19 May 2021

**Draft Launceston Transport Strategy**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Launceston Transport Strategy.

The council is to be commended on the thorough process it has embarked on to achieve a fit-for-purpose strategy that can govern the city for the coming two decades and achieve better transport options for residents and visitors.

Transport choice can improve liveability as it gives people more control of their travel times and costs. Families that have to invest in second or third cars because they have no other choice are faced with a heavy financial burden. While some trips will always need a car, shorter trips and one–two destination trips can easily be taken by walking, riding, scooting or taking a bus.

As the strategy states:

“Cycling should be a ‘go-to-choice’ for short trips throughout Launceston. Launceston has a lot of cycling potential with the right network and infrastructure in place. With a decentralisation of services and shops to our activity centres, the opportunity to choose cycling is greater. Technological advances such as e-bikes can also mitigate existing barriers like topography.”

Launceston is still a small, compact city and while it will undoubtedly grow in coming years the strategy’s mapping shows that cycling is one of the most efficient ways to access activity centres and health and educational facilities.

The challenge for the council is putting in place the separated cycling network that helps people feel safe and comfortable to ride for transport, especially for those trips to school, shops and workplaces.

It is encouraging to see that the strategy articulates the problems caused by overuse of private vehicles and the need to reduce the availability of cheap, abundant parking as a way of managing the problem. Re-allocating road space away from the dominance of vehicle parking will also make it easier to provide separated cycleways, more street trees, and seating.

The strategy identifies the main planks needed for getting greater uptake of riding for transport, but the timeline identified puts off a lot of tasks that could easily begin in the short-term timeframe.

**C2.1 – Maintain and expand cycle paths and supporting infrastructure on priority routes**

The most effective change will be creating a network of separated, all-weather cycleways that will take people into and through the city centre so they can get to the major attractors for work, school, health and services. In particular, the installation of two city-connector corridors identified in the strategy, running north–south and east–west.

Bicycle Network would like to see a greater commitment to identifying routes, consultation, design and development approvals in the short-term so that projects are ready to apply for state and federal funding for construction in the medium term.

This will be more in keeping with the timeline for the University of Tasmania’s move into the city, which will increase demand for more transport options in the city centre.

**C4.1 – Improve the interface across different modes to facilitate multimodal trips**

Advocacy for better integration of bike riding with buses would be very useful. Once again this is something that could happen in the short term rather than waiting to the medium term as it first requires trials of both options that are independently evaluated and focus on customer experience as well as operational considerations. Even though the delivery of permanent integration may not occur until the medium term.

**L1.3 – Maintain the regional network of shared paths and invest in feasible extensions**

The council could start work on improving existing paths and filling on those missing links, such as between the Rocherlea–Mowbray path and Inveresk path. The current plan has this action rated medium term but once again getting plans and designs done in the short-term ready for grant funding which could also mean the work gets done in the short to medium term. There is also scope for upgrading existing paths to the commuter corridor standard so that they are sealed, well lit, and have priority across side streets and through traffic signal sequencing.

**L2.1 - Develop frameworks for schools and businesses to establish, monitor and implement travel plans**

Bicycle Network’s Ride2School program, funded by the state government, already does this with primary schools through its HandsUp! counts and active travel maps and cycling skills workshops. But it would be beneficial to have council support for the program as Launceston schools are not as involved in the program as other areas of the state.

**H1.1 - Improve education and training opportunities for cycling across all age groups**

This is another one Bicycle Network is engaged with through the Ride2School program but also its Ride2Uni program and Back on your Bike skills sessions. The Ride2School and Ride2Uni programs are currently funded by the state government and University of Tasmania. Back on you Bike does not receive ongoing funding but is available on request, such as the recent sessions delivered at TasTAFE.

**H1.3 - Encourage employers to provide end-of-trip facilities**

The provision of end-of-trip facilities is an important consideration for people when deciding whether to ride, especially secure bike parking. The encouragement of private employers to provide these facilities is currently marked as long-term in the action plan, but an education campaign could be rolled out quite quickly as most of the information for what’s needed is already available. The council can then work with the state government on any other changes in the medium-term such as planning scheme changes that require facilities to be included in developments and grants to help existing buildings retrofit.

Yours sincerely



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