

# Central Coast Cycle Strategy

2014 - 2019



CENTRAL COAST  
COUNCIL

# Central Coast Cycle Strategy

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## WHY A CENTRAL COAST CYCLE STRATEGY?

The Central Coast Cycle Strategy is the Council's five year plan to support the growing culture of cycling in Central Coast. The aim is to enhance cycling in Central Coast, making it an enjoyable, relaxing and safe experience, and Central Coast a place where cycling is a viable option for short and medium trips that cannot be made on foot.

A successful increase in the uptake of cycling in Central Coast offers considerable personal health benefits, cost savings and environmental, liveability and sustainability benefits, as well as positive economic and social outcomes.

Cycling is effective in creating strong social networks, local accessibility and a vibrant economy, while reducing negative environmental impacts of motor vehicle activity.

The Council acknowledges its responsibility to continue to improve cycling facilities where practicable and to provide for new and less confident riders.

By supporting a culture of cycling the Council is committed to providing for the future of our community.

This Strategy has been developed collaboratively with the Bike Strategy Advisory Group made up of community members who represent many aspects and disciplines of cycling from within the Central Coast area. The Council will also work collaboratively with various Tasmanian government agencies including Tasmania Police, Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of State Growth, neighbouring local councils and the Education Department.

## A VISION FOR CYCLING IN THE CENTRAL COAST

*The aim: To make cycling in Central Coast an enjoyable, relaxing and safe experience for on and off road users, and those utilising the area's shared pathways.*

*To see cycling embedded in the area's way of life, bringing with it opportunities for social connection and inclusion, recreational activity, economic growth, positive environmental gains and individual and community health benefits.*

## BACKGROUND

The primary aim of the Central Coast Cycle Strategy is to encourage people travelling within or through Central Coast to make more of their trips by bicycle.

Cycling is experiencing improvement in participation rates, not only in Tasmania but in Australia and across the world, both as a means of transport, commuting and also as a recreational pursuit.

Central Coast has a long history of cycling, and is fortunate that linkages between riders and the community are stronger here than they are in many other regions.

Although the community uptake of cycling and awareness of its benefits are on the increase, there still remain barriers to cycling which are not underestimated by the Council. These include safety concerns, increased traffic and changes in residential density. However our biggest challenge and yet the area where Central Coast potentially stands to gain the most, is in utilising the growing popularity of cycling to engage those members of the community currently not participating in regular physical activity. It is intended that this Strategy will provide a framework to support a vibrant and healthy cycling culture.

With roads that are great for road cycling and training, and many other roads that provide enough space for bikes and vehicles to travel comfortably together, Central Coast is well positioned to lead the way in being a Tasmanian rural area that establishes itself as a recognised 'cycle' area, with potential ongoing benefits from tourism, events and a cycle business economy.

The Council does however recognise that there is ongoing work to be done with the building of infrastructure and the provision of shared pathway amenity, particularly to encourage families and new users.

Opportunities for older citizens to maintain an active and healthy life has been identified as an objective in the Central Coast Positive Ageing Strategy. Where possible it is the Council's aim that shared pathway infrastructure will provide the opportunity for mobility and social inclusion for as many user groups as possible including those using mobility scooters.

To date the Council's planning approach to cycle infrastructure in Central Coast has been the building of a network spine, which will provide the framework for cycle infrastructure into the future.

## STRATEGIC CONTEXT

### FEDERAL

#### The Australian National Cycling Strategy 2011 – 2016

***Vision: “Double the number of people cycling in Australia over the next five years.”***

### STATE

#### Tasmanian Walking and Cycling for Active Transport Strategy

Department of State Growth

***Vision: “To create a safe, accessible and well-connected transport system that encourages more people to walk and cycle as part of their everyday journeys.”***

Objectives: -

- Reduce greenhouse emissions
- Create liveable and accessible communities
- Increase travel reliability
- Encourage healthy, active communities
- Integrated transport and land use planning

#### Tasmania’s Plan for Physical Activity 2011 – 2021

Developed by the Premier’s Physical Activity Council in consultation with the Tasmanian community

***Vision: “All Tasmanians experience and enjoy the many benefits of regular physical activity.”***

- Goals: -
- Goal 1: Become a community that values and supports physical activity
  - Goal 2: Create built and natural environments that enable and encourage physical activity
  - Goal 3: Develop partnerships that build and share knowledge and resources
  - Goal 4: Increase opportunities for all Tasmanians to be physically active where they live, work and play.

The State Government is aiming for a 10% increase in the rates of participation in physical activity by different age groups by 2021.

## LOCAL

Four of the five strategic directions identified by the Council in its Strategic Plan 2014-2024 relate to the Central Coast Cycle Strategy:

They are:

Strategic Direction 1 - The Shape of the Place

Strategic Direction 2 - A Connected Central Coast

Strategic Direction 3 - Community Capacity and Creativity

Strategic Direction 4 - The Environment and Sustainable infrastructure

and have been identified to provide the guidance toward the outcomes of:

- socio-economic well-being
- resilient and engaged community
- healthy community and healthy lifestyle
- healthy environment.

*“It is always wonderful to watch the life skills that cycling teaches our youth. Discipline, life style skills, health choices, and road safety. Even if kids stop cycling when other life choices come into play those life skills stay, and that is invaluable.”*

*David Walker  
Australian Institute of Sport  
Cycling Coach*

## WHAT WE STAND TO GAIN

### HEALTH BENEFITS

Currently many Tasmanians are not enjoying the benefits of regular exercise. In 2007-08 seven out of 10 Tasmanians aged 18 years and over were classified as sedentary or having low levels of exercise.<sup>(1)</sup>

Studies show that physical inactivity contributes to 6.6% of the overall health burden in Australia, measured by the number of years lost due to ill health, disability and early death.<sup>(2)</sup>

It also contributes to over 16,000 deaths per year in Australia. The impact on the Australian economy in terms of direct health care costs, reduced productivity and increased mortality is estimated to be \$13.8 billion each year.<sup>(3)</sup>

Population health underpins the social and economic well-being of every community. Research shows that improving the health of communities through primary health prevention measures such as walking and cycling are generally low cost and these measures are more likely to have greater long-term success as they become part of everyday behaviour.<sup>(4)</sup>

Cycling is a great means of integrating exercise into the day, and by cycling for transport people can engage in physical activity without investing extra time, money or commitment to making it happen. Transport options that provide incidental exercise offer people with busy lives a means of reducing their risk of disease and ill health. Leisure cycling is also an important means of getting daily exercise to maintain health and well-being.

Incorporating active travel into your daily routine can help to address overweight and obesity, reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease, Type 2 diabetes and some forms of cancer.<sup>(5)</sup>

*“When I hit 104 kilograms, I knew that I had to do something! Too busy to fit in a team sport, and not much of a runner or gym-goer at the time, cycling provided the most flexible, affordable and enjoyable option. I’m 25 kilograms lighter than I was when I bought my bike, and I’m happier, healthier and more productive than I’ve ever been”.*

*Daryl Connelly  
Business Advisor  
Cradle Coast Innovation*

*60 minutes is the minimum daily requirement for physical activity for children under 18<sup>(6)</sup>*

## COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Increasing cycling within a community makes it a more liveable place by increasing people's opportunity for interaction, and infrastructure and land uses that support walking and cycling help to increase the attractiveness of a place to live, work, shop, and socialise in.<sup>(7)</sup>

A liveable community is also a more accessible community, where people are able to access everyday destinations through a number of transport options safely, using an acceptable amount of time, money and effort. A better designed and liveable community also benefits those who have lower levels of mobility such as aged, people with disabilities and chronic illness.

Cycling also provides a low cost form of transport for young people, low income families or those without access to a car.<sup>(7)</sup>

Walking and cycling also extends the reach for public transport and patronage of services such as buses.<sup>(7)</sup>

*Cycling enables people to interact socially and feel more at home in their community. More people cycling and walking provides additional opportunity for social interaction on the streets and this enhances a sense of community.<sup>(8)</sup>*

## ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

The transport choices we make play an important part in minimising the impact our community has on climate change.

Even a small reduction in short vehicle trips can generate a significant reduction in emissions.

Cars and trucks also contribute to other environmental issues such as noise and air pollution, and road traffic can also affect water quality and contribute to a loss of biodiversity due to road run-off.<sup>(9)</sup>

- Road Transport contributes 92% of transport greenhouse emissions in Tasmania.
- Greenhouse gas emissions by cars have grown by 21% Australia-wide since 1990 and are expected to rapidly increase without any form of rapid intervention.<sup>(10)</sup>
- If a person walked or cycled to work 3km each way they reduce their greenhouse emissions by 350kg per year.<sup>(11)</sup>

*Active transport can reduce congestion and parking problems, leading to healthier local environments and communities.<sup>(8)</sup>*

## ECONOMIC BENEFITS

With cycling now rated as the fourth most popular physical activity in Tasmania<sup>(12)</sup> there is an opportunity for growth in Central Coast of business and tourism experiences such as those which have been developed in other areas. These include, but are certainly not limited to, high country cycle tours, the development of identified farm gate produce, “foodie” or culinary cycle trails and experiences, winery tours, art tours and off-road cycle parks.

Central Coast has already seen the positive impact that the holding of events such as The Cranky Penguin, held at the Penguin Mountain Bike Park, can have on the local economy. The Cranky Penguin event largely accounted for the unprecedented interest in riding in the park (639 visitations) in the month the event was held, October 2013. The opportunity exists for this facility, in time, to become a cycling holiday destination of choice.

Central Coast is also host to criterium cycling tours which increase visitor traffic to the area bringing potential positive impacts for hospitality and business.

Opportunities exist as Central Coast and neighbouring councils expand their cycle infrastructure to further develop opportunities for tasting trails and local cycling experiences.

The economic incentives for people to choose to ride their bicycles are strong, namely savings on fuel and car registration, insurance and maintenance.<sup>(12)</sup>

More broadly, land values tend to increase substantially where there are high-quality cycle facilities.<sup>(13)</sup>

Research has also shown that retail businesses can benefit from more people using bicycles to shop, not to mention growth in cycling businesses themselves.<sup>(14)</sup>

*Cycle tourists stay longer in an area and spend more than the average visitor. They go to smaller out of the way places and therefore have the potential to bring economic benefits to rural areas and townships.<sup>(15)</sup>*

## OBJECTIVES

### DEVELOPING THE CYCLE CULTURE

It is the Council's objective to strengthen and support the culture of cycling:

- Where cycling is the first choice for trips between 2km and 7km.
- Where cycling is the natural and best choice for many trips.
- Where the benefits of cycling are acknowledged by all sectors within the community.
- Where the Council's priorities reflect investment where feasible in cycling education, information and infrastructure.

### EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

Comprehensive promotion and engagement programs are essential in supporting a culture of cycling, to do this the Council will aim to:

- Raise the profile of cycling in a positive manner through media, educational institutions and workplaces and the wider community to develop the culture of cycling.
- Promote Central Coast's existing infrastructure and network of cycle friendly routes as a basis for creating an understanding, acceptance and uptake of cycling as a safe, enjoyable and relaxing option for travel and recreation.
- Encourage cycling for recreation, for not only the health benefits but as an introduction to converting people from non-cyclists to cyclists and then from recreational cyclists to commuters.
- Work closely with agencies including the State and Federal Governments, other local councils etc. to develop a cycling culture.
- Support initiatives such as "Ride2School", "Ride2Work", "Way2Go" and National Bike Week and other bike events and initiatives that help build a bike culture.
- Support initiatives and programs such as driver education, cycling skills courses, enforcing traffic laws and reducing motor vehicle speeds to improve the safety of cyclists and to change the perception of cycling as being unsafe. Promote to all transport vehicle users, respect for each other and use of all infrastructure graciously and safely.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

A high quality cycling network that can be comfortably used by people of all ages and abilities removes the significant barrier of safety concerns, and therefore helps to make cycling enjoyable. People are more likely to cycle if the facilities and surrounding area are perceived to be safe.

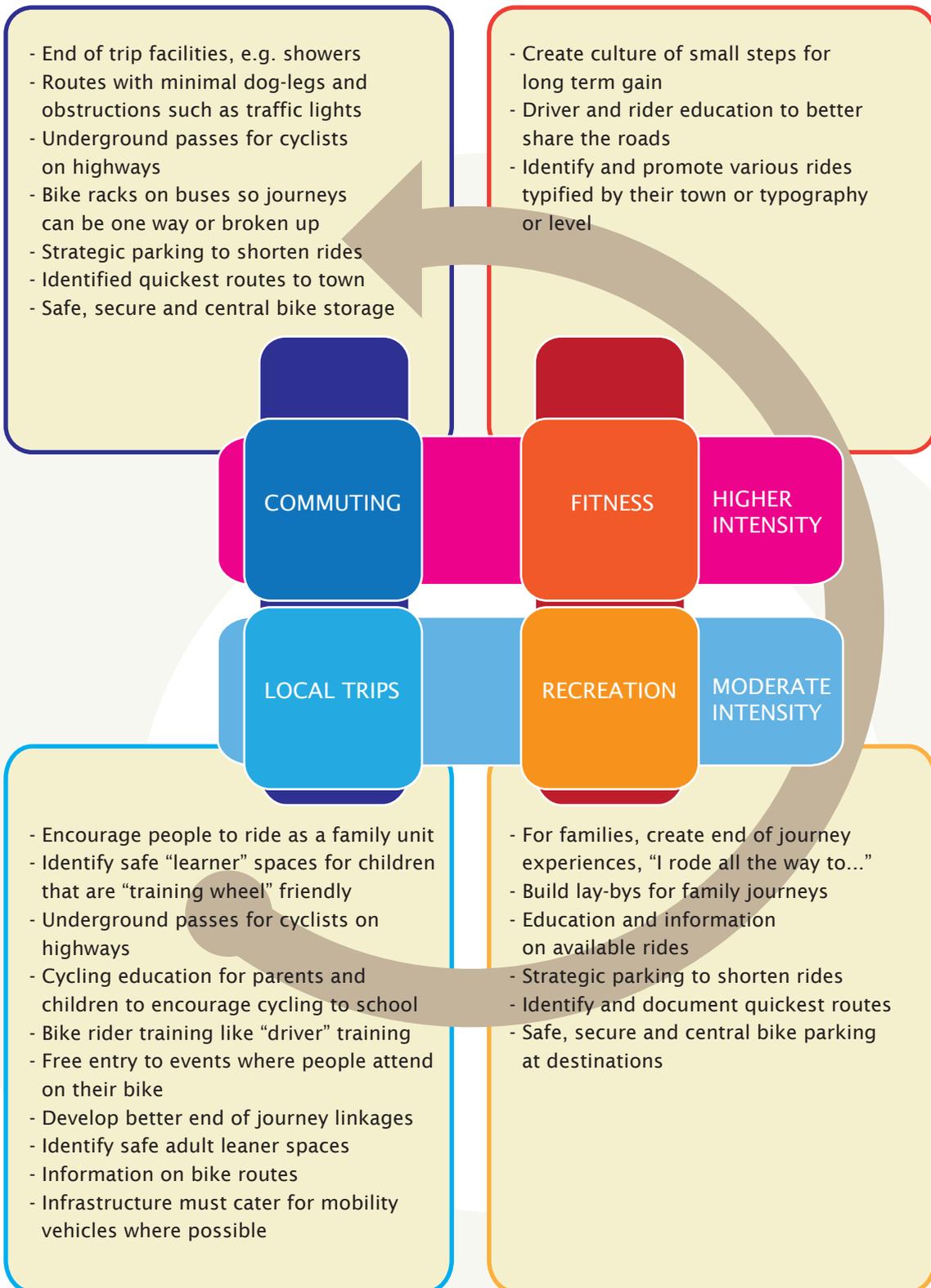
To help create this environment the Council will:

- Pursue a cohesive high quality network of cycle friendly routes accessing popular destinations within Central Coast that are suitable for use by those of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.
- Plan for further development, such as completing potential track loops, linking in with public transport, way finder signage and end of trip facilities.
- Develop way finding signage to identify routes that avoid busy roads and to educate other road users to see cycling as a valid method of transport and cyclists as valid road users.
- Promote routes to popular destinations.
- Plan for and create bike friendly town centres.
- Express a long term commitment to supporting a culture of cycling and engage key partners and stakeholders in prioritising investments in cycling.

*“Using a bicycle offers me the opportunity to enjoy the sights, smells and sounds of the surrounding countryside. It provides me with economic travel and it is faster than walking so greater distances can be covered; it supports the environment; generates a climate of consideration towards others and helps me to keep healthy”.*

*Keith Price  
Chairman - Safe Roads for Cyclists*

## THE PATHWAY FOR DEVELOPING A CYCLING CULTURE



## ACTIONS

The Council's leadership through this Cycle Strategy will improve accessibility, social inclusion, health outcomes, environment, air quality and community safety.

The Council will take a leading role to:

- Consider cycling infrastructure in future planning deliberation;
- Raise the profile of cycling and promoting its benefits;
- Engage the community including residents, businesses and educational institutions in planning, promoting and supporting cycling through information, events and promotional activities celebrating a culture of cycling;
- Where possible, ensure that transport and land use developments allow for direct, convenient and interconnected routes between key destinations and residential areas;
- Work with the Cradle Coast Mountain Bike club to further develop mountain biking in the area.

*Physical activity is ranked second to tobacco control as the most important factor in disease prevention in Australia<sup>(16)</sup>*

## PARTNERSHIPS

### COMMUNITY

- Engage with the community to understand emerging cycling issues in the area.
- Research the causes of any issues and develop solutions in partnership with users and other key stakeholders.
- Partner with schools and education institutions, children, parents, families and teachers to improve routes to school, and provide resources and cycle infrastructure.
- Work with neighbouring councils to increase connectivity, level of service and provide consistency across boundaries.
- Partner with community groups, neighbourhood houses and health promotion organisations to promote cycling and provide cycle training for beginners and less confident cyclists.
- Work with public transport providers to improve provision for bike riders.
- Partner with community and sporting groups to support cycling for recreation and health.

*“Not many places in the world are as lucky as the Cradle Coast to have so many wonders of nature and beautiful towns at our door step; all in a perfect balance, rivers, mountains, forest, beach, good food and other services all within 15 minutes of each other. The benefits of opening good quality mountain bike trails are unmeasurable, and the impact it has in small communities all around the world is equivalent to opening a ski field in town. The tourism increase and economical input to the local business is a proven fact, schools and local communities have easier access to nature and healthier lifestyle.*

*The increase in mountain bike users each year is exponential in all categories: Cross Country, Enduro, Down Hill etc., but the everyday riders and families is even bigger, giving greater strength to the mountain bike tourism. Nowadays people travel in bike holidays as commonly as ski holidays. After travelling and working in the best riding spots in the world and with the mountain bike coach and trail designer eye, I cannot find a better place to live.”*

*Marcelo Cardona  
Mountain Bike Association Australia  
Coach*

## **GOVERNMENT AND OTHER AGENCIES**

- Build relationships and effective communication within all areas of the Council to ensure an understanding of the benefits of cycling.
- Advocate to government agencies and the State and Federal Governments for road rules, design guidelines and processes that prioritise cyclists' safety and amenity.
- Advocate to Federal and State Governments and government agencies for funding and partnership opportunities to improve the cycling network and for investment and partnership to promote cycling.
- Promote to other regional councils support for walking, cycling, and public transport as an alternative to dependence on private transport as per planning scheme objectives.
- Provide a high level of pedestrian, cycling and vehicular movement and connectivity with the town of Penguin as per the planning scheme.
- Work across the Council to implement cycling infrastructure as opportunities arise.
- Work with neighbouring councils to increase connectivity, level of service and provide consistency across boundaries.
- Partner with Tasmania Police to increase enforcement of road rules and to encourage safe behaviour by all road users.
- Partner with the Parks and Wildlife Service and other agencies to identify and promote tracks and areas suitable for cycling.

## **BUSINESS**

- Support business in promoting on-street cycling facilities such as cycle parking, and encourage businesses to install cycle parking on their property and amenities for cyclists.
- Facilitate conversations with business that foster creative business ideas that support cycle activity, e.g. pop up coffee shop.

## CENTRAL COAST CYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE

The Central Coast Council has already made considerable investment to date in cycling infrastructure and facilities.

Currently there are bike racks situated at:

- La Mar - Turners Beach
- Beach Road toilets - Ulverstone
- Wharf Precinct - Ulverstone
- North Reibey Street car park - Ulverstone
- Recreation Centre - Ulverstone
- Waterslide - Ulverstone

### SHARED PATHWAY

The shared pathway currently runs from Anzac Park along the waterfront at the Wharf Precinct, before winding its way through Bicentennial and Fairway Parks and on from Ulverstone to Turners Beach.

Looking forward; subject to funding and community consultation, the Council will investigate the viability and potential for infrastructure such as:

- completion of the Coastal pathway to include West Ulverstone, Forth River Rail Bridge and Penguin to Sulphur Creek;
- pump and jump park;
- learner bicycle course, and
- criterium track.

*“Cycling for any age not only has physical, emotional and social benefits, it gives us back the thing in life it’s too easy to lose sight of and that’s FUN!”*

*I would say to anyone who hasn’t ridden a bike in a while – dust it off and start pedalling. Cycling is fun, and fun is the best way I can think of to stay young.”*

*Anne Langham*

*Bike Rider and Mother*

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