

Local Government Bicycle Plans

Guidelines for Preparing Bicycle Plans

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Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Transport**



Background

Local Bicycle Plans have been long recognised by local governments as the most effective planning tool for coordinating the development and integration of bicycle infrastructure within Municipalities across Western Australia. Implemented by local government authorities, each plan plays an important role in balancing the transport system within a Municipality.

This document has been designed as a guide for local government authorities who want to prepare a Local Bicycle Plan.

What to do

Plan Preparation Process

Local Bicycle Plans can range from a basic document developed by the local government authority itself through to a complex plan developed by professionals with special training in this form of service delivery.

The process usually involves the following steps:

- commence development of a Draft Local Bicycle Plan;
- finalisation of the Draft Local Bicycle Plan and forwarding of a copy to Bikewest for review;
- preparation of Final Local Bicycle Plan; and,
- adoption of the plan by the local government authority.

Meeting the criteria

What is needed in a Local Bicycle Plan

A local Bicycle Plan has seven key elements:

- Local Bicycle Route Network (Route Plan);
- Design and standards;
- schedule of works;
- maintenance schedule;
- on-going process to ensure a cycle-friendly road network;
- encouragement of cycling; and,
- a review of the plan.

While Bikewest prefers all elements to be addressed in each Local Bicycle Plan, a route plan, schedule of works and maintenance schedule are considered essential.

To assist local governments in the preparation of their Local Bicycle Plan the issues which need to be addressed in each of these elements, are detailed in this document.

Local Bicycle Route Network (Route Plan)

A Local Bicycle Route Network should give specific consideration to the following:

Bicycle Network routes

For metropolitan Perth municipalities, the Local Bicycle Route Network should incorporate Stage I and Stage II Perth Bicycle Plan (PBN) routes. Consideration should also be given to existing and planned Local Bicycle Routes (LBRs), Recreation Shared Paths (RSPs), and Principal Shared Paths (PSPs) as outlined in the latest Perth Bicycle Network Plan.

For regional municipalities, consideration should be given to identifying Local Bicycle Routes (LBRs) that provide fast, efficient and unbroken links between residential areas and trip attractors. A gap analysis that identifies missing links between existing cycling facilities and barriers to cyclists should be undertaken to determine a works program.

Safe Routes to Schools

School children, particularly primary school children, need special consideration in bicycle planning. Off road routes and safe crossing points at busy roads are important considerations. The provision of bicycle facilities around schools will improve access opportunities for school children and alert drivers to their presence.

The recently introduced 40km speed limit around schools improves the environment for children by slowing down local traffic and deterring through traffic in school zones.

Identification of Trip Attractors

Identifying destinations that cyclists may want to access, such as shops, schools, recreation facilities and other local services is an important component of a Local Bicycle Plan. As bicycle facilities are improved, the number of cyclists accessing services increases. Therefore, it is important to identify the likely origin and destinations (trip attractors) in the development of a Local Bicycle Plan.

Trip attractors may include commercial, community, employment, recreation, education and transport facilities. Regional facilities such as National Parks, scenic lookouts, parklands, beaches and river foreshores also attract cyclists. Trip attractors in adjacent municipalities or towns also need to be identified and considered and logical connection points provided.

Signage

Directional signage assists cyclists and others to determine a preferred route to services and facilities. Directional signage should convey destination and distance information. Any directional signage provided must meet Main Roads WA requirements.

Regulatory signage is required on all shared paths, in order to allow cyclists of 12 years and older to use them legally. Regulatory signage will require Main Roads WA approval. Refer to Bikewest's Signage, Pavement and Linemarking Guidelines.

In metropolitan Perth, directional signage should complement PBN Bicycle Route signage.

Cycling signage installed by local governments needs to be maintained by them as part of their maintenance schedule.

Travel Demand

Bicycle counts can be used to determine the routes cyclists use. The routes currently used by the majority of cyclists are likely to be considered the most convenient and safest. Motorised traffic counts may also assist in determining appropriate cycle routes. Routes with low motor vehicle usage, speeds and less heavy vehicles are generally attractive to cyclists, if they provide a direct connection to a destination. Circuitous routes are generally less attractive to cyclists and may deter people from cycling.

Cyclist cordon counts provide valuable information on the number of cyclists using selected facilities. Bikewest conducts an annual survey of existing facilities, both on road and off road, in metropolitan Perth. This information is available to local governments on request.

The provision of cycling facilities may vary according to traffic volumes on roads and paths. Austroads Guide to Traffic Engineering Practice – Part 14 provides guidance on determining the most appropriate facility.

Analysis of Crash Statistics

Where bicycle crash data is available, it may be used to identify hazards and barriers to cycling. Motor vehicle crash data can be used to determine locations in a proposed cycle route network that may be dangerous for cyclists.

End-of-Trip Facilities

Like motorists, cyclists need appropriate parking facilities at their destination. Bicycle parking, in accordance with Austroads Standards, is recommended and needs to be appropriately located. Bicycles are vulnerable to theft and parking facilities need to be located in regularly frequented areas and as close as practical to the entrance of the destination. Local cyclists can assist in the identification of bicycle parking requirements.

Bikewest has bicycle parking guidelines and a cost-effective U-rail design, which are available upon request.

Issues specific to Local Governments.

There may be issues specific to particular local governments that require special attention. For example, railways or rivers need to be given specific consideration to prevent them becoming a barrier to cyclist movements.

Community Involvement in the Plan

It is beneficial to involve local cyclists and other stakeholders in the development of your Bicycle Plan. This can be achieved through a community consultation process. The Bicycle Transportation Alliance (BTA) can provide details of known cyclists in your area, and advertising in community newspapers is another way of inviting contributions to the development of a Bicycle Plan.

Inviting councillors to contribute to and support the development of a Local Bicycle Plan is also vital to its success. It will also inform councillors about the needs of their constituents. All completed bicycle plans must be endorsed by Council.

The development of a Local Government Bicycle Plan can also act as a catalyst for the formation of a local Bicycle User Group (BUG).

Bikewest has published a manual that can be used as a model for developing a BUG. Manuals are available from the Bikewest web site, www.dpi.wa.gov.au/cycling.

In addition to cyclist input in the development of Bicycle Plans, it is important to seek the input of other users of these facilities. Pedestrians, people with a vision impairment or mobility disability, skaters and others who share off road facilities with cyclists must be considered.

Design and Standards

The design of all bicycle facilities must be in accordance with the requirements of Austroads Guide to Traffic Engineering Part 14: Bicycles and Australian Standards relating to bicycles AS1742.9 and AS2890.3.

Schedule of Works

The development of a schedule of works should include establishing priorities for the implementation of your bicycle network.

In establishing the priorities, consideration should be given to providing significant improvements to a bicycle network through relatively inexpensive changes to existing infrastructure.

The prioritisation of works could include:

- removing existing barriers to cycling by modifying hazardous drainage grates, and providing kerb ramps at key locations and crossing refuges on busy roads;
- providing primary commuter routes to major trip attractors;
- integrating bicycle routes with PBN routes;
- providing cycle parking at key destinations such as schools, shops and other community facilities;
- providing signage on local bicycle routes;
- providing marked bicycle lanes; and
- modifying bicycle unfriendly traffic calming devices.

Bicycle Facilities on Highways and Major Roads

Main Roads WA is responsible for bicycle facilities on highways and major roads. Where proposals relate to Main Roads, they should be involved in the preparation of the plan. Refer to Main Roads WA Policy for Cycling Infrastructure.

Maintenance Schedule

The schedule of works for your Local Government Bicycle Plan should include an allowance for maintenance and budget estimates should be identified.

The maintenance schedule should allow for:

- regular sweeping of paths to ensure that glass and other debris is removed;
- replacement of damaged signage;
- repair to paths as required; and,
- any lighting issues that could create a hazard for cyclists or pedestrians.

Hazard Reports

When cyclists come across a road or cycle facility they consider hazardous they can post a Hazard Report, via the Bikewest web site. The hazard is then forwarded to the appropriate authority.

Local government has a duty of care to address safety issues within 14 days.

Ensuring an Ongoing Bicycle Friendly Road Network

The Local Bicycle Plan should include key considerations regarding a bicycle friendly road network include:

Defining, Implementing and Protecting the Perth Bicycle Network Plan.

Metropolitan Perth municipalities can support and assist with the delivery of the PBN. Identifying PBN facilities in the Local Bicycle Plan and improving those facilities, also assists local connectivity for other non-motorised users.

Town Planning Schemes

Appropriate provision for cyclists in Town Planning Schemes can encourage people to cycle to their regional recreational facilities, their workplace and other destinations. The DPI encourages Local Government authorities to consider amendments to Town Planning Schemes to encourage commercial and community facilities to install bicycle parking and other end-of-trip facilities. Bicycle parking facilities may be considered as a substitute for car parking bays.

New Developments

As part of the approval for new sub-division developments, consideration needs to be given to provision of cycle facilities such as new paths and bicycle parking facilities. Also, large developments should be required to develop their own Bicycle Plan, which would be integrated into the municipality Local Bicycle Plan.

Perth Bicycle Maps

The Perth Bicycle Maps show the PBN routes, as well as good, medium and poor riding environments on many other roads. Metropolitan local governments should notify Bikewest of any modifications to the road network so they can be reflected in revised and updated editions.

Traffic Calming and Traffic Management

Traffic calming devices are one of the major ways local governments address the impact of increasing traffic in local areas, particularly on residential roads. Unfortunately, some traffic calming measures can create an unnecessarily hostile road environment for cyclists when, in many cases, minor modifications to the devices can take the cyclists needs into account.

Austrroads Guide to Traffic Engineering Practice – Part 14 provides information on bicycle integration with traffic calming devices. Advice is also available from Bikewest engineering staff.

Encouragement of Cycling

A valuable component of a bicycle plan will identify means by which local residents can be encouraged to cycle to local services and facilities.

This may be achieved by:

Council Contact Officer

An appropriate technical officer should be nominated as the contact person, with the responsibility for monitoring implementation progress. This responsibility may include preparation of an implementation plan and budget items for the Bicycle Plan.

Cyclist Education

A system should be developed to provide training for school children to increase their cycling safety and understanding of road rules.

Ongoing Consultation with your Local Bicycle User Group and Other Stakeholders

Establishing a rapport between local cyclists and officers within local government on cycle related issues is a valuable mechanism in ensuring that the plan is appropriate and correctly implemented.

The local BUG can provide the Council with feedback on destinations, preferred routes and barriers to cycling in their area. A mechanism for regular consultation between elected officials, planning and engineering officers, and BUGs and other stakeholders is an important component of the process of ensuring your plan is appropriately implemented.

End-of-Trip Facilities

Local businesses can be encouraged to support their staff to cycle to work by providing end of trip facilities, such as change rooms and bicycle parking.

DPI grants funds to local governments specifically for the installation of bicycle parking facilities at recognised destinations.

Provision of Cycling Information

Cycling information should be available for residents at local government offices, libraries and other public venues to encourage residents to consider cycling. This information should include Local Bicycle Plan maps, regional maps and information regarding health and cycling.

Contacts – Further Assistance

For further assistance contact your Bikewest team at the Department for Planning and Infrastructure on (08) 9216 8313 or cycling@dpi.wa.gov.au.

Your Bikewest team has also developed a template for preparing a consultant's brief that may be used for both obtaining quotes and engaging consultants.

References

WAPC Liveable Neighbourhoods (2007)

Perth Bicycle Network, (1996)

Bikewest's Signage, Pavement and Linemarking Guidelines.

Bike Ahead: Bicycle Strategy for the 21st Century, Transport, (1996)

Bicycle Directional Signage Guideline, MRWA Document No.07/1786 07/3220, (2007)

BUG Development Manual, Transport, (1996).