

How to make Cycling + Walking a priority in your NSW local Council

Under new legislation, all Councils in NSW must have a *Community Strategic Plan* – a long term plan which sets out their priorities for the future.

Councils are required by the legislation to consult with their local communities in early 2016 to prepare the Community Strategic Plan, and then, after local government elections in September 2016, to adopt the plans. Once adopted, the Council's priorities cascade down to their 4-year delivery plans and annual operational budgets.

This is YOUR opportunity to help your local Council make cycling and walking a priority!!

In five easy steps:

1. Look at the example below of Marrickville Council
2. Read the summary provided here about **'What is a Community Strategic Plan'**
3. **Prepare questions to ask or address** (see the 'Worksheet' attached)
4. Make a **meeting** with your local Councillor, as a group (e.g. BUG or community group) or individual
5. Make sure you are on the Council's **consultation list** for the Community Strategic Plan in early 2016.



STEP 1: Example of Marrickville Council

The current Community Strategic Plan for Marrickville Council has **four Key Result Areas:**

1. A diverse community that is socially just, educated, safe and healthy:
The community is active and healthy; has improved access to range of local services for all ages and abilities; increased participation; feels safe, connected and has accessible infrastructure; has affordable housing; is diverse; is engaged in lifelong learning opportunities. **[NOTE: Active transport fits well with all of these]**
2. A creative and cultural Marrickville **[and some of these]**
3. A vibrant economy and well planned, sustainable urban environment and infrastructure **[and these]**
4. An innovative, effective, consultative and representative council **[and these]**.

Marrickville's current targets already include: the number of vehicle and pedestrian accidents is decreasing; the proportion of residents who are obese or overweight is decreasing; the proportion of residents who walk and cycle is increasing. See www.marrickville.nsw.gov.au/en/council/forms-and-publications/main-plans/



Further Resources

NSW Premiers Council for Active Living – Resources: www.pcal.nsw.gov.au/local_government

Some council plans: www.olg.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/Community-Strategic-Plans-Group-1-Councils.pdf

Office of Local Government: www.olg.nsw.gov.au/councils/integrated-planning-and-reporting/framework

STEP 2: What is a Community Strategic Plan?

The Community Strategic Plan represents the highest level of strategic planning undertaken by a local council. All other plans developed by the council as part of the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework **must reflect and support the implementation of the Community Strategic Plan.**

The Community Strategic Plan should identify the main priorities and aspirations of the community, providing a clear set of strategies to achieve this vision of the future. Building the Community Strategic Plan takes time and must involve a whole-of-community engagement process. It is important to note that while the council is the custodian of the Community Strategic Plan, it may not be responsible for the delivery of all of the activities the Plan identifies. It is important that the Community Strategic Plan identifies who is responsible for its implementation, including other partners such as State agencies, non-government organisations, business partners and community groups.

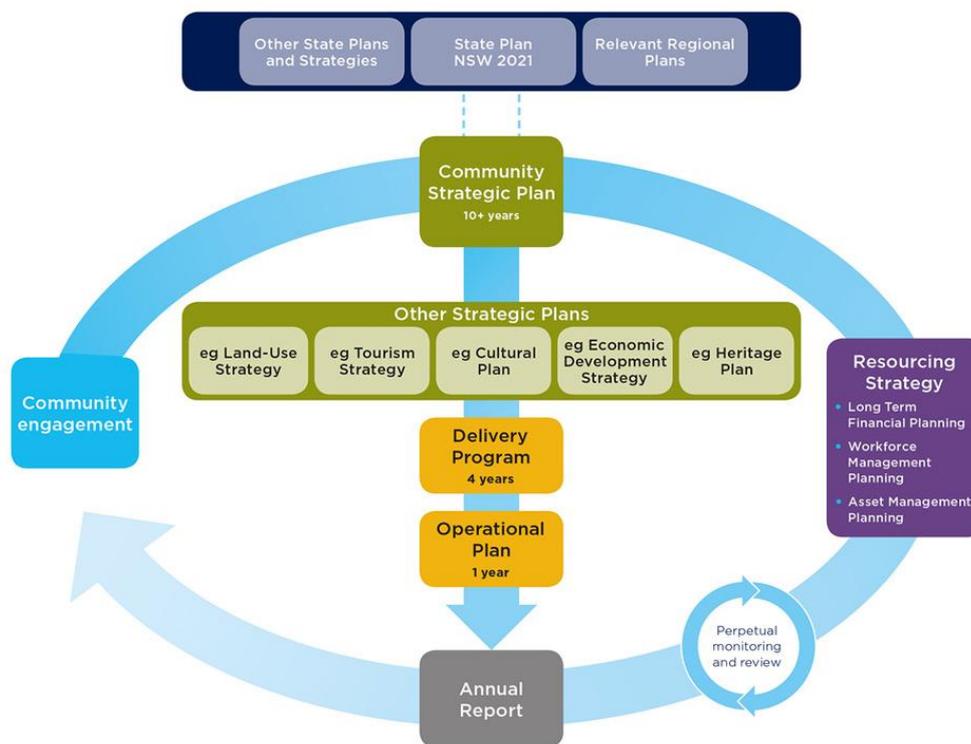
The Community Strategic Plan addresses four key questions for the community:

- 1 Where are we now?
- 2 Where do we want to be in ten years' time?
- 3 How will we get there?
- 4 How will we know when we have arrived?

The Community Strategic Plan must be based on the social justice principles of access, equity, participation and rights. It should also address the quadruple bottom line (social, environmental, economic and civic leadership) issues. It is recommended that a council uses a multi-disciplinary team to manage and implement the integrated planning process.

You can help your local Council to make cycling + walking (also known as active transport) a priority in the Community Strategic Plan.

IP&R Framework (From the Office of Local Government website)



Terminology

It is important to ensure that **cycling, walking, and active transport** are incorporated throughout Council’s documents – on the public website, on the Council’s own intranet pages, in brochures and pamphlets issued by Council, and in its strategic and operational plans.

Council’s areas of concern:	Request that Council also add the following words:
Access to sports & recreation	With safe bike routes to get there (more space for sport, less needed for parking)
Parks & playgrounds	With safe routes to get there (and add more kids bike tracks)
Mental health & wellbeing	Active transport opportunities and green spaces to get to by walk/bike
Children’s education & childcare	With safe access by bike to reduce traffic danger. Add bike racks, and at schools.
Community services for all ages	Easy & convenient to reach by walk/bike
Council facilities, libraries, etc	Easy & convenient to reach by walk/bike
Neighbourliness, reduced social isolation, more social capital	By more people walking & riding bikes, to increase social contact and neighbourhood trust and safety
Safe places to interact...	And safe ways to get there...
Improved accessibility	For all (including those too young/old to drive)
Reduce crime or improve safety	Including road crime/road safety (which affects so many, and deters bike/walk)
Affordable housing	By reducing need to always include cost of parking / need for car
Services for new migrants	Bike/walk/public transport info to help them access services and work
Learning opportunities	Including cycling courses for adults & children, to improve health & air quality
Cultural activities, events, etc	Encourage access by bike & walk
Reduce greenhouse emissions	Reduce car use. Encourage walking, riding and public transport.
Reduce waste	Project to recycle old bicycles.
Increase walking & cycling & PT	Install bike racks, distribute maps, run courses, improve planning controls for buildings to have bike parking & facilities, build bike network & signage.
Improve air quality. Reduce noise.	Reduce car use. Improve streets for walking and riding.
Reduce congestion.	Build facilities for active transport.
Reduce water pollution	Reduce car use (main source of stormwater pollutants)
Support local economy/business	Encourage walking & cycling (because in a car people drive to more distant regional shopping areas, not their local shops). Install bike racks & benches.
Leadership by councillors & staff	Encourage them to walk & ride to have view that reflects all the community, not just a windscreen view. Add council bike fleet and make sure it is well used. Regular inspection rides with community.
Efficient and healthy workplace	Encourage walking & riding for health & for efficient travel to site meetings.
Ethical, and value for money	Spend a fair share of road/infrastructure budget on the sizeable part of the community not in cars (including young, old, new migrants, disadvantaged).

STEP 3: Worksheet – things to think about before approaching Council

1. What priorities and targets does your council have in its current strategic plan and/or other plans?
2. What priorities do you/does your group think should be included in the new plan? How can you word them to have broad appeal?
3. How would progress on those priorities be measured? What targets/measures/data should there be?
4. Who else and what other groups would be supportive of some or all of your suggestions?
5. How will you make contact with them, your members, and/or your community, to garner support during the consultation period?
6. What ideas or lessons can you share with other groups to help them with their council areas?

STEP 4: Make a meeting with your local Councillor

You can meet with your local Council representative either as a group (e.g. BUG or community group) or individual. Check your Council's website (or phone them) to find out who you should meet with.

Remember that they are busy people, so come prepared with **3-4 key messages**, e.g.

- 1) This is who we represent
- 2) We believe cycling and walking are important to the broad community because....
- 3) Council should consider the following top 3 priorities...

STEP 5: Get the Council's consultation list

Make sure you are (or someone from your community group is) on the Council's consultation list for the Community Strategic Plan in early 2016.

Check your Council's website (or phone them) to find out how you can be part of this consultation.

This document was prepared in Nov 2015 by Bicycle NSW in consultation with experts within the community.