Tamworth REGIONAL COUNCIL

DRAFT

ACTIVE TRANSPORT STRATEGY

2021

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Tamworth Regional Council

Active Transport Strategy 2021, prepared by the Regional Services Directorate of Tamworth Regional Council
This document is a controlled document and therefore subject to review and amendment from time to time.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Tamworth Regional Council area has a growing population, particularly the city of Tamworth which has about 75 per cent of the region's population of 65,000.

As the Tamworth region moves towards a population of 100,000 persons in the future, it is particularly important that our transport infrastructure caters for this increase. With this growth, the number of daily vehicle trips within Tamworth itself is expected to rise by 70 per cent. With almost every trip in Tamworth currently completed using private vehicles, the demand on the road network and parking will dramatically increase, resulting in increased congestion.

Increasing active transport usage such as walking and cycling is one way to mitigate increasing traffic congestion. Active transport is generally any non-motorised form of transport involving physical activity, such as walking and cycling. There are a few exceptions to this including mobility scooters and to some extent public transport – which often includes either walking or cycling at the beginning or end of journeys.

Active transport provides tangible benefits by increasing daily physical activity levels and reducing greenhouse gas emissions through a reduction in cars on the road. Other benefits include improved social wellbeing and a greater sense of community.

The Tamworth Regional Council Active Transport Strategy forms part of Council's wider Tamworth Integrated Transport Masterplan (the Masterplan) which consists of the Active Transport, Roads Infrastructure, Bridge and Parking Strategies. The Masterplan provides the transportation information required for achieving sustainable growth as outlined in Council's Blueprint 100 plan.

While private vehicles are expected to remain the primary mode of transport for many Tamworth residents in the immediate future, the identified increased load on the local road network needs to be addressed in order to strike a more balanced transport network. Tamworth has many challenges which can make it difficult to reduce private vehicle use, including large distances between residential areas and places of work and a disconnected existing active transport/public transport network.

Improving active transport infrastructure through creating a sustainable, connected, attractive, safe and inclusive network will greatly improve the likelihood of reducing the dependency on private vehicle use and ensuring a more balanced transport network.

Providing active transport infrastructure and encouraging more people to participate through effective communication channels is key to developing a sustainable transport network. The current active transport network in Tamworth consists of 34km of shared path, 116km of footpath and 2km of on-road cycleway. Council will continue working towards developing a connected active transport network by identifying and completing missing links in the network.

Council aims to improve the safety of those using the active transport network, with walkers and cyclists in the road environment being particularly vulnerable. Safety can also refer to a person's perception on safety, with Council improving lighting, line-of-sight and the closed circuit television (CCTV) network.

End-of-trip and mid-trip facilities will be improved to ensure that users' needs are catered for when using the network. These will be located in areas of high-use and public transport interchanges. To also maximise the user experience, Council will seek to implement innovative solutions to navigation and explore new technologies as they become available.

Providing inclusive infrastructure and developing an accepting culture towards active transport use is something which Council will prioritise. As each person has their own purpose for travelling, a particular ability level and confidence level, Council will aim to cater for all when developing the network.

Undertaking these improvements requires a coordinated approach involving not only Council and its community stakeholders, but also the State Government and Federal Government. All should work together to meet the needs of the community in providing a functional, attractive, safe and connected transport network.

This strategy outlines Council's priority actions in achieving a target of around 1 in 10 journeys to work being undertaken using active transport means within the next 10 years. The main priorities for the Tamworth Regional Council Active Transport Strategy are:

- **Priority 1** – Encouraging active transport
- **Priority 2** – Providing a connected network
- **Priority 3** – Providing a safe network
- **Priority 4** – Ensuring an inclusive network and accepting culture
- **Priority 5** – Pursuing a smart network
- **Priority 6** – Ensuring an affordable network
- **Priority 7** – Maintaining a suitable network

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

The Tamworth Integrated Transport Masterplan (the Masterplan) is Council's guiding document in ensuring that our transport network meets the demand of the community now, and along the way in achieving a target population of 100,000 people within the region. It comprises:

- Active Transport Strategy;
- Roads Infrastructure Strategy;
- Bridge & Major Culvert Strategy; and,
- Tamworth CBD Parking Strategy.

The strategies which inform the Masterplan draw upon various Regional, State and Federal initiatives in order to provide a holistic view of transport in the region.

Council's Blueprint 100 document assesses all infrastructure and non-infrastructure programs required in order to achieve a sustainable target population of 100,000 persons in the region. This target is to be achieved in a sustainable manner with consideration given to water, transport, sewer, recreation and retail, commercial and industrial centres. The below framework demonstrates where the Active Transport Strategy, Tamworth Integrated Transport Masterplan and Blueprint 100 documents sit in the Regional Services Strategic Framework hierarchy.

REGIONAL SERVICES STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR DELIVERY OF TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

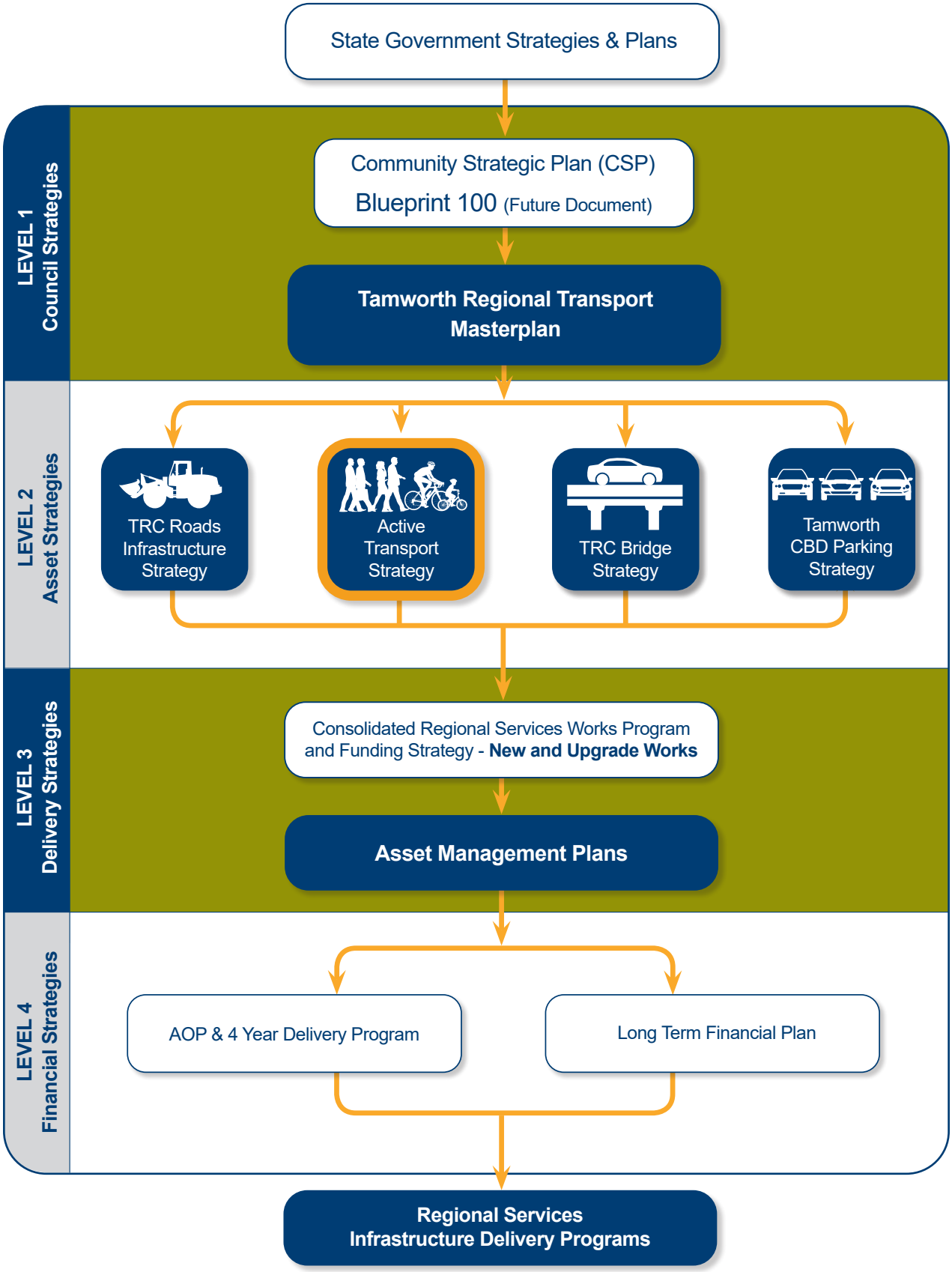

FIGURE 1. TAMWORTH REGIONAL COUNCIL STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE.

SETTING THE SCENE

The Tamworth Regional Council Active Transport Strategy (Active Transport Strategy) aims to ensure the Tamworth region is equipped to transform into a pedestrian and cycle-friendly region for the benefit of both its residents and all visitors. This will be achieved through providing a safe, connected, inclusive, accepting and smart active transport environment.

Cycling and walking plays an important role in shaping the region's transport network, with the Active Transport Strategy identifying the priority actions catering for an expected increase in the number of persons participating in active transport, and the frequency in which they do so.

The Active Transport Strategy will deliver improvements over the next 10 years and will support objectives outlined within the Tamworth Integrated Transport Masterplan and ultimately Blueprint 100.

VISION

Our vision is to create a connected, accessible, safe, inclusive and attractive walking and cycling network which will attract those of all abilities and ages to walk and cycle.

By 2031, it is targeted that around 1 in 10 journeys to work will be done so by either walking or cycling. Currently, only around 1 in 20 trips are done so in this manner.

Transport Mode	% Share of Trips					
	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031
Walking	5.6	4.4	4.0	5.0	6.0	7.0
Cycling	0.8	0.6	0.5	1.0	2.0	2.5
Public Transport	1.0	0.8	0.9	2.0	3.0	4.0
Private Transport	92.6	94.2	94.6	92.0	89.0	86.5

TABLE 1. JOURNEY TO WORK MODE SHARE WITHIN TAMWORTH REGIONAL COUNCIL.

Achieving this vision will result in:

- Increased use of active transport for a range of purposes including recreational, commuter, tourism and those seeking health benefits;
- Improved acceptance of pedestrians and particularly cyclists in the community;
- A reduction in congestion, particularly around busier intersections within the Tamworth CBD;
- Improved safety of those participating in active transport; and
- Appropriate end-of-trip facilities to support user demand.

CONTEXT

The Tamworth region is home to around 62,541 residents, with the city of Tamworth representing 75% of this total. Tamworth attracts an estimated 1,251,000[1] annual visitors through various tourism events and high-level sporting events.

As a low-density residential area, Tamworth covers a large spatial area which results in difficult and unique transport challenges, with private vehicles the predominant form of transport currently utilised. Targeting a population increase to 100,000 persons as outlined in Blueprint 100 represents an estimated increase of 70% in the total number of daily trips.

With almost all of these journeys occurring via private vehicles, the need for alternate transport modes becomes highly necessary as traffic congestion significantly increases on the road network.

Active transport methods such as walking and cycling are key alternate transport modes that play a significant role in reducing the forecasted traffic congestion issues. Walking and cycling are two highly economical and environmentally friendly transport options which shape a sustainable future for the region.

[1] (Source Local Government Area Profiles | Tourism Research Australia)

WHAT IS ACTIVE TRANSPORT?

Active transport is generally any non-motorised form of transport involving physical activity, such as walking and cycling. It is free, healthy, sustainable and environmentally friendly. It includes pedestrians, cyclists and those who use various mobility devices. Almost everyone in the community is able to participate in some form of active transport, whether it is for short trips or longer journeys, or for commuter or recreational purposes.

The use of active transport is critical for the transport network, with increased uptake in active transport participation resulting in decreased road congestion, improved environmental amenity and cost savings to the user.

Within the umbrella terms of cyclists and pedestrians, there are different types of each:

- **Recreational** – Sporting, leisure, touring
- **Commuter** – To and from work
- **Beginner** – Inexperienced and unconfident
- **Experienced** – Advanced skills and confident

BENEFITS OF ACTIVE TRANSPORT

The range of benefits active transport has is vast, from the individual to the region as a whole; active transport has the potential to reshape how we currently look at transport.

Active transport provides tangible benefits by increasing daily physical activity levels and reducing greenhouse gas emissions through a reduction in cars on the road. Other benefits include improved social well-being and a greater sense of community.

HEALTH IMPROVEMENTS

Regardless of age, gender, weight or fitness level, those who participate in active transport receive numerous health benefits. With almost 41 per cent of adults living in the Tamworth region being obese (according to the Australian Health Policy Collaboration (2017)) and physical inactivity costing the Australian healthcare system an estimated $13.8 billion per year (National Heart Foundation of Australia 2014), active transport can play a major role in improving both outcomes.

Walking and cycling are low risk forms of exercise that have minimal impact on joints, with various health studies demonstrating how walking just 30 minutes a day helps to:

- Reduce risk of heart disease and stroke;
- Manage weight, blood pressure and cholesterol;
- Improve balance and coordination; and
- Prevent and control diabetes.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS

In Regional NSW, it is estimated private vehicles cost an average of $250 per week to run (Budget Direct 2018). In comparison, the cost of buying and maintaining a bicycle is estimated as 1% of this cost – with walking having a lower cost again. The 2016 Census showed that the median weekly household income for the Tamworth region is estimated at $1,180 – meaning running a private vehicle represents 20 per cent of this household income – a significant portion which can be reduced through using active transport means.

With metered public parking used in the Tamworth CBD, cycling and walking avoids any end-of-trip costs unlike private vehicle use. A full-time worker in the Tamworth CBD may spend up to $750 per year for parking.

TRAFFIC CONGESTION

It is estimated that the avoidable cost of traffic congestion will reach $20.4 billion by 2020 (according to Australian Government Major Cities Unit 2010). Particularly for short trips, active transport greatly assists in reducing traffic congestion on the local road network, with cyclists taking up much less space on the roads and pedestrians being removed from the road network altogether (for the most part).

The Australian Government spends an average of $27 million per day maintaining the road network (Department of Transport and Main Roads Queensland). Active transport results in little to no damage to the road network, extending the life of road pavements and wearing courses.

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

Compared to motorised transport, active transport produces no air pollution or noise pollution. Private vehicles are the greatest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions and with almost 95 per cent of trips to work in Tamworth made in private vehicles (Census 2016), replacing some of these trips with active transport will greatly improve the amenity of urban centres and the health of those within these centres.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS FROM DIFFERENT MODES OF TRANSPORT
kg per person per km

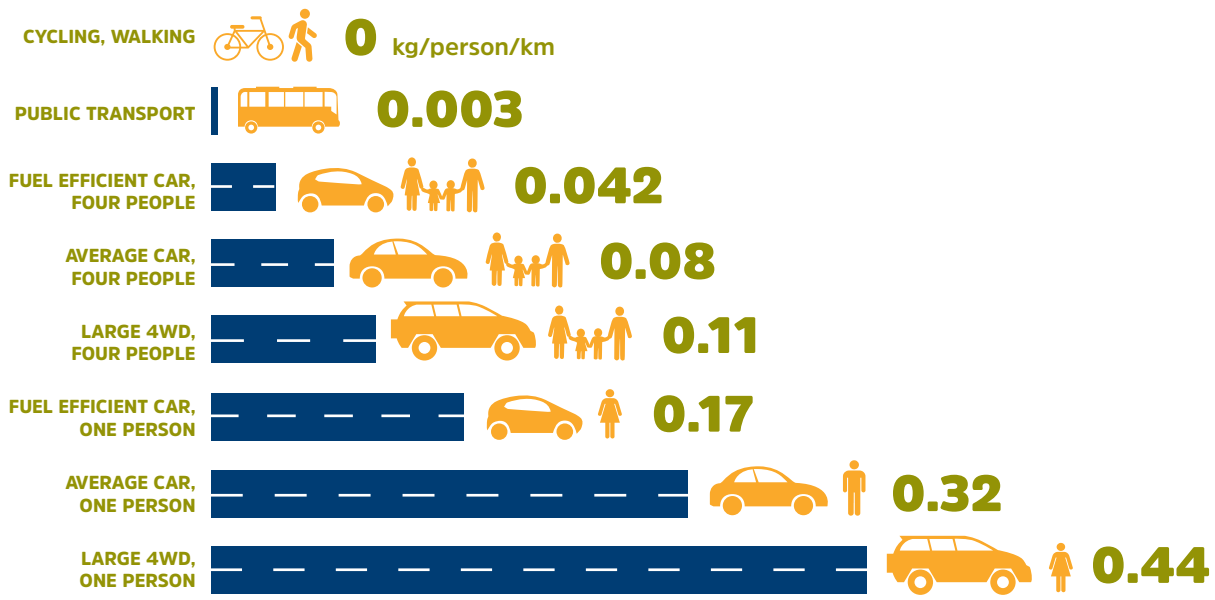

FIGURE 2. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS FOR VARIOUS TRANSPORT MODES (SOURCE: TRANSPORT FOR NSW FUTURE TRANSPORT STRATEGY 2056).

CURRENT APPROACH

In the last five years, Tamworth Regional Council has been successful in obtaining various external grants for undertaking active transport and pedestrian safety improvements. In the 18 months since 2018, Council has secured around $5.38 million worth of grant funding for the construction of shared paths, and $1 million for the construction of footpaths across the region. In addition to this, internal funding is allocated annually for things such as new footpaths, pram ramps, disabled parking and pedestrian refuges.

The active transport network in the Tamworth region consists of:

End-of-trip facilities (bicycle parking)

5 High Pedestrian Activity Zones (HPAZ)

34km
of shared pathways

116km
of footpaths

2km
of on-road cycleway

8 water refill stations

Outdoor gym equipment

Since 2014, the following have been constructed:

Multiple school pedestrian safety improvements:

- Children's crossings
- Kerb extensions
- Line marking
- Signage
- Concrete medians

FOOTPATHS AND SHARED PATHS:

6.6km
of new shared path
(with a further 8.7km to be constructed by June 2022)

1.9km
of new footpath
(with a further 3.5km to be constructed by June 2021)

ACTIVE TRANSPORT ATTRACTIONS:

New Tamworth Regional Cycling Centre with a velodrome and criterium track

New Tamworth Regional Skate Park

Significant upgrades to Tamworth Mountain Bike Park

HIGH PEDESTRIAN ACTIVITY ZONES (HPAZ):

New Tamworth CBD HPAZ

MID AND END-OF-TRIP FACILITIES:

8 water refill stations

End-of-trip facilities (bicycle parking)

PEDESTRIAN ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS:

32
disabled parking spaces

Multiple kerb ramp installations across the region

Tactile ground surface indicator installation at a number sites across the region

IMPORTANT ACTIVE TRANSPORT LOCATIONS

Figure 3 below shows the key areas of interest within Tamworth that require linking together in order to facilitate active transport. Each of these areas have their own distinct user groups, including those walking/ cycling for work purposes, for recreation, sporting related, families and vulnerable user groups such as the elderly. Depending on the type of user groups expected to utilise a path or on-road network will shape just what type of facility is required.

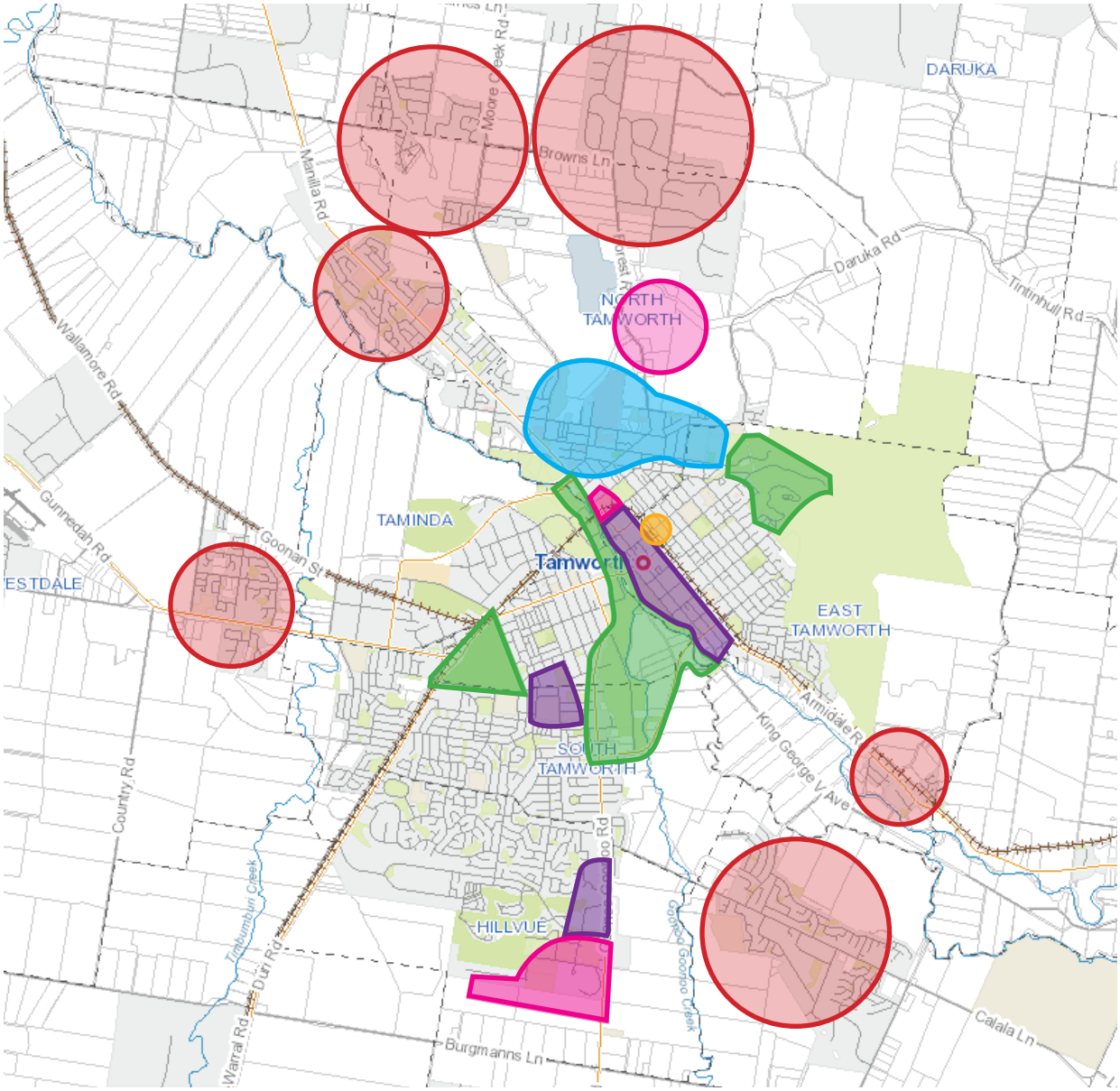

FIGURE 3. KEY AREAS OF INTEREST WITHIN TAMWORTH - WALKING AND CYCLING.

- Red – Key fringe areas
- Pink – Cycling attractors
- Blue – Health and education precinct
- Green – Key family attractors
- Purple – Primary retail areas
- Orange – Key Transport area

A variety of different facilities are required to cater for the range of user groups.
These types of cycling/walking loops include:

- Family-friendly and tourism loops
- Advanced loops – those for on-road cyclists
- Linking loops – those which link large groups of people with key attractors such as schools, sporting precincts, health facilities, retail and other loops
- Recreational loops – those designed for fitness and social needs

FAMILY-FRIENDLY AREAS

The key family-friendly / recreational areas identified are as follows and shown below in Figure 4:

- 1. Peel River Loop
- 2. Tamworth Golf Course Loop
- 3. Calala to Tamworth CBD (via King George Avenue)
- 4. Victoria Park Precinct

FIGURE 4. KEY IDENTIFIED FAMILY-FRIENDLY AREAS WITHIN TAMWORTH.

Each of these areas is expected to provide shady, scenic routes that cater for families and recreational users. It is also an expectation that these loops will be constructed to a standard which caters for large groups of people/cyclists. Examples of this may include increased width, separation between travel directions, higher levels of lighting, water refill stations and/or seating.

ON-ROAD CYCLING LINKS

On-road cyclists are a large user group within Tamworth, with Figure 5 showing the key on-road cycling routes around Tamworth. As part of Council's road maintenance, these roads will eventually feature wider shoulders, line marking and signage indicating cyclists in the area. This will improve safety for all road users and ensure that motorists are aware of cyclists in these areas, and that cyclists have a safe space to utilise. Note that only the non-urban roads which make up these cycling loops are shown and the typical (although not always) direction of travel for these loops is shown.

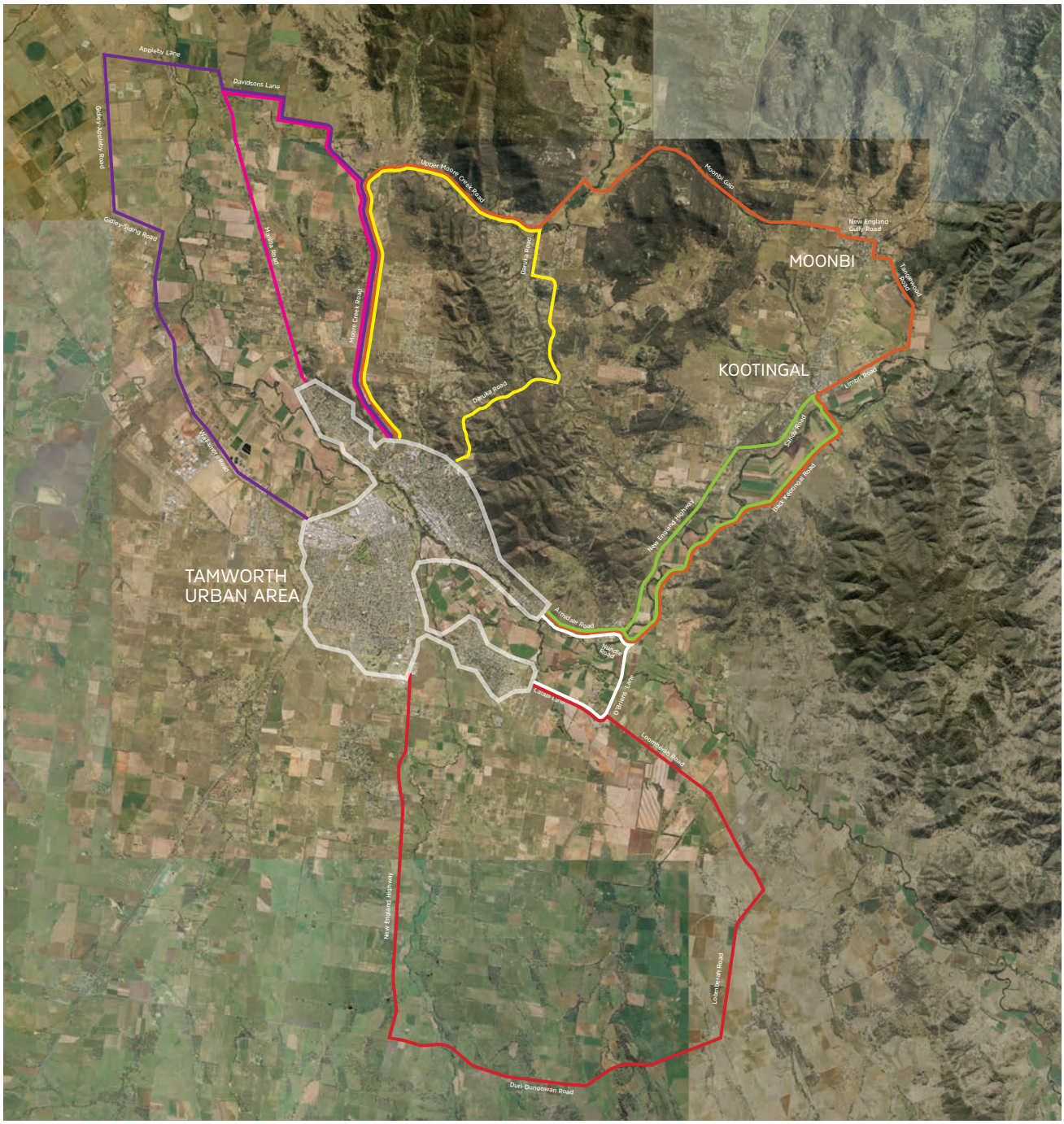

FIGURE 5. ON-ROAD CYCLING LOOPS AROUND TAMWORTH.

Table 2 shows a list of the on-road cycling loops from Figure 5. Note that only the non-urban roads are listed.

Loop No.	Name	Difficulty	Usual Group Ride Direction	Length (km)
1	Mine Shaft	Hard	Anti-clockwise	42
2	Pedal the Peel	Moderate	Clockwise	41
3	Oxley Anchor Loop	Moderate	Clockwise	28
4	The Gap Loop	Hard	Clockwise	56
5	Moore Creek Caves	Hard	Anti-clockwise	28
6	Recovery	Easy	Anti-clockwise	27
7	Tamworth Worlds	Moderate	Anti-clockwise	34

TABLE 2. SUMMARY OF ON-ROAD CYCLING LOOPS AROUND TAMWORTH.

RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS

Tamworth Regional Council has been actively seeking funding opportunities from external sources in recent years. These have included Roads and Maritime Services (now Transport for NSW) grants as well as NSW Government and Federal Government programs.

Council has a set allocation of $60,000 a year as part of its annual budget for new footpaths and shared paths. This is enhanced through securing additional external funding sources. In addition to this, most new developments have either footpath or shared path constructed in accordance with development guidelines and future planned networks.

The three most significant recent funding allocations were:

- $3.284m from the NSW Government under the RMS's Active Transport Program in August 2019 for shared path projects to be completed up to June 2022;
- $1.245m from the NSW Government under the Stronger Country Communities Fund in September 2018 for shared path works; and
- $1m from the Australian Government as part of its Drought Communities Programme initiative which allowed more than 15 years worth of footpath works to be carried out during 2020.

FIGURE 6. STEWART AVENUE SHARED PATH - CONSTRUCTED EARLY 2020.

TAMWORTH REGIONAL CYCLING CENTRE

- 333m long asphalt velodrome
- 6m wide 880m long criterium track
- Completed October 2019
- $2.26million

FIGURE 7. TAMWORTH REGIONAL CYCLING CENTRE - COMPLETED OCTOBER 2019

TAMWORTH REGIONAL SKATE PARK

- Stage 1 completed june 2019
- Total project cost for Stage 1 $1.7million - with close to $1million of this being State Government contribution
- Features unique bowl design with varying depths of 7, 9 and 11 feet
- Also features a street skate course. pump track and other supporting infrastructure such as paths, lighting, security cameras, BBQ's and shelters.

FIGURE 8. TAMWORTH REGIONAL SKATE PARK

POTENTIAL BARRIERS

Despite the significant benefits of active transport, there are certain factors which can limit or challenge a person's perceptions when choosing to take part in forms of active transport. Knowing these factors can assist in removing these barriers or limiting the effect they may have on a person. Examples identified through the consultation process are:

- Different ability levels:
  - Estimated that 1 in 5 Australians are living with some form of disability (via Australian Network on Disability 2019). Whilst not all disabilities limit a person's ability to walk or cycle, it is often the case that they can restrict how a person utilises the active transport network.
  - A person's health, fitness and confidence/ skill level can also restrict how they use active transport

- Weather conditions:
  - Tamworth has a relatively low annual rainfall compared to most coastal areas in NSW with an average of 83 rain days per year. However, temperatures in summer often reach above 40°C. Rainy days and days of extreme temperatures can greatly restrict participation numbers for active transport.

- Existing infrastructure:
  - The connectivity of the existing active transport network is a limiting factor in active transport participation. Results from a 2018 Cycling Survey undertaken by Council indicated that 95% would cycle more frequently if infrastructure is improved.

- Spatial
  - The Tamworth urban area has a population density of 290 people per km² (via 2016 Census) compared to Armidale (520 people/km²), Coffs Harbour (490 people/ km²) and Orange (830 people/km²). This low value corresponds to a large spread of people, which can prove difficult for active transport. It is important that connected, efficient active transport links be provided across the Tamworth area to reduce this barrier.

- Safety risk perceptions
  - Safety plays a major role in how likely someone will choose active transport compared to other transport modes. This is particularly the case for user groups such as children, shift workers and the elderly. Factors such as poor lighting, visibility, time of day and constrained spaces all contribute to safety risk perceptions of active transport.

OUR ACTION PRIORITIES

The visionary target set by Council to achieve 1 in 10 trips to work undertaken via active transport by 2031 will be achieved through the following six priorities:

Priority 1: Encouraging active transport

Priority 2: Providing a connected network

Priority 3: Providing a safe network

Priority 4: Ensuring an inclusive network and accepting culture

Priority 5: Pursuing a smart network

Priority 6: Ensuring an affordable network

Priority 7: Maintaining a suitable network

PRIORITY 1 – ENCOURAGING ACTIVE TRANSPORT

To make active transport an attractive, fun and safe mode of transport, the benefits need to be effectively communicated in order to encourage behavioural changes. There are very few people in the Tamworth region participating in active transport, with only 4.5 per cent travelling to work using this method. A behavioural change facilitated through effective communication methods is required for increasing participation numbers in active transport. This can include promoting the various benefits of active transport, and ensuring that attractive walking, running and cycling events are provided.

No.	ACTION	Purpose	Delivery Timeframe	Cost ($)
1.1	Inform the community about the benefits of active transport	Active transport provides many benefits to individuals and the community. Informing the wider community of these benefits through communication channels is highly important in achieving the target vision.	Ongoing	Low
1.2	Actively seek to attract and facilitate walking, running and cycling events in the region	Walking, running and cycling events are enjoyed by many people with a wide range of abilities. Encouraging more events within the region helps boost the profile of active transport	Ongoing	Low
1.3	Improve existing walking trails and mountain bike trails	Walking trails and mountain bike trails are popular amongst those seeking a rural setting or more challenging experience than those in the urban areas. A number of people participate in these activities across the region and improving these trails will attract increased utilisation of these facilities	1-5 years	Medium
1.4	Encourage behavioural change through targeted school and business programs	Targeting short journey trips such as those to school and work can greatly reduce urban congestion and improve the amenity of urban centres. Reducing the number of private use vehicles also improves safety for pedestrians. Behavioural changes in schools and businesses can significantly contribute to achieving the transport mode targets.	Ongoing	Low

TABLE 3. PRIORITY 1 ACTIONS - ENCOURAGING ACTIVE TRANSPORT.

PRIORITY 2 – PROVIDING A CONNECTED NETWORK

Whilst there has been an increased focus on constructing active transport infrastructure in recent years, there are still many gaps in Council's existing network. These gaps include missing footpath, shared path and on-road cycleway links which are all critical in developing a connected active transport network.

The primary network must also ensure that it captures as many trip attractors as possible including schools, aged care facilities, sporting precincts, retail centres and public transport routes.

No.	ACTION	Purpose	Delivery Timeframe	Cost ($)
2.1	Update and implement footpath and shared path priority programs	Footpaths and shared paths are critical in moving pedestrians and many cyclists around in a safe, efficient manner.	Ongoing	High
2.2	Identify pedestrian mobility infrastructure improvements and develop an updated works program	Pedestrian mobility infrastructure improvements include disabled parking, shared paths, footpaths, kerb ramps, concrete medians, kerb blisters, tactile markers, signage and line marking. These all aim to improve pedestrian mobility and safety.	Ongoing	High
2.3	Investigate additional locations that may benefit from future active transport improvements	Identify any further missing links or areas that may highly benefit from future improvements including line marking, footpaths/shared paths, signage, lighting and kerb ramps.	1-5 years	Low
2.4	Plan infrastructure around key trip attractors and public transport	Capturing key trip attractors and public transport links within the active transport network such as schools, large employers, aged care facilities and bus pickups ensures that the active transport network is highly accessible	Ongoing	Low

TABLE 4. PRIORITY 2 ACTIONS - PROVIDING A CONNECTED NETWORK.

PRIORITY 3 – PROVIDING A SAFE NETWORK

Pedestrians and cyclists are particularly vulnerable when entering the road environment. It is highly important that the safety of those participating in active transport is prioritised. With safety, or a perceived lack of safety being one of the main barriers identified in limiting a person's willingness to participate in walking or cycling, well-designed safe infrastructure is critical in removing this barrier.

No.	ACTION	Purpose	Delivery Timeframe	Cost ($)
3.1	Improve safety around schools and other high-risk locations	The safety of vulnerable user groups such as the elderly, children and those with disabilities is critical when planning an active transport network. Having unsafe infrastructure means less people are inclined to utilise active transport.	Ongoing	Med
3.2	Improve safety of road crossings for cyclists and pedestrians	Entering the road environment for cyclists and pedestrians presents a high number of potential hazards. Limiting the number of times active transport users must enter the road environment, the length of time in which they are in the road environment and the width of travel lanes they must traverse at one time are all methods for improving safety. Investigating treatments such as kerb extensions, centre medians and designated crossing points all contribute to a safe active transport network.	Ongoing	High
3.3	Separate active transport users from busy roads	Where possible, providing separation between active transport users and motorists greatly reduces the likelihood of incidents occurring. Shared paths cater for the needs of the majority of active transport participants, however it is understood that on-road cyclists reach much higher speeds which are unable to be achieved through the use of shared paths.	Ongoing	High
3.4	Increased focus on surveillance	Developing a greater presence of security cameras, improved lighting and line-of-sight are critical in reducing the safety hazard perception some people may have with regards to active transport. Low levels of lighting can greatly dissuade people participating in active transport.	Ongoing	Med
3.5	Identify key on road cycling routes and maintain to a suitable standard which allows for safe on-road cycling	On-road cyclists are a key user group within the active transport space. These cyclists travel at much higher speeds than those which are suitable along shared paths. Providing a safe, connected environment with suitable line marking, shoulder width and signage will improve the safety of cyclists and motorists sharing the same space.	Ongoing	High
3.6	Identify a suitable location for the construction of a Road Safety Park close to Tamworth CBD	Road Safety Parks provide a safe place for children to learn road rules and practice safe walking and cycling behaviour. These parks feature miniature signage and line marking consistent with those found in the road environment to assist with improving cycling ability and also knowledge around road rules.	1-5 years	Low

TABLE 5. PRIORITY 3 ACTIONS - PROVIDING A SAFE NETWORK.

PRIORITY 4 – ENSURING AN INCLUSIVE NETWORK AND ACCEPTING CULTURE

Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992, it is a requirement for infrastructure to be designed and constructed to a standard that is inclusive of all ability levels. The active transport network is no different, with infrastructure required to be constructed that allows ease of access for all users. Routinely engaging with key community stakeholders can identify areas that require access improvements.

Cyclists, particularly those using the on-road environment are often the targets of unwarranted criticism and are subjected to the highest level of risk. Improving the acceptance and awareness of cyclists in the community is critical to improving active transport numbers, and ensuring the safety of cyclists and motorists when sharing the same space.

No.	ACTION	Purpose	Delivery Timeframe	Cost ($)
4.1	Greater connectivity between disabled parking spaces and footpaths	There are many existing disabled parks that do not have immediate or safe access to the adjoining footpath. Improving the connectivity between the two will have safety benefits for those using disabled parking spaces.	1-5 years	Low
4.2	Cater for all abilities and ages when planning and constructing infrastructure	Where possible, all active transport infrastructure is to be planned, designed and constructed in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1992.	Ongoing	Low
4.3	Engage routinely with key active transport stakeholders	Liaising with a broad range of active transport stakeholders such as schools, cycle clubs, aged care facilities, businesses and disability access groups will provide continual feedback on the network and how it can be further improved.	Ongoing	Low
4.4	Improve community acceptance of active transport, particularly cycling	Cycling often attracts unwarranted disapproval, particularly when undertaken in the road environment. Improving the knowledge of both cyclists and motorists when sharing the road environment is critical in developing an accepting active transport culture.	Ongoing	Low

TABLE 6. PRIORITY 4 ACTIONS - ENSURING AN INCLUSIVE NETWORK AND ACCEPTING CULTURE.

PRIORITY 5 – PURSUING A SMART NETWORK

Innovative ideas assist in improving the user experience for cyclists and pedestrians. Along with providing facilities for active transport users to rest along their journey and facilities at the end-of-trip locations to cater for bicycle storage, navigation is also a crucial tool, allowing users to know where they are and where they need to go. It is important that new technologies and ideas which improve the user experience are continually investigated.

No.	ACTION	Purpose	Delivery Timeframe	Cost ($)
5.1	Investigate the use of smartphone applications to improve user experience.	Smartphone applications allow active transport maps, points of interest, 'refuel' stations and end-of-trip facilities to be accessed conveniently.	1-5 years	Low
5.2	Develop a network of wayfinding signage to assist in navigation.	Signage is a great visual tool used to assist users in navigating the active transport network. Wayfinding signage is typically located at major intersections of the active transport network, informing users where points of interest are and where to go.	1-5 years	Low
5.3	Investigate innovative active transport improvements.	Innovation can greatly improve efficiency and safety of transport networks. Continually looking for opportunities to implement innovative ideas has the potential to improve the active transport network.	Ongoing	Med
5.4	Provide 'recharge' stations along key active transport links.	'Recharge' stations include water refill, seating, shelter and lighting. These are ideally located at key points along the active transport network and provide users the opportunity to rest, have some water and continue on their journey. If poor weather sets in, they may also provide the opportunity to seek shelter.	1-5 years	Med
5.5	Investigate the feasibility of pedestrian countdown timers and/or scramble crossings at high pedestrian use intersections	Improving the safety and ease in which pedestrians cross the road environment is highly important in both reducing risk of injury, and assisting in making walking a more attractive transport option	1-5 years	Low
5.6	Identify a suitable location for the construction of a Bicycle Hub within the Tamworth CBD	A Bicycle Hub within the Tamworth CBD will provide a safe, secure and accessible location for the storage of bicycles. This will enable improved access to the CBD for those utilising active transport. End-of-trip facilities are a critical component of all active transport journeys.	1-5 years	Low

TABLE 7. PRIORITY 5 ACTIONS - PURSUING A SMART NETWORK.

PRIORITY 6 – ENSURING AN AFFORDABLE NETWORK

With footpath and shared path costing roughly $210 and $350 per lineal metre respectively, prioritisation of the proposed network is extremely important. In order to fast-track these priority programs, external funding is to be sought on a continual basis. Also where possible, new developments or other infrastructure projects should be making allowances for active transport infrastructure in order to fill in missing network links and further extend the network.

No.	ACTION	Purpose	Delivery Timeframe	Cost ($)
6.1	Actively seek external grant funding	Implementing actions outlined in this strategy will require a substantial amount of funding over an extended period of time. It is important that external grant funding be applied for in order to fund network improvements and fast-track their implementation.	Ongoing	Low
6.2	Ensure all new capital works include provisions for active transport where practicable	Any works that Council is either facilitating or has some control of design processes over, the provision of active transport infrastructure is to be considered.	Ongoing	Low
6.3	Aim to reduce private vehicle dependency	Achieving the transport mode share targets outlined within this strategy and reducing the dependency on private vehicle transport will result in many savings including reduction in new car park construction, reduced congestion (improved road network efficiencies) and savings to the individual	Ongoing	Low

TABLE 8. PRIORITY 6 ACTIONS - ENSURING AN AFFORDABLE NETWORK.

PRIORITY 7 – MAINTAINING A SUITABLE NETWORK

With many users of the active transport in the vulnerable users category (children, the elderly and some disabilities), it is important that defective active transport infrastructure be made aware of and scheduled for appropriate maintenance, renewal or replacement. Achieving this requires a collaborative effort between community reporting of defects, and the ongoing implementation of inspection programs.

No.	ACTION	Purpose	Delivery Timeframe	Cost ($)
7.1	Develop and implement inspection schedules for the active transport network	Inspection schedules assist in obtaining condition data and subsequently developing maintenance and/or renewal timeframes.	1-5 years	Low
7.2	Ensure the primary shared path network and on-road facilities are maintained to a high standard	Shared paths and on-road facilities often experience accumulation of silt/material and also growth of weeds/grass adjacent to these facilities. It is important that these facilities are maintained to a high standard in order to encourage usage of the facilities and ensure the safety of those utilising the network.	Ongoing	Med

TABLE 9. PRIORITY 7 ACTIONS - MAINTAINING A SUITABLE NETWORK.

OUR NEXT STEPS

Achieving the actions and outcomes within the Active Transport Strategy will require a combined effort over the next 10 years between Tamworth Regional Council, the State Government, private businesses and the community.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the actions outlined within the Strategy ensure that the intent and vision of the Strategy is being achieved. Tamworth Regional Council will undertake the following monitoring and evaluation techniques:

Data Source	How Data is Gathered	What Data Achieves	Frequency
Cycling and Pedestrian Counts	Either manually or using automated counters	Number of cyclists and pedestrians using particular links	Every 2 years
Community Surveys	Online surveys	Information regarding all aspects of active transport	Every 3 years
Crash Data	NSW Centre for Road Safety	Gives insight into number of and severity of crashes involving pedestrians and cyclists	Every 1 year
Stakeholder Engagement	Face-to-face or informal meetings	Ongoing feedback relating to cycling and walking network	Ongoing
Walking and Cycling Events	Event attendance numbers	Target improvements to certain areas	Ongoing
Census Data	Survey of each household in Australia	Information regarding journey to work mode of transport which is used as a measuring tool in how successful the active transport network is	Every 5 years

TABLE 10. MONITORING AND EVALUATION TECHNIQUES FOR PRIORITY ACTIONS.

Reviews of the Strategy will be undertaken on a periodic basis in response to data monitoring and evaluation.

FUNDING AND DELIVERY

Funding for the Active Transport Strategy will require a joint effort between Tamworth Regional Council and the State and Federal Governments through funding initiatives. With identified priority programs for pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, funding these and other infrastructure described within the Strategy is to be achieved through:

Internal Funding

- Council currently allocates around $60,000 per year for the construction of new footpath and shared path and a further $30,000 per year for pedestrian facilities including concrete medians, pram ramps and other mobility improvements.

Section 7.11 Developer Contributions

- Section 7.11 contributions enables Council to levy contributions for public amenities and services (including footpaths/shared paths) as a consequence of development to ensure that appropriate infrastructure is constructed which meets the needs of the development
- A portion of Section 7.11 funding is used to construct new shared paths and footpaths, particularly missing sections linking areas of development

State and Federal Funding

- Due to limited internal funding for active transport infrastructure, external grant funding opportunities through the State and Federal Government are to be actively applied for
- Without receiving State or Federal funding for active transport, the implementation of outlined infrastructure improvements will take a substantially longer period of time

SUMMARY OF PRIORITY ACTIONS

No.	Action	Purpose	Timeframe	Cost ($)
1.0 – Encouraging active transport				
1.1	Inform the community about the benefits of active transport	Active transport provides many benefits to individuals and the community. Informing the wider community of these benefits through communication channels is highly important in achieving the target vision.	Ongoing	Low
1.2	Actively seek to attract and facilitate walking, running and cycling events in the region	Walking, running and cycling events are enjoyed by many people with a wide range of abilities. Encouraging more events within the region helps boost the profile of active transport	Ongoing	Low
1.3	Improve existing walking trails and mountain bike trails	Walking trails and mountain bike trails are popular amongst those seeking a rural setting or more challenging experience than those in the urban areas. A number of people participate in these activities across the region and improving these trails will attract increased utilisation of these facilities	1-5 years	Medium
1.4	Encourage behavioural change through targeted school and business programs	Targeting short journey trips such as those to school and work can greatly reduce urban congestion and improve the amenity of urban centres. Reducing the number of private use vehicles also improves safety for pedestrians. Behavioural changes in schools and businesses can significantly contribute to achieving the transport mode targets.	Ongoing	Low

No.	Action	Purpose	Timeframe	Cost ($)
2.0 – Providing a connected network				
2.1	Update and implement footpath and shared path priority programs	Footpaths and shared paths are critical in moving pedestrians and many cyclists around in a safe, efficient manner.	Ongoing	High
2.2	Identify pedestrian mobility infrastructure improvements and develop an updated works program	Pedestrian mobility infrastructure improvements include disabled parking, shared paths, footpaths, kerb ramps, concrete medians, kerb blisters, tactile markers, signage and line marking. These all aim to improve pedestrian mobility and safety.	Ongoing	High
2.3	Investigate additional locations that may benefit from future active transport improvements	Identify any further missing links or areas that may highly benefit from future improvements including line marking, footpaths/shared paths, signage, lighting and kerb ramps.	1-5 years	Low
2.4	Plan infrastructure around key trip attractors and public transport	Capturing key trip attractors and public transport links within the active transport network such as schools, large employers, aged care facilities and bus pickups ensures that the active transport network is highly accessible	Ongoing	Low

No.	Action	Purpose	Timeframe	Cost ($)
3.0 – Providing a safe network				
3.1	Improve safety around schools and other high-risk locations	The safety of vulnerable user groups such as the elderly, children and those with disabilities is critical when planning an active transport network. Having unsafe infrastructure means less people are inclined to utilise active transport.	Ongoing	Med
3.2	Improve safety of road crossings for cyclists and pedestrians	Entering the road environment for cyclists and pedestrians presents a high number of potential hazards. Limiting the number of times active transport users must enter the road environment, the length of time in which they are in the road environment and the width of travel lanes they must traverse at one time are all methods for improving safety. Investigating treatments such as kerb extensions, centre medians and designated crossing points all contribute to a safe active transport network.	Ongoing	Med
3.3	Separate active transport users from busy roads	Where possible, providing separation between active transport users and motorists greatly reduces the likelihood of incidents occurring. Shared paths cater for the needs of the majority of active transport participants, however it is understood that on-road cyclists reach much higher speeds which are unable to be achieved through the use of shared paths.	Ongoing	High
3.4	Increased focus on surveillance	Developing a greater presence of security cameras, improved lighting and line-of-sight are critical in reducing the safety hazard perception some people may have with regards to active transport. Low levels of lighting can greatly dissuade people participating in active transport.	Ongoing	Med

3.5	Identify key on road cycling routes and maintain to a suitable standard which allows for safe on-road cycling	On-road cyclists are a key user group within the active transport space. These cyclists travel at much higher speeds than those which are suitable along shared paths. Providing a safe, connected environment with suitable line marking, shoulder width and signage will improve the safety of cyclists and motorists sharing the same space.	Ongoing	High
3.6	Identify a suitable location for the construction of a Road Safety Park close to Tamworth CBD	Road Safety Parks provide a safe place for children to learn road rules and practice safe walking and cycling behaviour. These parks feature miniature signage and line marking consistent with those found in the road environment to assist with improving cycling ability and also knowledge around road rules.	1-5 years	Low

No.	Action	Purpose	Timeframe	Cost ($)
4.0 – Ensuring an inclusive network and accepting culture				
4.1	Greater connectivity between disabled parking spaces and footpaths	There are many existing disabled parks that do not have immediate or safe access to the adjoining footpath. Improving the connectivity between the two will have safety benefits for those using disabled parking spaces.	1-5 years	Low
4.2	Cater for all abilities and ages when planning and constructing infrastructure	Where possible, all active transport infrastructure is to be planned, designed and constructed in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1992.	Ongoing	Low
4.3	Engage routinely with key active transport stakeholders	Liaising with a broad range of active transport stakeholders such as schools, cycle clubs, aged care facilities, businesses and disability access groups will provide continual feedback on the network and how it can be further improved.	Ongoing	Low
4.4	Improve community acceptance of active transport, particularly cycling	Cycling often attracts unwarranted disapproval, particularly when undertaken in the road environment. Improving the knowledge of both cyclists and motorists when sharing the road environment is critical in developing an accepting active transport culture.	Ongoing	Low

No.	Action	Purpose	Timeframe	Cost ($)
5.0 – Pursuing a smart network				
5.1	Investigate the use of smartphone applications to improve user experience.	Smartphone applications allow active transport maps, points of interest, 'refuel' stations and end-of-trip facilities to be accessed conveniently.	1-5 years	Low
5.2	Develop a network of wayfinding signage to assist in navigation.	Signage is a great visual tool used to assist users in navigating the active transport network. Wayfinding signage is typically located at major intersections of the active transport network, informing users where points of interest are and where to go.	1-5 years	Low
5.3	Investigate innovative active transport improvements.	Innovation can greatly improve efficiency and safety of transport networks. Continually looking for opportunities to implement innovative ideas has the potential to improve the active transport network.	Ongoing	Med
5.4	Provide 'recharge' stations along key active transport links.	'Recharge' stations include water refill, seating, shelter and lighting. These are ideally located at key points along the active transport network and provide users the opportunity to rest, have some water and continue on their journey. If poor weather sets in, they may also provide the opportunity to seek shelter.	Ongoing	Low
5.5	Investigate the feasibility of pedestrian countdown timers and/or scramble crossings at high pedestrian use intersections	Improving the safety and ease in which pedestrians cross the road environment is highly important in both reducing risk of injury, and assisting in making walking a more attractive transport option	1-5 years	Low
5.6	Identify a suitable location for the construction of a Bicycle Hub within the Tamworth CBD	A Bicycle Hub within the Tamworth CBD will provide a safe, secure and accessible location for the storage of bicycles. This will enable improved access to the CBD for those utilising active transport. End-of-trip facilities are a critical component of all active transport journeys.	1-5 years	Low

No.	Action	Purpose	Timeframe	Cost ($)
6.0 – Ensuring an affordable network				
6.1	Actively seek external grant funding	Implementing actions outlined in this strategy will require a substantial amount of funding over an extended period of time. It is important that external grant funding be applied for in order to fund network improvements and fast-track their implementation.	Ongoing	Low
6.2	Ensure all new capital works include provisions for active transport where practicable	Any works that Council is either facilitating or has some control of design processes over, the provision of active transport infrastructure is to be considered.	Ongoing	Low
6.3	Aim to reduce private vehicle dependency	Achieving the transport mode share targets outlined within this strategy and reducing the dependency on private vehicle transport will result in many savings including reduction in new car park construction, reduced congestion (improved road network efficiencies) and savings to the individual	Ongoing	Low

No.	Action	Purpose	Timeframe	Cost ($)
7.0 – Maintaining a suitable network				
7.1	Develop and implement inspection schedules for the active transport network	Inspection schedules assist in obtaining condition data and subsequently developing maintenance and/or renewal timeframes.	1-5 years	Low
7.2	Ensure the primary shared path network and on-road facilities are maintained to a high standard	Shared paths and on-road facilities often experience accumulation of silt/material and also growth of weeds/ grass adjacent to these facilities. It is important that these facilities are maintained to a high standard in order to encourage usage of the facilities and ensure the safety of those utilising the network.	Ongoing	Med

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