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To
The Mayor and Councillors
Leichhardt Municipal Council
PO Box 45
Leichhardt NSW 2040

27 March 2012

Dear Mayor and Councillors

BIKESydney's submission to Leichhardt's Draft Integrated Transport Plan

This document outlines BIKESydney's response to Leichhardt Municipal Council's Draft Integrated Transport Plan. In the pursuit of clarity, the points are presented in concept rather than in detail. BIKESydney is available to expand on the points as required.

The submission is presented in two parts:

- responses to items as raised in the draft integrated Transport Plan's Four Year Service Delivery Plan,
- Strategies that we believe should be included in the draft Integrated Transport Plan.

In our response, we use the following abbreviations:

- **dITP** - the draft integrated Transport Plan
- **ITP** - the (as yet to be completed) final version of the Integrated Transport Plan
- **The Delivery Plan** - the ITP's Four Year Service Delivery Plan 2012-2016
- **LGA** - Local Government Area
- **DCP** - Leichhardt's Development Control Plan (which includes parking rates)
- **RMS** - NSW Government department of Roads and Maritime Services

In overview, we feel that the dITP presents a progressive agenda for active transport but that it is lacking in its attempt to appropriately manage the LGA's total future car parking burden.

Responses to items raised in Council's dITP

Our responses are presented with reference to the section numbering of the dITP's Four Year Service Delivery Plan ("The Delivery Plan").

Section 1 of The Delivery Plan

We congratulate Council on its adoption of explicit numerical targets for trips by bike and car [Figure 4].

Section 1 couches Parking Targets in terms of *accommodating* rather than *restricting* the demand for [car] parking. In keeping with the approach taken by surrounding councils, the final ITP must mandate a REDUCTION in on-site parking rates within developments. The ability to conveniently and cheaply park vehicles at destinations induces traffic from out-of-area and encourages avoidable car use for even short trips within the LGA.

Section 2 of The Delivery Plan

The final ITP must explicitly reference the revised DCP parking rates.

These revised parking rates must REDUCE existing levels of parking provision. This approach will be essential to the strategy for reducing car-dependency within the LGA.

In keeping with this vision, the dITP's expression of its Strategic Objective relating to parking ["Provide appropriate levels of parking"] is ambiguous and leaves scope for the objective to be interpreted in future as justifying increases in the LGA's total parking burden.

**The final ITP must set a numerical limit for the total parking capacity of the LGA.
The final ITP must commit to reducing this total LGA parking burden over time.**

Presently, on-street parking in parts of the LGA operates at not just capacity, but saturation levels. For example, in Balmain, under Council guidance, parking rangers permit vehicles to be parked right up to the building (facade) line at intersections (often less than a footpath width away from the through road). Not even the car-centric RMS permits parking within 10m of intersections in order to preserve safe passage and good sight lines. Leichhardt's lenient practice is very dangerous for cyclists and pedestrians who are presently not able to see oncoming vehicles on Council's bike routes and footpaths respectively.

It will not be possible to reduce car usage (let alone to the stated goal of -25% of all car driver trips) without arresting parking provision creep given the induced traffic that results from unfettered capacity to park vehicles. As stated in the document itself, the ITP's **primary** goal is to foster environmental improvements by **reducing private car dependency for all travel**".

The ITP should explicitly commit Council to upholding the RMS's requirement that cars not park within 10m of intersections.

Figure 8 - The Action Plan - ITP Action Matrices

Council is to be commended for its Strategic Objective of “creat[ing] a legible, direct and safe pedestrian and cycling environment”.

Strategies 2.1 - 2.17 are commendable but we note that many of these strategies are unfunded. In order to have Council staff properly engaged with and committed to these initiatives, these strategies must be funded.

Other strategies that aren't included in the dITP but should be

Given the myriad ways in which walkers and bicycle riders do and will interact within the LGA, **the ITP should explicitly articulate principles, strategies and design guides** for appropriately managing these interactions (eg, “Share the path” campaign for the Bay Run, Shared zones at intersections).

The ITP should incorporate a construction **design guide for its active transport corridors** (shared paths, footpaths, streets) similar to the City of Sydney’s Streets Design Code which provides key public domain principles and guidance on material and street furniture palettes. A particular focus here is to ensure that road surfaces are made safe for cycling. At present, many of the roads within the LGA present hazards (eg, drain grates) and dangerous surfaces (cracks, pavers, cut seams left by utility company works). A design code (education) and accompanying monitoring (enforcement) through Leichhardt’s Traffic Committee would greatly reduce this incidence of these hazards.

The Bay Run surrounding Iron Cove requires a masterplan. The lack of coordination between different sections of its foreshore path unnecessarily presents hazards for many of its users.

Following from the lead provided by the City of Sydney, **Leichhardt’s Traffic Committee should be renamed** (eg, Local Pedestrian, Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee) and have its remit realigned to reflect the ITP’s focus on active transport. This shift in focus is supported by the NSW State Government’s Long Term Transport masterplan discussion paper.

The dITP calls for many cycling-related initiatives. To achieve these, Council will require someone be wholly devoted to these tasks. To this end, Council should **create a new Cycling Officer role**. In our view, this is the single most important action Council can take to enhance provision for cycling within Leichhardt in the longer term.

From its seat on the Leichhardt Council Bicycle Advisory Committee, BIKESydney is aware that Leichhardt spends only part of its allocated annual cycling budget (\$400,000 pa). Withholding spending comes at the “expense” of lost matched-funding from the RMS. Separately, Council will overhaul its Bike Plan in the coming year and the cost of doing so will be comparable to the annual salary of a devoted Cycling Officer. This officer could be tasked with undertaking a significant proportion of the work required of the Bike Plan review. Thus, the installation of a Cycling Officer could be done cost-effectively and to great value.

The Callan Park Masterplan makes provision for a Bike Hub to be included on its grounds. The ITP should explicitly recognise the value and roles that could be provided by the **Callan Park Bike Hub** located adjacent to the Bay Run. We envisage that the Callan Park Bike Hub would serve as a bicycling resource, information, outreach and events centre as well as a (generally free and open) bicycle recycling and repair centre.

Depending on the financial model adopted for the Park, the Bike Hub could also incorporate a “bike cafe” which would allow for the Hub to be self-funding. Located adjacent to the Bay Run path, the Bike Hub would be a highly visible and valued contact point for all passing cyclists as well as a catchment for would-be cyclists visiting the cafe. The visibility and community value of the Bike Hub would much increase if and when the GreenWay and the City West Cycle Link (both referred to in the dITP) are activated.

The Bike Hub would present as a strong opportunity to knit communities together and an iconic statement of the ITP’s commitment to transport mode-shifting to bicycles. The Bike Hub would have a meaningful role with ALL future tenants of the Park - the Arts College (commute to college, art rides, culture), the NSW Ambulance service (commuting), the public gardens (cargo bikes for carrying tools and plants), sporting groups (ride rather than drive to Saturday sports), the recreational park users (the joy of riding) and of course, the mental health services (rehabilitation by bike, bike-servicing etc.)

Please feel free to contact BIKESydney should you have any questions regarding this submission.

Yours sincerely

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