



Sarah Bickford <sarah.bickford@bicyclensw.org.au>

A City for Walking - Strategy and Action Plan

1 message

Sarah Bickford <sarah.bickford@bicyclensw.org.au>

5 April 2024 at 14:50

To: council@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au, sydneyoursay@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au

Cc: Peter McLean <peter.mclean@bicyclensw.org.au>, Yvonne Poon <yvonne.bikeeast@gmail.com>

Dear Maab,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft strategy and action plan for walking in the City of Sydney ('the Strategy')

Bicycle NSW has been the peak bicycle advocacy group in NSW for forty-seven years and has more than 30 affiliated local Bicycle User Groups. Our mission is to 'create a better environment for all bicycle riders', and we support improvements to facilities for pedestrians and cyclists. We advocate for new cycling routes to provide connections to jobs, schools and services for daily transport and recreation trips. Bike riding provides a healthy, congestion-reducing, low-carbon form of travel that is quiet, efficient and attractive for all ages with the correct infrastructure design.

Bicycle NSW strongly supports the Strategy and 12-point action plan to create an exemplary City for Walking.

- We thank the City of Sydney for the great work undertaken over the last decade to upgrade the pedestrian realm. Multiple projects at a variety of scales have led to significant improvements in the experience of walking. It is clear that City planners and policy makers understand that walking is a mode of transport but also a form of public life. It is great to see that this leadership role is deeply embedded in Strategy.
- The Strategy is based on global best-practice in active transport infrastructure and policy. The outcome of more people walking and cycling on continuous, safe, connected and attractive paths is consistent with the raft of excellent NSW Government strategies and policies that support active transport.
- The 12 actions will accelerate and reinforce walking as the easiest, most convenient and most inviting way to get around Sydney. We note that these actions are not all within the City of Sydney's control. Bicycle NSW engages regularly with ministers and senior staff at Transport for NSW. Please reach out when we can support your efforts to influence external stakeholders.
- Bicycle NSW agrees that road space reallocation is a critical part of accommodating the future growth in walking. Too many Sydney footpaths are narrow and not fit-for-purpose while multiple lanes of unencumbered vehicles fly past. We are confident that the City of Sydney is continually planning street upgrades to address the most pressing issues and create more space for pedestrians. However, we have not been made aware of any plans for Macquarie Street, and ask this corridor to be considered as soon as possible. The State's most important institutions and heritage buildings are marred by too much noise and traffic, and they are fronted by embarrassingly narrow, cluttered and congested footpaths.
- We support the planting of large trees within the carriageway to improve walking space on narrow footpaths, calm traffic, and shade and cool our streets. In a similar vein, we ask the City to repurpose car parking spaces in the carriageway to accommodate defined share bike parking areas. It is important that car space, not pedestrian space, is used for bike (and, in the future, e-scooter) parking. This is supported by the Road User Space Allocation Policy and is a key advocacy concern for Bicycle NSW
- It is fantastic that improved signal phasing is front and centre of the action plan, despite the challenges of multi-stakeholder advocacy. Bicycle NSW is working with TfNSW to push for changes, and we will collaborate with the City to help achieve good outcomes. We are particularly keen to see more default green crossings in low-traffic areas, and instant green for pedestrians and bike riders at off-peak times when traffic is light.
- Of course, we strongly support the proposals to implement 30 km/hr speed limits in the city centre, high streets, residential streets and around childcare centres, schools, universities, and health establishments, with a maximum of 40 km/hr elsewhere. This aligns with a [Bicycle NSW advocacy priority](#) and we urge the City of Sydney to act quickly to make these changes.
- The promise to declutter footpaths is appreciated, but this work risks being undermined by the proliferating advertising signs, poorly designed bus stops, parked share bikes, car parking meters, electric car charging infrastructure and construction signs. Obstructed shared paths are of particular concern as these have more diverse path users travelling at a variety of speeds. It is essential that all departments within the City of Sydney bureaucracy work together to achieve clear and uncluttered paths. Internal education and communication processes may need to be sharpened to ensure better outcomes going forwards!
- We suggest a change to this line on Page 8: "it is important to provide the basic necessities so that walking is inviting for both an 8- and 80-year-old so that we are creating a city for walking for everyone". This age bracket is commonly applied when planning for bike infrastructure. It is not appropriate for walking projects. People need good walking infrastructure from the day they take those first steps until a very old age.

- Figure 5 on Page 13 is not correct - it is a repeat of Figure 4.
- Finally, the City of Sydney is lucky to have an active and highly experienced ecosystem of advocates living and working in the LGA. Please collaborate closely with WalkSydney, BIKEast, Bike Sydney and Bicycle NSW on projects related to walking and cycling.

The City of Sydney will continue to lead the way in transforming the urban environment with people, not cars, at the centre. Other councils are inspired by your work and your influence spreads far and wide. Please keep up the good work and know that Bicycle NSW is behind your efforts.

Many kind regards,



Sarah Bickford
Bike Planner

Bicycle NSW

Gadigal Country
Tower 2, Level 20,
201 Sussex Street, Sydney, NSW 2000
T: 02 9704 0800 M: 0431 961 520 W: bicyclensw.org.au



JOIN OUR FAMILY