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## **BIKESydney's submission to the Draft Parramatta Road Urban Renewal Strategy**

### **Introduction**

BIKESydney is an incorporated not-for-profit community organisation.

We want to live in a city:

- Where riding a bicycle is part of everyday life
- That is vibrant, healthy, productive, creative and robust
- That values community, mobility, health, wellbeing social equity and sustainability
- Where people of all ages can make easy choices to ride a bicycle, walk and take public transport.

We advocate on behalf of our members and people who ride bicycles who live and work in central Sydney.

## Policy Framework

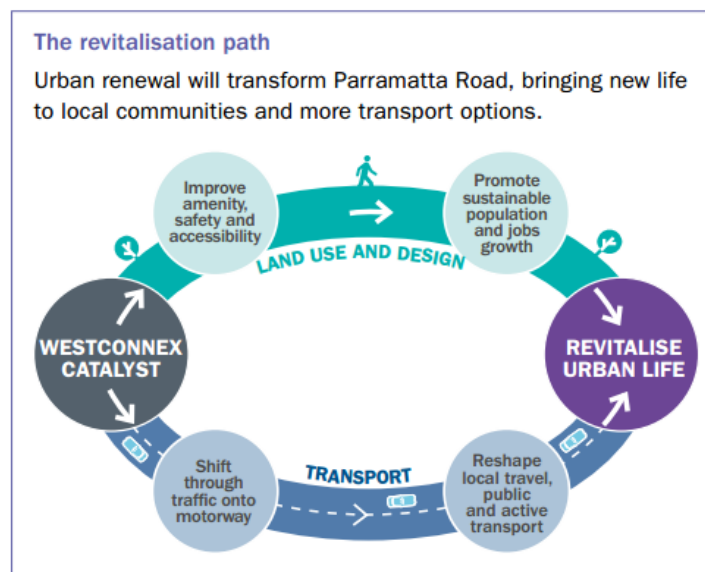
BIKESydney supports the NSW Government's commitment to its **NSW 2021** Goals of:

- More than doubling the mode share of bicycle trips made in the Greater Sydney region, at a local and district level, by 2016 (NSW 2021 Goal 8);
- Promoting healthy lifestyles, including by increasing the mode share of bicycle trips and by reducing overweight and obesity rates (NSW 2021 Goals 8 and 11);
- Improving road safety, reducing fatalities and making NSW roads the safest in the country (NSW 2021 Goal 10).

## BIKESydney supports the Principle of renewing the Parramatta Road Corridor

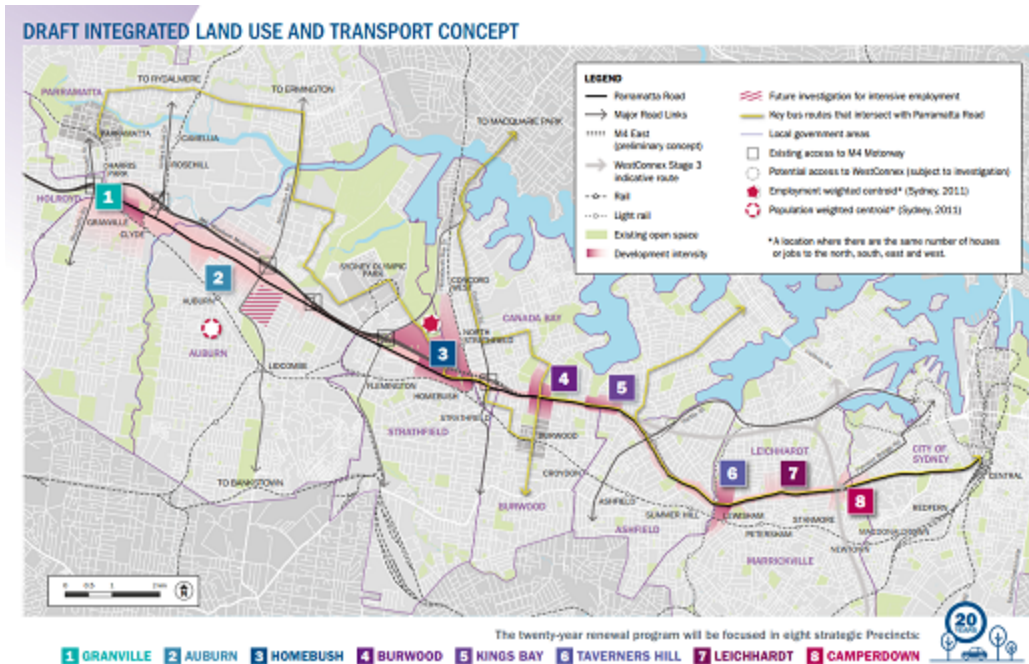
BIKESydney supports the *principle* of renewing the Parramatta Road corridor subject to it be delivered based on place- and human-centric design.

Our comments are qualified by the observation that the proposal's relationship with the "catalysing" (but yet to be approved) WestConnex Motorway project - which has since been de-coupled from the Parramatta Road corridor - is unknown. To this end, we have contained our recommendations to high-level principles. We look forward to providing feedback on a concept design in the near future.



Our assessment of the proposal is based on review of the Draft Strategy updated in February 2015.

We hereafter refer to the *Draft Parramatta Road Urban Renewal Strategy* (the subject assessment) as the “Draft Strategy” and the (yet-to-be published) final version of the Strategy as the “Final Strategy”.



## Quick Facts

The **Draft Strategy** states that:

- the proposal will increase the current population within the eight affected precincts by 285% from 18,100 to 51,600 by 2031 [Draft Strategy, page 2];
- Parramatta Road [corridor’s] continuing deterioration has many causes including noise, the under-functioning road system (travel speeds are less than 20 km/h for more than eight hours of each day), poor north-south cross connections for pedestrians and cyclists, and inefficient public transport [page 3];
- the proposal aims to introduce 50,000 new homes and 50,000 new jobs along the corridor [page 4];
- Approximately 2.8million trips are made to, from and within the Parramatta Road corridor each weekday [page 11].

## Transport in the Parramatta Road Corridor

Around **2.8 million** trips on an average **weekday**

This is **17.5%** of the total trips made in **metro Sydney**



About  **1 in every 3** residents travel to work by **public transport**

About **1 in 10** walk or cycle   


### On a typical workday ...


Around **9000** people travel to work in the **Sydney Olympic Park area**

Over **900** bus services operate along Parramatta Road through **Leichhardt** east of Norton Street

Over **450** bus services operate on **Burwood Road**


Almost **2 million** trips each year on **Parramatta River ferry** services


**10 minutes** in peak periods and every **15 minutes** in the off peak

 **Customers a year**

**Bus route 438**  
**2.5 million**  
Operating between the City and Abbotsford

**Bus route 461**  
**1.3 million**  
Operating along Parramatta Road between Burwood and the City

 **Inner West light rail extension**  
The Dulwich Hill Line provides a service every **10 minutes** in peak periods and every **15 minutes** in the off peak

 In a typical weekday peak hour, over **40** train services stop at **Strathfield**, **20** at **Parramatta**, and more than **10** each at **Granville**, **Lidcombe**, **Auburn**, **Burwood** and **Ashfield**

## We support the Draft Strategy's:

- principles to deliver “new public transport services” and “safer and better cycle routes”
- principles to create (although the Draft Strategy states “demonstrate”) “high-quality new development”
- focus for creating good public spaces, and places to meet, ie. making places habitable rather than merely traffickable.

## The Final Strategy should:

- adopt the principle to “*prioritise* sustainable travel modes (walking, cycling and public transport) over personal car use”, rather than merely to “*improve*” public transport and “*expand* travel choices” and to “optimise use of road space for all users” (productive though those ambitions are);
- specifically enunciate how the proposal serves the State’s goal of doubling cycling’s mode share (**NSW 2021**, Goal 8);
- explicitly enunciate the *strategies* that it will adopt to encourage cycling as a transport and commuting option;
- adopt the principle to provide safe, connected regional cycling links that eliminate conflict with pedestrians and motorised traffic;
- include an explicit assessment of “trip generators” (eg, Sydney University, Sydney Olympic Park), cycling catchments and “desire lines” for each precinct and the entire corridor;
- adopt urban design principles to localise living and reduce transport trips;
- adopt urban design principles that result in walking and cycling presenting as an easy first choice for most local trips;
- create built environments that are consistent with those identified by the Premiers Council for Active Living (PCAL) so as to deliver vibrant local economies and health benefits for citizens and the state of NSW;
- Include explicit measures to actively dis-incentivise personal car trips. (Note, this is different to *incentivising* sustainable transport.) While the Draft Strategy does not commit explicitly to many measures, yet does commit to ensuring that “...*Parramatta Road will remain a toll-free route for those that choose not to use WestConnex*” [Draft Strategy, page 11]. This measure alone significantly increase motorised traffic and in time will result - as for all other Sydney inter-regional roads - in traffic congestion along the corridor;

- propose **specific measures** to address the likely future instruction by the RMS to increase capacity for personal motor vehicles along the corridor which will heavily impact the effectiveness of the proposal's public transport and mode-shifting initiatives. This intention is clearly signalled by the RMS' current (and past) attempts to "widen the pipes" for motorised traffic on state-controlled corridors similar in nature and function to the Parramatta Road corridor: [\[http://www.mynrma.com.au/blog/2014/01/13/more-clearways-planned-to-ease-weekend-traffic-congestion/\]](http://www.mynrma.com.au/blog/2014/01/13/more-clearways-planned-to-ease-weekend-traffic-congestion/) These interventions by the RMS compete directly with the proposal's ambitions;
- commit to using kerbside lanes within the corridor for public transport, cycleways, landscaping and pedestrian amenities rather than on-street car parking. A primary justification for this project is the traffic alleviation possible along the corridor due to the presence of the (project "catalysing") WestConnex Motorway. This newly-created road capacity must not be devoted back to personal car use. It is well established that any on-street car parking so provided by the project would fill immediately after the project's opening and would induce significant traffic along the corridor. Including on-street car parking within the corridor would cede any transport capacity advantage claimed by this proposal;
- commit to providing high-capacity public transport modes along the corridor such as light rail and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) systems, for example. The corridor will not function nor attract new residents if the increase in public transport is contained to merely scaling up existing bus services in their current mode of deployment;
- introduce new planning controls that result in:
  - shifting vehicle trips to the periphery of precincts, leaving inner-precinct areas prioritised for walking and cycling;
  - traffic-calming measures;
  - mixed-use development;
  - removal of minimum parking rates for developments;
  - active and public transport presenting as a preferred choice for most of the population;
  - car-lite and car-free developments (of which, several examples already exist in Sydney);
  - improved storage for bicycles within tenancies (as detailed in [BIKESydney's submission to the NSW Planning's review of SEPP65 – Design Quality of Residential Flat Development](#), and
  - mandating minimum bicycle parking rates for development;
- commit to providing signalised cycling crossings at intersections on significant north-south cycling routes along the corridor;
- include a strategy to direct the *location* of traffic signals poles, traffic signs, signal boxes, letter boxes and other public domain infrastructure to create space within the (facade-to-facade) "road corridor" for walking and cycling in particular.. This strategy alone will significantly increase the opportunity for segregated walking and riding paths. (Currently, the potential for safe, segregated walking and cycling infrastructure is blocked merely because of the space constraints imposed by poorly-placed (mainly, traffic signal) poles. A new approach to the placement of these poles will unlock significant space for active transport;

- commit to including lead cycling-for-transport stakeholder groups such as Bicycle NSW and BIKESydney in the design of the proposal;
- mandate that cycling infrastructure and facilities are provided in advance of major commercial and residential redevelopment (as roads are) to ensure that sustainable travel habits are established as and when occupation occurs.

Could you please advise us directly once UrbanGrowth NSW has completed its Submissions Report for this consultation?

We look forward to consulting further with you as a significant stakeholder.

Yours sincerely

David Borella

**BIKESydney**

President

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