



## **Submission to South Sydney Council 2003-2007 Draft Management Plan**

Monday, 9 June 2003

Submission by: Marrickville-South Sydney Bicycle Group (MASSBUG) –  
[www.massbug.org.au](http://www.massbug.org.au)

Contact address: 31 Queen St  
Newtown 2042

Email: [cyclist@massbug.org.au](mailto:cyclist@massbug.org.au)

Contact Person: Brenda Bailey (h) 9565 1657 or (w) 9286 3860

INTRODUCTION .....	2
Our submission .....	2
Why is cycling relevant to Council functions? .....	2
Links between ‘Miscellaneous Matters’ and the draft Management Plan .....	4
Structure of the Corporate Plan and Council .....	4
Vision Statement .....	4
CITY ENVIRONMENT .....	5
Strategic Environmental Planning Program .....	5
Integrated development: Public Domain (p.33) .....	5
Environmental Health .....	6
COMMUNITY LIVING .....	6
Community Development .....	6
CITY WORKS .....	6
Infrastructure planning & asset management - Transportation and Traffic Management .....	6
Infrastructure planning & asset management – Public Domain Planning .....	7
Service Delivery: roads, drainage and traffic maintenance (p.50) .....	7
CORPORATE SERVICES .....	7
FINANCIAL SUMMARY – 2003/2004 – P.61 .....	8
The CARES Facility .....	8
Footway Access and RTA’s proposal for Footway (Car) Parking .....	8
Operating Summary – Principal Activities Programs – Budget 2003-2004 .....	8
Draft Plant & Services: Fleet services (p.81) .....	8
Draft Works Program List- Identification of items relevant to cycling (pp. 82-84) .....	9
Works programme – project details – items relevant to cycling (pp.85-93) .....	9
MASSBUG’S General observations: .....	9
CONCLUSIONS .....	10

## **INTRODUCTION**

Marrickville-South Sydney Bicycle Group (MASSBUG) is a local bicycle user group, affiliated with Bicycle New South Wales. We work with Marrickville and South Sydney Councils and state government bodies (e.g. Area Health Services) for the improvement of cycling infrastructure, urban amenity, community health and safety. We also provide information, advice and rides for members of the local community and local schools.

Our vision is for a safe, healthy, vibrant community whose planning and infrastructure provide for greater share of transport by walking and cycling in order that the personal, community and environmental benefits of more sustainable transport can be realised. We also regard public transport services as essential.

### **Our submission**

We appreciate the warm invitation by the General Manager, Michael Whittaker, to respond to Council's draft Management Plan 2003-3007. We request that you accept this late submission, delivered a day after the closing date.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss further any of the issues in this submission and to be consulted on the development and review of relevant plans and strategies as listed below.

### **Why is cycling relevant to Council functions?**

First, we thought it useful to set out the ways in which cycling relates to Council's functions and major objectives over the coming term.

As an activity, riding a bicycle can serve as a form of transport and recreation. Cycling is a healthy way to get around! Cycling is also environmentally friendly: taking up little space, providing access for people of all ages and incomes, non-polluting, and conducive to urban amenity of public spaces. It is more efficient than motorised transport for short distances and cycling can serve as 'active transport' instead of car travel, thereby reducing reliance on cars (and car parking). This characteristic is directly relevant to Council's Strategic Environmental Planning Objective 3 (p.19):

To increase the accessibility of South Sydney, facilitate the development of non-car modes of transport which meet the needs of the community and progress reduction in car dependency.

Since Council's last Management Plan, resolutions from the NSW Childhood Obesity Summit (2002) highlight the need for greater attention to creating 'supportive environments' for walking and cycling. Resolutions relating to Local Government include:

***Taking a leadership role in creating a supportive environment for physical activity opportunities***

6.12 That an environment be developed that supports incidental activity through the provision of safe and appropriate infrastructure (eg paths, cycleways).

6.13 That partnerships be developed with the local community and relevant stakeholders in developing cost-effective and appropriate physical activity opportunities.

6.14 That urban design and renewal policies that promote physical activity opportunities be developed and adopted.

6.15 That physical activity policies/guidelines be developed, implemented and monitored which apply to Council services, venues and events and community information, for example, children's services.

Resolution 9 addressed actions relating to 'transport and planning'. The Summit's Communique is at <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/obesity/adult/summit/communique.pdf>

In line with this approach, South Sydney City Council is to be commended for initiating the development of a major Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (covering the northern end of the Area) and the consultative activities for revising the Bike Plan (due out later this year) – both well described in Council State of the Environment Report 2002.

People in our communities need to undertake more physical activity and use cars less – cycling is an ideal opportunity. The main obstacles to increasing the level of cycling are the lack of a safe cycling network, cycling facilities at the end of the trip, and skill and confidence in cycling. Thus the People and Leisure Services Programs within Community Living, hold great potential through community development for responding to the social priority issue of increasing physical activity and controlling weight by promoting cycling, offering Cycling Proficiency Training for adults and youth, and ensuring good cycling access to facilities and in regenerating areas, such as Redfern-Waterloo and Green Square.

Initiatives aimed at increasing levels of cycling are necessarily part of a commitment to sustainability (ESD) and need to be at the heart of 'joined-up' policy making. It works to establish a culture in the community and within Council favourable to the increased use of bicycles for all age groups and to seek out effective and innovative means of fostering accessibility by bicycle. As for the incorporation of sustainability principles, each of the four Directorates of Council can contribute to making South Sydney more cycle-friendly – both the community and the council.

## **LINKS BETWEEN ‘MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS’ AND THE DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The influences shaping this Draft Management Plan are neatly summarised under ‘Miscellaneous Matters’ with the exception of Council’s Social Plan. Because cycling is a physical activity, available on a daily basis, it is valuable to all the groups for which social plans relate. Further, disadvantaged groups in our community tend to be less physically active. Studies have also shown how cycling programs are valuable to overcome social exclusion, and the health benefits of cycling are not only for physical health (heart health, some cancers, diabetes) but also mental health (anxiety, stress and well-being).

We congratulate South Sydney City Council for having the highest Sydney council bike mode share of journey to work (by origin SLA) in the 2001 census by far, at 2.4%. Council should seek to increase this level and target bicycle trips over the next term.

## **STRUCTURE OF THE CORPORATE PLAN AND COUNCIL**

It is helpful to readers to see the new structure of Council and the organisation of this management plan, so we have used this structure to organise our responses.

Considering the objective of **Principal Activity: City Environment**, we suggest that the function of road safety could be transferred from **Works**. Irrespective of the location of the road safety function, we recommend that the current and future Road Safety Officers (RSOs) be offered a program of Cycle Proficiency Training (this might be undertaken jointly with the RTA). By completing such a program and commencing to ride a bicycle in the Area, RSOs will become more aware and informed about the road safety needs of all road users. We also recommend that cycling proficiency courses be offered to council staff or staff of community groups who run physical activity programs, particularly staff involved in youth programs. In addition, South Sydney Council could be represented at next year’s Active Communities conference convened by NSW Sport & Recreation.

We also observe the emphasis on curtailing the unwanted intrusion of motor vehicles by the listing of car-related management services in the functions of City Environment and City Works. We suggest that Council consider developing a mobility function/Mobility Officer to promote the use of ‘active transport’ (walking, cycling and public transport) with trip generators and parking offenders.

## **VISION STATEMENT**

In 2002, Marrickville-South Sydney Bicycle Group expressed its support for South Sydney Council’s vision statement and congratulated council for placing sustainability so high on the agenda. We stated that the challenge is to translate this commitment to sustainability into practice. One way to assist the practical implementation is to give greater visibility to provision and people services for cycling throughout Council’s plan. At least, we recommend that the construction and maintenance of cycle routes should appear in the list of services by City Works (p. 14).

Just a brief, but important note – the term ‘sustainability’ derives from Ecologically Sustainable Development, defined in the Local Government Act 1993. There is a risk that the homespun version in this year’s management plan omits significant principles of improved valuation, pricing and incentive mechanisms.

## **CITY ENVIRONMENT**

We note that the draft Management Plan appropriately draws upon Council's 2002 State of the Environment (SoE) report. While it referred to the NSW EPA's SOE report, it did not emphasise the increasing car use and the even greater, urgent need to create more 'supportive environments' for 'alternative transport'. In addition, the majority of the Cities for Climate Protection activity is directed to electricity rather than to energy used for mobility – the Australian Greenhouse Office indicates 34% greenhouse gases from households is due to transport. Cycling is highly desirable in terms of landtake and causing no greenhouse gas emissions nor local air pollutants. In addition to the requisite 'themes', the SoE report is obliged to address Council's own environmental impact arising from its activities. Consequently, we recommend that Council, its staff and councillors, develop a cycling program. Other Councils in Australia have undertaken such programs (e.g. Moreland & Mitcham in Victoria, Gosnells in WA etc) and MASSBUG would be pleased to support Council.

It is important that Council invest in more healthy transport owing to the growing evidence of the harms caused by air toxics and fine particulates emitted principally from motorised transport. Council could and should build on the remarkable fact that 26% of the residents of Bligh walk to work. Council should seek to obtain a higher level of trips by cycling, particularly since public transport has insufficient capacity to cope with Sydney's peak hours.

We suggest that Council consider developing a mobility function/Mobility Officer to promote the use of 'active transport' (walking, cycling and public transport) with trip generators and parking offenders.

### **Strategic Environmental Planning Program**

Council's 2002 SoE Report refers to the land use and transport study due for completion around June 2003. This study is expected to assist the preparation of a new Land Use and Transport DCP (superseding DCP 11) and to include the bicycle routes from the revised Bike Plan. We believe these changes to be significant – an update over 7 years. Yet the Annual Plan's Statement of Means (p.32) does not indicate that the revision of the bike plan would feed into the new DCP.

For clarification and assurance, we request Council confirm that the revised Bike Plan would inform and, where appropriate, be incorporated into the new DCP and that the draft Management Plan allocates sufficient funding for the coming financial year, and is on track. Further, we recommend a Key Performance Indicator for the Strategic Environmental Planning Program include the production of a draft Land Use and Transport DCP, incorporating information drawn from Council's revised bike plan, be completed before December 2003.

MASSBUG supports the continued program of precinct-specific PAMPs, noting the RTA's recommendation to link Bike Plans, s94 Plans and the value of including community groups, such as MASSBUG, on an advisory committee.

Consultation with consumers is essential to the development of the bike plan. We recommend that time frames and budgets be adjusted to allow for this to be incorporated into any projects affecting bike users.

### **Integrated development: Public Domain (p.33)**

We strongly recommend amending the objectives and statement of means to include *cycle use*. Public domains are highly amenable with access and mobility by foot and bicycle. We are

concerned that planners may overlook the value and need to accommodate bicycles – a problem at Taylor Square and Darling Harbour, for example.

## **Environmental Health**

We support the broader approach of environmental health, and recommend that environmental health officers are engaged in supporting active transport, such as indicating potential sites for bicycle parking outside shops (e.g. Regent St Waterloo). In addition, Environmental Health could seek partnership with Central Sydney or South Eastern Sydney Area Health Service in projects supporting active transport, such as surveying residential apartment blocks for safe cycling access and cycle parking for residents and visitors.

We seek amendment to the Law Enforcement second objective (p.35) to include *cycleways* and *pram ramps*. We note that cars may be parked not only illegally, in terms of time, but obstruct pram ramps and cycleways.

## **COMMUNITY LIVING**

### **Community Development**

A wide range of bicycle programs are suited to Community Development activities initiated by Council and MASSBUG is willing to assist Council on such programs. For example, cycling programs can be offered for Job Search programs, Work for the Dole, and for programs to encourage physical activity. All community facilities, including the planned new library, provide a further opportunity for providing good cycling access, visitor bicycle parking and promotions to use 'active transport'. Waverley Council has done some useful work for their new library.

We suggest that the Key Performance Indicators be expanded to include people-based outcomes.

## **CITY WORKS**

### **Infrastructure planning & asset management - Transportation and Traffic Management**

The objective sounds quite traditional (pre-'sustainability') as if the only type of traffic in mind is motorised traffic, rather than all road users. The influence of 'sustainability' thinking on transport and traffic management is to recognise that the road network has to be treated and managed to better accommodate people walking, cycling and using public transport than in the recent past.<sup>1</sup> The same shift is also consistent with Childhood Obesity Summit resolution 9.6: *That the priority given to pedestrians and cyclists in managing traffic flow be increased.*

We recommend that the objective be amended as follows:

Increase the emphasis in the road hierarchy to channel through *motorised* traffic along State and Regional roads and to restrict regional *motorised* traffic in local streets where amenity and safety can be improved; ***and, improve the permeability of the road network for bicycles through street closures, by bicycle-sensitive design and markings in treatments for motor traffic management and calming.***

In our submission for Council's 2002 draft Management Plan, we stressed the importance of permeability and connectivity to facilitate walking and cycling. We re-iterate here our view that

---

<sup>1</sup> Hazel G. (1999), "Transport, Sustainability and Engineering" and "Sustainable Transport Solutions in Edinburgh", Transport Engineering in Australia, Vol 5, No., 2, pp. 83-85 and 86-90.

should lead to a modification of the objectives of City Works which are ultimately people services!

Marrickville-South Sydney Bicycle Group strongly recommends that no roads or lanes be sold without agreement from local bicycle and pedestrian groups. Recently published *Bike-It! Sydney a back street guide for cyclists* and the World Health Organisation's *Healthy Urban Planning* demonstrate the importance of a more permeable street network for cyclist and pedestrian safety and amenity.

### **Infrastructure planning & asset management – Public Domain Planning**

We also highlight that mobility by cycling and walking is more cost effective for Council, and therefore seek the inclusion of mobility in the public domain planning and works implementation.

### **Service Delivery: roads, drainage and traffic maintenance (p.50)**

We are prompted to make two comments in response to the objective of meeting community expectations. First, we note that maintenance has to be given greater support to check conditions on the ground e.g. line marked bicycle lanes have become faded and no longer visible to motorists creating a safety hazard.

Secondly, we note that works implementation on footways sometimes falls short of 'good practice' particularly in installing kerb ramps – either by omitting installation to create a 'continuous path of travel' or installing inappropriate kerbing for the demands of the particular location (e.g. the ramps need to be of long to accommodate the volume of pedestrians at the crossing (NB the problem with the new Broadway crossing just south of City Road).

We are concerned by much pedestrian works where ramps have not been installed thereby impeding a continuous path of travel for pedestrians and wheeled-vehicle users, even where new development has occurred (e.g. the northern side of Reservoir Street from Smith Street to Elizabeth St; the western side of Mary St between Reservoir St and Albion Streets). We shall pick these points up again in our comments on Council's PAMP now on exhibition.

## **CORPORATE SERVICES**

We support Council's intent to develop a Triple Bottom Line report for Council by May 2004. We do not regard a Triple Bottom Line (TBL) report to be interchangeable with a 'Sustainability' Report because the intent of TBL is to see in financial terms the moves being made by a corporation toward ESD practices e.g. broadening the fleet to include bicycles and replacing some motor vehicle trips by bicycle trips; the use of recycled paper etc etc.

In the interest of sustainability, particularly in meeting council's 20% greenhouse gas reduction target, Marrickville-South Sydney Bicycle Group recommends that Council's Asset Replacement Policy for council passenger vehicles encourage the acquisition of (a) lower engine capacity vehicles in preference to large sedans; (b) hybrid vehicles; and (c) bicycles. Bicycles can be especially useful for parking enforcement officers.

This shift in the fleet composition is also visible to residents and visitors and shows Council being environmentally and fiscally responsible.

Public meetings are an essential component of the Council's objective in maximising outcomes for the limited resources at hand. Council officers should also allocate time within their planning timetables to meet with specific groups of interested residents when developing and implementing plans and activities.

## **FINANCIAL SUMMARY – 2003/2004 – P.61**

We note the considerable increase in revenue from s94 contributions and have commented above about our interest in seeing the new draft s94 Plan, and our concern with recent inadequate implementation by Council of footways around new developments. Council should seek to maximise its ability to invest in cycling infrastructure, for the future health of this community, using s94 funds.

Here we raise two significant projects that in our view cut across responsibilities of Council's directorates:

### **The CARES Facility**

Construction is of particular significance and one little known about by many residents in the area. Marrickville-South Sydney Bicycle Group supports the construction of the new Community and Road Education Scheme in Sydney Park to give practical road safety education to children. We recommend that council encourages extra community access to the facility and include community representation on the management committee. Bicycle routes to the facility and Sydney Park as a whole will be important to maximise active transport access. We are expecting these routes to be in the forthcoming revised Bike Plan.

### **Footway Access and RTA's proposal for Footway (Car) Parking**

**Footway leasing** is also of particular significance and poorly understood; aside from cafes that have obtained Council approval, commercial operators frequently use the footpath to display billboards (e.g. backpackers) which limit access and deter use. Last year, MASSBUG commented to Council on the necessity to maintain sufficient width for wheelchairs and for children under 12 and their parties who are entitled to ride their bikes on the footpath. Subsequently, the problem of people driving cars onto the footpath for parking appears to be worsening (in line with increased motor vehicle use reported by NSW EPA). MASSBUG is greatly concerned by the RTA's **Discussion Paper on Footway Parking** because it appears to be looking to legitimise this practice. MASSBUG provided a submission in response – see [www.massbug.org.au](http://www.massbug.org.au). We now recommend that Council oppose the suggestion that motor vehicles may be parked on the footpath. It is a fearful experience as people drive vehicles onto the footpath in Reservoir St south of Mary St (City of Sydney), for example, as well as forcing some road users to walk on the road or to cross the road to the other footpath.

### **Operating Summary – Principal Activities Programs – Budget 2003-2004**

**City Works - Project Delivery** has almost half Council's capital expenditure and we emphasise that from the perspective of people walking, riding bicycles and using public transport, the fine-grained detail of implementation is of great importance. We note the importance of Council staff having sufficient control over the detail as to what precisely is constructed on the ground, and we recommend that Council staff be given assistance in developing effective contractual relations if it is decided to out-source the works. Further, these contractual relations may need to take account of detailed advice sought by Council staff from community groups such as MASSBUG (e.g. on the specific location of bicycle parking).

### **Draft Plant & Services: Fleet services (p.81)**

We recommend that Council consider procuring bicycles for use by its staff and that the management of these vehicles become part of Council's vehicle fleet so as to encourage substitution of short car trips by bicycle.

## **Draft Works Program List- Identification of items relevant to cycling (pp. 82-84)**

We are pleased to have read through this extensive program and highlight line items for which MASSBUG has an interest in the process an outcome of the item, including:

- City Environment
  - Ashmore Estate Masterplan
  - Green Square Domain Plan & town centre consultation
  - s94 Comprehensive Review
- Community Living
  - Recreation/sports usage policy
  - Redfern-Waterloo facilities plan
  - Wilson Bros Multipurpose community facility
  - Surry Hills Library & community centre
- Corporate Services
  - Redfern Works – TNT surrounds
  - Website redesign
- City Works
  - Alexandra Canal works
  - CARES facility
  - Footway reconstruction
  - Green Square, implementation & design
  - Redfern streetscape – further stages
  - R2R – design & implementation
  - R2R – Misc Works Bicycle
  - Rosebery LATM
  - Sydney Park – bicycle access?
  - Traffic & Parking Studies

## **Works programme – project details – items relevant to cycling (pp.85-93)**

We highlight the importance of how works are designed and implemented to accommodate people with wheels (prams, shopping trolleys, bicycles) and all users, and we request Council staff give particular attention to the formulation and management of contracts for all out-sourced works.

### **MASSBUG’S General observations:**

We also recommend:

- investigation of Council staff being offered TravelPasses by salary deduction prior to the move to the TNT building, adjacent to Redfern railway station and many bus routes; this offer could serve as partial replacement for staff vehicles and restrictions on staff bringing cars to work (as North Sydney has done);
- the development of transport access guides for the new TNT building, council workplaces and major facilities (see for the Sustainable Energy Development Authority-RTA brochure *Producing and Using Transport Access Guide*, new edition on RTA website);

- more publicity be given to Council's ongoing development of the CARES facility at Sydney Park and should encourage access to the Park by bicycle (unlike the problem of Centennial Park where only 5% of users access the Park by bicycle); and,
- Council consider, in partnership with MASSBUG, hosting a conference on Healthy Urban Planning in association with urban policy, planning, housing, transport, education and children and youth, health agencies, professional associations and interested groups.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

In this submission we have made a number of recommendations and suggestions that we trust you will consider and accommodate wherever feasible.

We strongly support the review, finalising and implementation of the Bike Plan by December 2003 as planned and heartily commend South Sydney Council for its strong commitment to bicycle facilities and sustainable transport generally.

As residents in the area, we maintain an on-going interest in Council's activities and thank you again for this opportunity to comment.

