017/18) is that only one – the Iron Cove Creek Bridge, is unambiguously completed. Ten seem not be started and nine are in one way or another inadequate. For example the Concord Shared Pathway has issues at most of the roads that it crosses and needs to be extended to be useful. Widely separated Bike logos on small sections of what should be routes achieve little. The BayRun was "improved" near Timbrell Drive but not with the object of making conditions safer for pedestrians and cyclists crossing Timbrell Drive. The Wentworth Point Bridge shared cycle path is inadequate. Several seem poor choices in terms of priorities. Eg concreting on existing short paths on Mutton Reserve and to Exile Bay. Refuge at Minnesota Ave.
TC4 Row 4	Promote the use of bicycles for transport • Support Bike Week events in the local community.	BayBUG would love to help communicate an updated bike plan and cycle way connections. A good way to do this would be to document and publish preferred cycling routes through Canada Bay. These could be updated whenever some improved cycling infrastructure is created. In the absence of a good bike plan and useful safe routes connecting to places people want to get to Bike Week will always be a difficult sell.
TC5 Row 6	Place management – bike rack programs	In a number of precincts bike parking has been swallowed by café tables. The plastic add on to vertical poles type of parking facility is not worth pursuing, as they are barely more secure than just having the pole. Too many facilities are inconveniently located and lack weather protection and (anti vandalism) oversight. And where is the budget? BayBUG suggests advertising for suggestions for locations for Council provided cycle parking, with an initial budget of 32 Australian standard cycle parking facilities for the year.

Suggestions for furthering the bike plan – beyond the 2014 Review’s Works Plan (detail to comment on Action TC2 Canada Bay Bike Plan - Implement the actions in the Bike Plan review):

1. Publish a Bike Plan including routes highlighted by BayBUG in its response to the review's table 5.1 which can be described as "Routes preferred by Canada Bay cyclists but currently not marked or signposted".
2. Form "bike plan review committee" of council staff, interested councillors and cyclist representatives to advise on and review progress on bike plan. Suggest officers circulate quarterly reviews on plan progress with committee meeting annually and as required (perhaps just by an exchange of emails) to provide input to new cycling issues and plans.
3. Include in the Plan advertising for suggestions for locations for Council provided cycle parking, with an initial budget of 32 cycle parking facilities for the year.
4. Include in the Plan consulting with cyclists and reporting on ways to improve cyclist safety at the 9 multiple cycle accident black spots identified in the 2014 Review section 6.
5. Task the bike plan review committee to develop suitable measurable objectives for bike plan, for example increased cycling observed in bike counts and reduced cyclist accidents.
6. Implement Council policies that further and follow through/and or add to the Bike Plan works program and prioritise and budget solutions to the following Canada Bay cycling issues:

Canada Bay cycling issue	Brief description
1 Dangerous roundabout Barnstaple Rd, Ingham Ave	Implement the counter measures identified in the Austroads paper “Bicycle Safety at Roundabouts” at 7.2.3 of the paper.
2 Access across Timbrell Drive/Henley Marine Drive to the BayRun Cycle path	The 2016 upgrade to the BayRun and contiguous traffic systems does not adequately cater for safe pedestrian and cycling movements onto the BayRun from surrounding streets and paths. A re-think is required to resolve conflict points between Arthur St and the pedestrian/bicycle refuge at Timbrell Park. See BayBUG’s paper emailed to Council on 16/3/2017.
3 Inadequate and inconsistent provision of cycle parking	Many places that people want to cycle to have no or poorly located or poorly designed parking facilities.
4 Five Dock Town Centre Urban Design Study - Recommendations not yet implemented	The study recommended that 'the key east-west cycle connection along Barnstaple Rd and Henry St should be upgraded into a high-quality link'; and improvements to pedestrian zones, including for Garfield St between Great North Rd and Thompson Lane (with existing parking removed)

Canada Bay cycling issue	Brief description
5 Lack of safe cycling access to the Bay Run/Cycle path	There are no proposed routes in Council's bike plan to take riders to the path and few kerb lips to facilitate access from adjacent roads.
6 New 90° car parking Crane Street, Canada Bay near new playing field	Danger for cyclists arising from motor vehicles entering and leaving the angle parking.
7 Concord Path crossings of Wellbank and other streets	Improvements needed to sight lines, refuges and safety of crossings and priorities
8 Homebush Bay Bridge.	The shared path is proving to be excessively congested while the (bus only) roadway is mostly completely devoid of traffic. Cyclists could safely be on the roadway.
9 A new pedestrian cyclist railway overbridge or underpass, without steps, near Rhodes station	The large distance between existing railway crossing points materially disconnects Rhodes from the rest of the city.
10 Support Council efforts to achieve lower speed limits in Rhodes and most other residential and commercial areas.	Lower speed limits save pedestrian and cyclist lives, improve residential amenity and make expensive LATM work less necessary.
11 Legalise the use of footpaths and pedestrian crossings by adult cyclists at least where such use is the best way to create a continuously cyclable routes.	A common issue is where a cyclist needs to get to a mid block crossing to cross a road that would be dangerous to cycle on.
12 Advocacy is needed for new off road cycle facilities and/or walking speed residential neighbourhoods to be the backbone of the new Parramatta Rd and Olympic Park corridors.	Existing State proposals do not deal with these issues.
13 Advocacy is needed for new off road cycle facilities and/or wide shared footpaths and pedestrian crossings to be part of all new school planning.	This did not happen with the Victoria Avenue School Concord West.
14 Protection from squeeze points at the bottom and top of the hill for cyclists proceeding east over the railway line at Pommeroy Street North Strathfield.	This is an important place, given the infrequency of railway crossing points and because of the steepness of the grade cyclists are particularly vulnerable. We understand that the intersection of Pommeroy and George Streets is to be altered to improve vehicle access to the Victoria Avenue School.
15 Improve the lighting and drainage in the	An important and much used piece of infrastructure

Canada Bay cycling issue	Brief description
Station Street Concord West subway	in poor condition.
16 Great North Rd upgrade	The kerb extensions on the eastern side of GNR near Barnstaple St and Rodd Rd narrow the traffic lane on GNR unnecessarily and make it hazardous for bicycle riders proceeding south (uphill).

Suggestion for aims and objectives and performance indicators for update of 2005/revised 2014 bike plan (detail to comment on Action TC2 Canada Bay Bike Plan - Implement the actions in the Bike Plan review):

The 2005 plan was done to consolidate the existing bike plans of the Drummoyne (1995) and Concord (1999) Councils with the objective of showing how the new City could provide for:

- commuter bicycle routes through the City with such routes linking neighbouring bicycle routes and regional routes;
- recreational bicycle routes throughout the City;
- local neighbourhood and local school bicycle routes;
- and bicycle facilities at transport nodes, shopping centres, parks and schools.

In fact it did more. It also:

- suggested engineering measures and programs to overcome impediments to useful bicycle routes including estimated costs, time frames and priorities.

BayBUG has no issue with these objectives, but we note that best bike planning practice (as set out in the "Cycling Aspects of Austroads Guides (2011)") suggests that bike plans, or better, programs, should have an overarching object like:

- "to make cycling safer, more convenient and so an attractive alternative means of transport." or
- "to encourage cycling as a desirable alternative to motor vehicle travel and to enable cyclists of a wide range of abilities and experience to move safely and conveniently to chosen destinations via suitable desire lines."

And (Austroads 2.3.4) should have more specific objects like using roads and cycle specific infrastructure to create:

- a designated regional network of roads and paths that serves longer-distance commuter and recreational trips
- designated local networks and routes designed to provide low-stress routes, to feed the regional network and to provide for shorter local trips to shopping centres, recreational activities, public transport hubs
- full construction of route sections between origins and destinations consistent with the route purpose

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- convenient access into and through residential, commercial and industrial subdivisions, and major developments
 - access and facilities to travel with a bicycle on public transport
 - secure long and short-term parking facilities at major destinations
 - safe routes to schools
 - well-defined bicycle facilities on arterial roads where significant cyclist demand exists including specifically for commuter trips
 - appropriate maintenance practices which result in smooth surfaces
 - calming in local streets
 - paths which are interesting, that include rest areas at appropriate intervals on regional routes, and are designed to appropriate geometric standards
 - implementation of regulatory, warning and guidance signage on paths.

Austrroads "Commentary 2" and the NSW RMS "How to prepare a bike plan" (http://www.bicycleinfo.nsw.gov.au/prepare_a_bike_plan/index.html) list typical actions and stages in collecting and organising the inputs to create a plan that can meet objects like those set out above, but at this preliminary stage we thought it worthwhile to draw attention to two of them (from the NSW RMS "Updating a bike plan checklist", Appendix C, "updating an existing bike plan"):

- updating main origins and destinations that have been created or have evolved since 2004;
- reviewing the 2004 plan against performance indicators.

The most obvious performance indicators for the 2005/revised 2014 plan would be the extent to which the routes and engineering proposals and priorities were implemented, or not. BayBUG would hope that revised plan would commit to more useful measurable targets like the NSW government's "By 2016, our target is for the number of bicycle trips in the Greater Sydney region to double, with further growth in cycling for all trips in NSW, particularly in urban centres, by 2031." (Long Term Transport Master Plan), as well as the less easily measurable ones like:

- contribution to a healthy, active and liveable community.
- reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.
- reduction in private motor vehicle usage.
- Reduction in road congestion.
- Reduction in parking congestion.
- Increased mobility and independence for those without cars.
- Increased capacity for local public transport networks.
- Reduction in health costs, travel times, noise and vehicle operating costs.

Yours sincerely,

Geoff Ashton

Secretary
Canada Bay Bicycle User Group