



## Shoalhaven Active Transport Strategy

including Pedestrian Accessibility & Mobility Plan Update and Bike Plan Update

for

Shoalhaven City Council

Appendix I: Exhibition Outcomes Report

## Table of Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	Overview.....	1
1.2	Engagement .....	1
1.3	Responses.....	2
<b>2</b>	<b>Get Involved Responses .....</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1	Respondents.....	4
2.2	Draft Strategy Documents Views/Downloads .....	4
2.3	Visitor Traffic Source.....	5
2.4	Association with Shoalhaven.....	6
2.5	Place of Residence .....	7
2.6	Survey Responses.....	8
2.7	Review of Written Survey Responses .....	15
<b>3</b>	<b>Key Stakeholder Submissions.....</b>	<b>19</b>
3.1	Overview.....	19
3.2	Transport for NSW .....	19
3.3	Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District .....	22
3.4	Bicycle NSW .....	22
3.5	Community Consultative Bodies .....	23
3.6	Shoalhaven Bicycle User Group .....	23
<b>4</b>	<b>Strategy Amendments.....</b>	<b>24</b>
4.1	PAMP Maps.....	24
4.2	Active Transport Scoring Criteria – Community Advocacy .....	25
4.3	Active Transport Scoring Criteria – Heavy Vehicle Volumes .....	25
4.4	Ranking Spreadsheets.....	26
4.5	Whole of Government Changes .....	27
4.6	Additional Strategy Amendments .....	28
4.7	Finalisation of the Strategy.....	29

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Overview

arc traffic + transport, for Shoalhaven City Council, prepared a Draft Shoalhaven Active Transport Strategy (**Draft Strategy**), incorporating updates to both the Pedestrian Accessibility & Mobility Plan (**PAMP**) and **Bike Plan**, which (following Council's endorsement on 15 August 2024) was placed on exhibition from Monday 26 August to Sunday 29 September 2024 (5 weeks). This report summarises the outcomes of the exhibition and associated responses to submissions.

## 1.2 Engagement

Pursuant to the 15 August 2024 Council resolution, on 26 August 2024, the Draft Strategy documents were placed on exhibition on Council's "**Get Involved**" webpage. To maximise public awareness of the exhibition, immediately following posting of the exhibition, a Media Release was sent to 105 key communications contacts (those key contacts who usually receive all of Council's media releases), including:

- Media Contacts.
- All current Councillors and Mayor at the time.
- All Senior Council staff contacts (CEO and Directors).
- All 3 local members, including the Federal Member for Gilmore, and State Members for South Coast and Kiama).

In addition, notification of the exhibition was also advised via email (with links to the Get Involved Page) to:

- 28 Council staff (across all directorates).
- 10 TfNSW staff (Project Managers on all local TfNSW projects, Princes Highway Program Director, local TfNSW contacts, and the NSW Active Transport Program Manager).
- Healthy Cities Illawarra.
- Illawarra Shoalhaven Active Transport Task Force (**ISATT**), which includes the coordinator from Healthy Cities Illawarra; neighbouring Illawarra-Shoalhaven Council contacts; Illawarra-Shoalhaven Local Health District contacts; and other interested local community contacts across the Illawarra-Shoalhaven.
- Shoalhaven Bicycle Users Group (**SBUG**).
- The Coordinator of the Mollymook Milton Ulladulla EMTB and e-Bike Group.
- Every one of the 24 Community Consultative Bodies (**CCBs**) in the Shoalhaven.
- Every school in the Shoalhaven.
- All of Council's Youth liaison contacts.

In addition, given recent consultation between Council and local landholders/residents in regard to a potential bike track proposal in Falls Road, Falls Creek, all 6 property owners/residents at the western end of Falls Road, and all 6 property owners/residents in Hillside Ridge, were also specifically contacted to make them aware of the exhibition, and invite their feedback, as originally assured by Council.

The Draft Strategy was available to the public and other stakeholders for review and comment for 5 weeks, with the exhibition period officially ending on 29 September 2024. Only two (2) submissions were received after the official close of exhibition period (from the SBUG and Bicycles NSW), which were also accepted.

### 1.3 Responses

There were over 1,700 visits to the Get Involved webpage, with approximately 55% of visitors downloading one or more of the Draft Strategy documents. A total of 97 responses were provided through the Get Involved webpage, and an additional 5 responses from the public and stakeholders were received by email during and immediately after the exhibition period (102 total responses).

The Get Involved webpage provided a short survey to determine the level of support for the Draft Strategy's principles; key projects; and overall support for a greater focus on active transport in Shoalhaven. The survey requested that the visitor indicate whether they "**support**", "**support – but with some changes**", or "**No**" (i.e. did not support) the following:

- The newly adopted Active Transport Scoring Criteria (**ATSC**);
- The ranking of paths projects based on the ATSC;
- The ranking of crossings projects based on the formula Pedestrian x Vehicle (**P x V**) whereby the ranking specifically considers pedestrian and traffic volumes at project locations;
- The ranking of shared user path bridges (**SUP bridges**) based on P x V;
- The ranking of paths for investigation projects based on the ATSC; and
- The Draft Strategy overall.

The responses from the Get Involved webpage and email submissions from the public and stakeholders were positive overall, as summarised in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Summary of Responses to Draft ATS Survey

Do You Support...	Yes		Yes – but with some Changes		No	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Scoring Criteria	47	48%	25	26%	25	26%
Ranking of Crossings	47	48%	19	20%	31	32%
Ranking of Paths	39	40%	23	24%	35	36%
Ranking of SUR Bridges	59	61%	10	10%	28	29%
Paths for Investigation	49	51%	19	20%	29	30%
The Strategy	33	34%	40	41%	24	25%

Considering that only 6% (i.e. 102 out of 1,700) of those who viewed the Get Involved webpage made a submission (i.e. 94% of those that viewed the Draft Strategy didn't make a submission); that some 70% of submissions supported the Draft Strategy (including those who suggested some changes); and that most of the requested changes that can be accommodated have already been addressed, the effective support for the Draft Strategy of 70% of submissions is very pleasing.

It is also important to acknowledge from the outset that of the Get Involved webpage responses not supporting the Draft Strategy, over 50% were in favour of active transport initiatives, but just not some parts of the Draft Strategy itself (and more specifically the ranking of projects, primarily if the projects they were individually supporting happened to have a low ranking). When accounting for these responses, the broader “active transport initiatives” detailed in the Draft Strategy were in turn supported by over 85% of respondents.

Additional submissions from key stakeholders were also overwhelmingly positive (and again, most of the requested changes that can be accommodated have already been addressed).

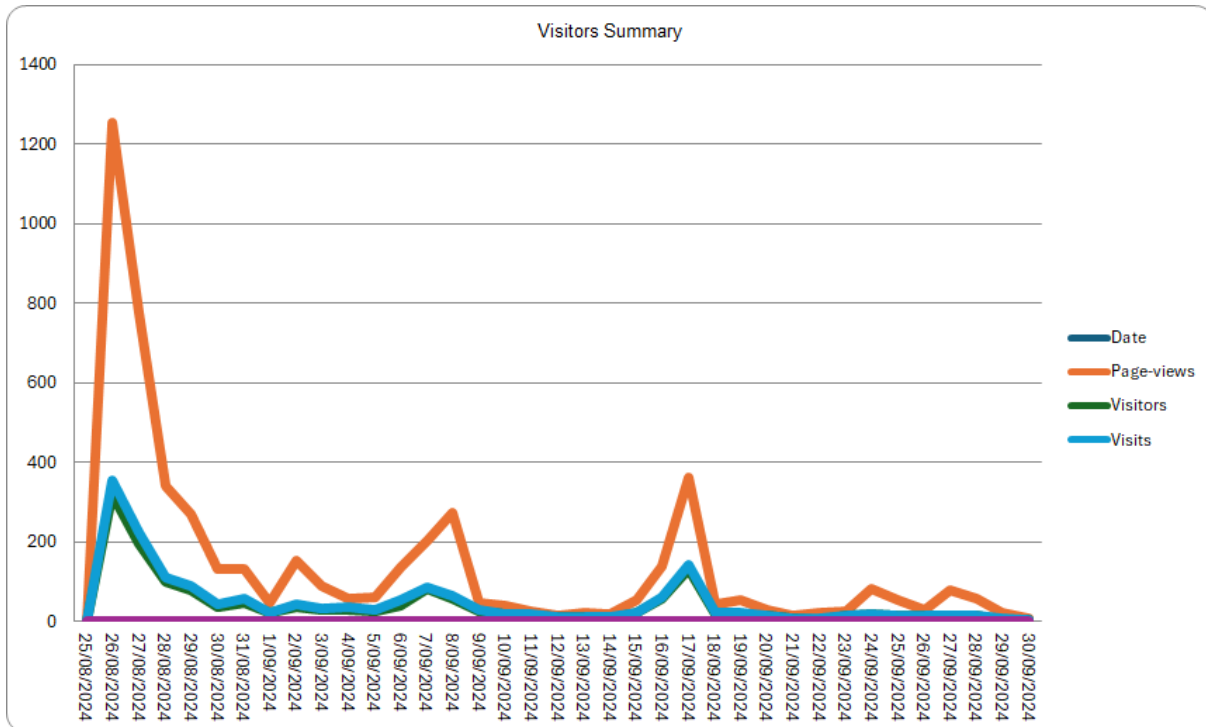
Sections below provide a more detailed summary of all feedback received during and following the exhibition period, and where relevant changes to the Draft Strategy that have been addressed to respond to the feedback, and moreover that will be included in the final Strategy.

## 2 Get Involved Responses

### 2.1 Respondents

A total of over 1,700 people visited the Get Involved webpage, with approximately 55% of visitors downloading one or more of the available Draft Strategy documents. A summary of the number of visitors, and the date when they accessed the Draft Strategy documents, is provided in **Figure 1**.

Figure 1: Get Involved Webpage Visits



### 2.2 Draft Strategy Documents Views/Downloads

As discussed, over 55% of visitors (some 960 visitors) downloaded one or more of the Draft Strategy documents; a summary of the most viewed/downloaded Draft Strategy documents is provided in **Table 2**.

Table 2: Viewed and Downloaded Strategy Documents

Engagement Tool Name	Visitors	Views/Downloads
Appendix A - PAMP Maps	281	311
Draft Shoalhaven Active Transport Strategy	228	275
Appendix B - Project ranking of paths	155	170
Appendix E – projects for investigation	45	50
Appendix D – Project ranking of shared user path bridges	35	38
Active Transport Scoring Criteria	35	35
Appendix C – Project ranking of crossings	33	37
Draft Shoalhaven Active Transport - Consolidated Appendices	32	38
Appendix F - Notes to scoring Criteria & Project Ranking	8	9
faqs	61	65

## 2.3 Visitor Traffic Source

While there were well over 300 direct contacts to get the word out initially, the news that the Draft Strategy was on exhibition also appeared to be rapidly spread by word of mouth, with the majority of visitors being directed to the Get Involved webpage via social media. There were also a large number of visitors accessing the Get Involved webpage directly via Council’s website; via links provided in local media; and further to Google searches.

A summary of the sources via which visitors went to the Get Involved webpage is provided in **Table 3**.

Table 3: Get Involved Webpage Traffic Source

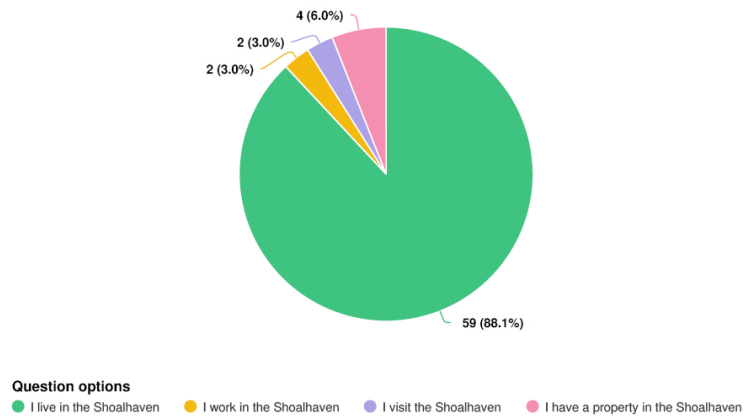
REFERRER URL	Visits
m.facebook.com	367
www.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au	311
lm.facebook.com	172
l.facebook.com	105
www.google.com	62
www.southcoastregister.com.au	32
www.ulladullatimes.com.au	14
mail.google.com	10
statics.teams.cdn.office.net	8
www.google.com.au	7
android-app	3
www.bing.com	3
linktr.ee	3
scc.livepro.com.au	2
lnkd.in	2

## 2.4 Association with Shoalhaven

The majority of respondents identified as Shoalhaven residents, while a small number identified as being workers, visitors and property owners; these results are summarised in **Figure 2**. When considering **Figure 2**, it is noted that not all respondents specifically answered this question.

Figure 2: Association with Shoalhaven

What is your association with Shoalhaven? Select the most appropriate response



## 2.5 Place of Residence

For respondents that identified as residents, the majority also identified their home suburb; a summary of these responses is provided in **Table 4** (in alphabetical order), noting that this also includes responses from CCBs representing specific suburbs.

Table 4: Respondents Place of Residence

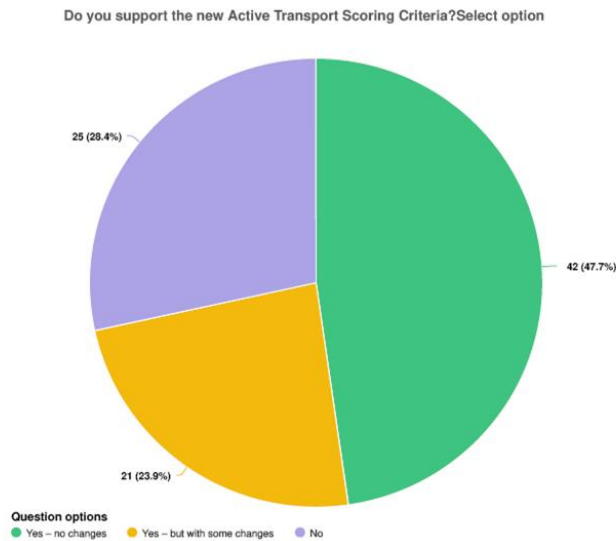
Respondent Suburb/Association	Respondents
Bangalee	2
Berrara	1
Berry	5
Bomaderry	1
Callala Bay	3
Callala Beach Progress Association	1
Cambewarra Rate Payers	1
Cambewarra Village	5
Conjola Park/Lake Conjola	6
Culburra Beach	3
Falls Creek	4
Fishermans Paradise	3
Lake Conjola	8
Milton	1
Mollymook Beach	2
Narrawallee	2
North Nowra	2
Residential (Not stated, different, random locations)	8
Nowra	4
Sanctuary Point	5
Shoalhaven Heads	1
Sussex Inlet	2
Ulladulla	2
Vincentia	3
Visitor (different, random locations)	2
West Nowra	2
Work	2
Worrigeer	2
Worring Heights	1

## 2.6 Survey Responses

### 2.6.1 Question 1: Do you support the new Active Transport Scoring Criteria?

Question 1 of the Get Involved survey asked respondents for their opinion of the new ATSC; a summary of these responses is provided in **Figure 3**.

Figure 3: Do you support the new Active Transport Scoring Criteria?



In relation to the survey responses where “Yes – but with some changes” was selected, most of these respondents didn’t identify where or how they wanted to see the ATSC changed, but were simply concerned that the projects of interest to them were not highly ranked. In regard to most of these identified projects, no adjustments to the ATSC would have resulted in any major shake up of the project rankings, relative to other projects across Shoalhaven.

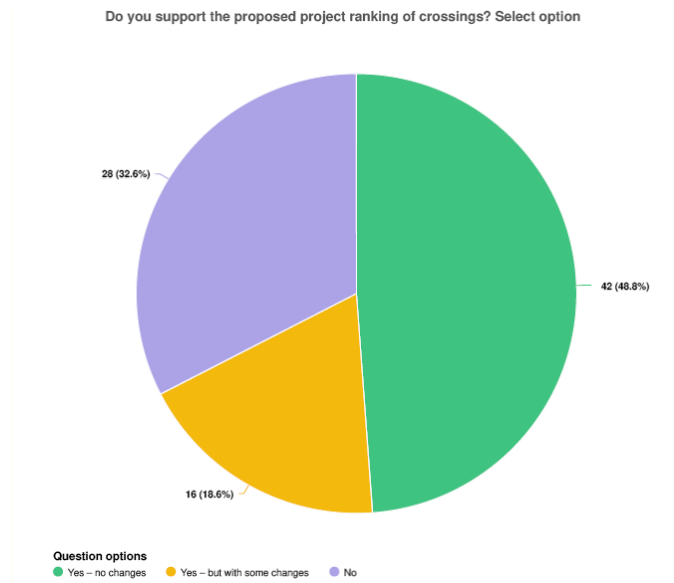
Overall, **the survey responses indicate more than 70% support for the new ATSC.**

With regard to those who responded who “No”, the comments received mostly also disagreed with the ranking of projects, or simply considered that funding for active transport should not be prioritised.

### 2.6.2 Question 2: Do you support the ranking of Crossing Projects

Question 2 of the Get Involved survey asked respondents for their opinion of the ranking of crossings projects based primarily on the P X V formula; a summary of these responses is provided in **Figure 4**.

Figure 4: Support for the ranking of Crossings Projects



In relation to the survey responses where “Yes – but with some changes” was selected, most of these respondents didn’t identify where or how they wanted to see the P x V criteria changed, but were simply concerned that the projects of interest to them were not highly ranked. In regard to most of these identified projects, no adjustments to the ATSC would have resulted in any major changes to the project rankings, relative to other projects across Shoalhaven.

Some feedback was also received requesting new surveys at some sites (to support a higher ranking); it is noted that resurveying of P x V demands occurs every year at as many sites as possible, and that projects rankings are adjusted accordingly based on the most up-to-date survey data.

Importantly, all of the sites identified by respondents are already shortlisted for resurvey, and as such most of these responses will be specifically addressed further to new surveys.

A small number of responses also identified an issue with the P x V criteria where the composition of the traffic volume is not considered, or more specifically whether the percentage of heavy vehicle traffic (trucks) is not considered. This is an entirely valid concern, particularly in some roads with a high percentage of trucks or – in some instances – where truck traffic has grown over time. As such, the ATSC has been specifically revised to account for the percentage of truck traffic; this is discussed in further detail in **Section 4.3**.

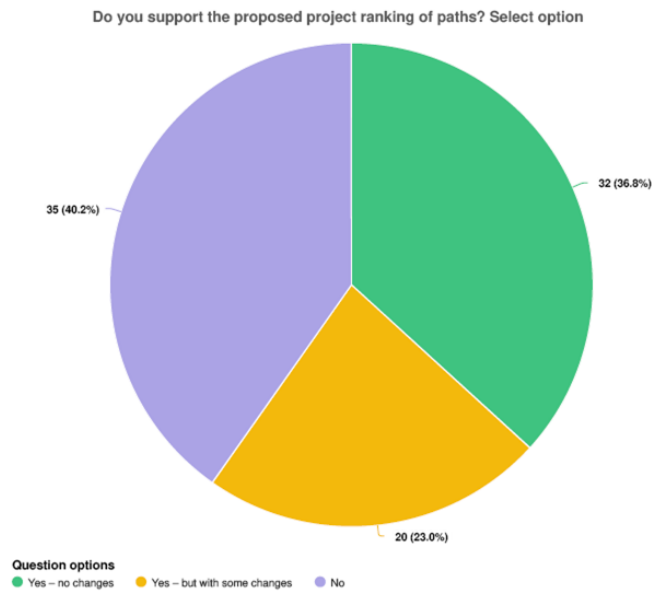
Overall, **the survey responses indicate more than 70% support for the ranking of crossing projects**, though further to identifying projects where traffic volumes include a higher percentage of trucks, it is likely that more than 75% of respondents would support the ranking of crossing projects.

With regard to those who responded who “No”, the comments received mostly also disagreed with the ranking of projects, or simply considered that funding for active transport should not be prioritised.

### 2.6.3 Question 3: Do you support the ranking of Paths Projects?

Question 3 of the Get Involved survey asked respondents for their opinion of the ranking of paths projects based on the new ATSC; a summary of these responses is provided in **Figure 5**.

Figure 5: Do you support the ranking of Paths Projects



In relation to the survey responses where “Yes – but with some changes” was selected, most of these respondents didn’t identify where or how they wanted to see the ATSC criteria changed, but were simply concerned that the projects of interest to them were not highly ranked. In regard to most of these identified projects, no adjustments to the ATSC would have resulted in any major changes to the project rankings, relative to other projects across Shoalhaven.

Notwithstanding, a number of these responses have been addressed further to consideration of the existing “community support” criteria, whereby additional points are allocated when a projects has been specifically identified as a priority by the local community; this has resulted in many of the Medium Priority projects identified by respondents being elevated to High Priority, or Low Priority projects being elevated to Medium Priority, and in some instances High Priority.

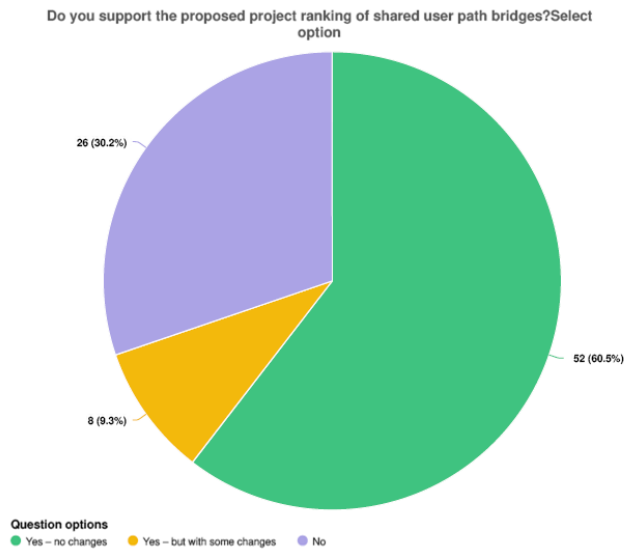
Overall, **the survey responses indicate over 60% support for the proposed ranking of paths**; however, further to the allocation of additional points for projects with community support, it is likely that more than 70% of respondents would support the ranking of paths projects.

Many of those who responded “No” didn’t support the ranking of paths for the same reasons (i.e. paths of interest to them were not ranked highly enough), or considered that any allocation of funds to active transport infrastructure was inappropriate.

#### 2.6.4 Question 4: Do you support the ranking of SUP Bridge Projects?

Question 4 of the Get Involved survey asked respondents for their opinion of the ranking of SUP bridge projects based on the P x V formula; a summary of these responses is provided in **Figure 6**.

Figure 6: Do you support the ranking of SUP Bridge Projects?



In relation to the survey responses where “Yes – but with some changes” was selected, most of these respondents didn’t identify where or how they wanted to see the P x V criteria changed, but were simply concerned that the projects of interest to them were not highly ranked.

Some feedback was received requesting new surveys at some sites (to potential support a higher ranking); it is again noted that new surveys to determine P x V occurs every year at as many sites as possible, and that projects rankings are adjusted accordingly based on the most up-to-date survey data. Importantly, many of these sites have already been identified for new surveys.

**Overall, the survey responses indicate over 70% support for the proposed ranking of SUP bridge projects.**

Briefly, it is worth noting the comments of one respondent, who was concerned about the long list of projects at the bottom of the SUP bridges ranking spreadsheet, including SUP bridge projects where there was no data to allow them to be ranked.

SUP bridge projects are typically very expensive, and grant funding in that order of magnitude doesn’t come easily, or annually. The last 3 SUP bridge projects that were successfully completed were the Moona Moona Creek bridge (Huskisson-Vincentia), Chris Creek bridge (Sussex Inlet) and Swan Lake Inlet bridge (Cudmirrah); these SUP bridges were delivered over a 6 year period from 2017 to 2022.

Council tries to ensure that the next highest priority SUP bridge projects do have data to support them, and often community feedback, local knowledge and inspections help Council determine which projects have higher demand, relative to others, and warrant progressing to formal surveys.

Many of the SP bridge projects may not need surveys at this time, as they would only be undertaken when (for example) an adjoining path project is completed, but high costs and funding availability may be the issue preventing shorter term delivery.

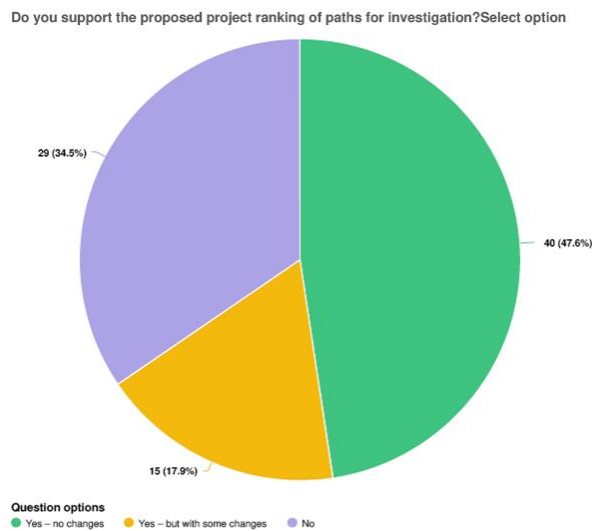
It is also important to note that the list of projects at the bottom of the SUP bridge ranking spreadsheet isn't provided in any particular order, but rather in alphabetical order at this point in time until each is able to be progressed.

Finally, most of those who responded "No" considered that any allocation of funds to active transport infrastructure was inappropriate.

### 2.6.5 Do you support the ranking of Paths for Investigation Projects?

Question 5 of the Get Involved survey asked respondents for their opinion of the ranking of Paths for Investigation projects based on the P x V formula; a summary of these responses is provided in **Figure 7**.

Figure 7: Do you support the ranking of Paths for Investigation Projects?



In relation to the survey responses where "Yes – but with some changes" was selected, most of these respondents didn't identify where or how they wanted to see the ATSC criteria changed, but were simply concerned that the projects of interest to them were not highly ranked. In regard to most of these identified projects, no adjustments to the ATSC would have resulted in any major changes to the project rankings, relative to other projects across Shoalhaven.

Notwithstanding, a number of these responses have been addressed again further to consideration of the community support criteria.

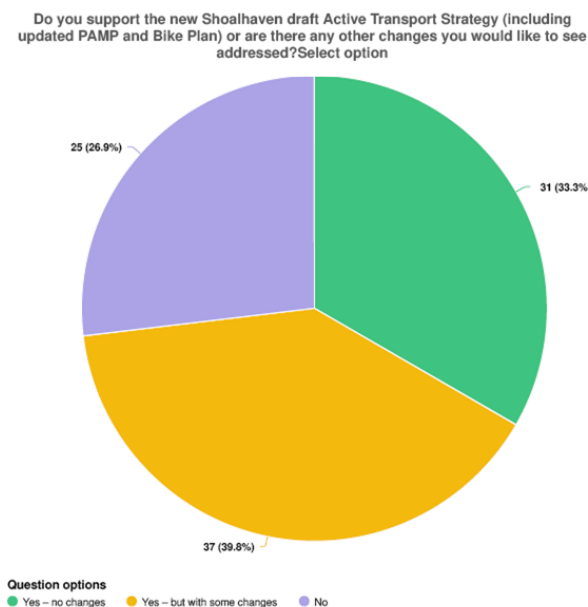
Overall, the survey responses indicate 65% support for the proposed ranking of the paths for investigation; however, further to the allocation of additional points for projects with community support, it is likely that more than 70% of respondents would support the ranking of paths projects.

Many of those who responded “No” didn’t support the ranking of the paths for investigation for the same reasons ((i.e. paths of interest to them were not ranked highly enough), or considered that any allocation of funds to active transport infrastructure was inappropriate.

### 2.6.6 Do you support the Active Transport Strategy?

Question 6 of the Get Involved survey asked respondents for their opinion of the overall Draft Strategy; a summary of the results is provided in **Figure 8**.

Figure 8: Do you support the Active Transport Strategy?



In relation to the survey responses where “Yes – but with some changes” was selected, most of these respondents didn’t identify where or how they wanted to see the Strategy changed, but were simply concerned that the projects of interest to them were not highly ranked.

As discussed, further to the feedback the ranking of some projects has been adjusted further to consideration of the community support points in the ATSC, and/or where there is a higher percentage of trucks in the P v X criteria. However, in the majority of cases adjustments to the ATSC or consideration of truck volumes would not result in any major changes to the project rankings, relative to other projects across Shoalhaven.

Overall, the survey responses indicate 75% support for the Strategy; however, further to the elevation of many projects identified by respondents (again further to considering community support and truck volumes) it is likely that close to 80% of respondents would support the Strategy.

Finally, while many of those who responded “No” simply considered the need to fund other essential infrastructure (and particularly road upgrades) rather than active transport infrastructure, approximately half of these respondents provided comments that inherently supported the Strategy (or at least active transport) but again simply considered that projects of interest to them had not been appropriately considered.

## 2.7 Review of Written Survey Responses

The Get Involved survey questions allowed the respondent to provide additional information as to why they chose their response. Sections below provide a summary of the most common comments provided in these written survey responses.

### 2.7.1 Unqualified Support

With reference to the survey responses in **Section 2.6**, a relatively high percentage of respondents supported most components of the Draft Strategy without change; typical written responses from these respondents include:

*Need to have as many places for people to walk and cycle around as possible. Need to get people active and healthy. Less reliance on private cars.*

*Keep it up! More, more, more! I would honestly ride to work if it was safe. 8 minute drive. Imagine one more car off the road multiplied by everyone else in the same boat.*

*Bikes and bikes are the way of the future, the more paths the better.*

*We need to reduce the pressure on our roads. Look to the European way - cycling/walking/running benefits everyone, places less pressure on roads and infrastructure and less pressure on the health system. Time for a long term investment into the future.*

*Prioritise commuter safety and access, encouraging more local workers to ride and reduce all day car parking in our towns/villages.*

### 2.7.2 Support – but with Changes or No

As discussed, many of those choosing “Support - but with some changes” or “No” in response to the Get Involved survey questions were primarily unhappy with the prioritisation of projects, and more often with the prioritisation of paths projects of specific interest to them.

Some of the other common themes of these responses include:

*The priority list is upside down. Places with highest population densities should be creating more pathways to get to other areas or places of nature. i.e. Berry to SHH. Bomaderry to SHH via Bolong. Council should see these investments as assets for tourism, not just serving local communities.*

*The criteria should reflect the importance of substituting active transport for car use. Paths and crossings need to support cycling to shops, services and work, by making it safe and straightforward - otherwise we're accidentally making active recreation easier, but not active transport, which is good for health but has very little environmental impact.*

*Since we have very poor public transport across the Shoalhaven, making cycling (including e-bikes) a viable transport option is a vital environmental initiative.*

*P x V only works for currently safe streets with some form of refuge alongside (path or nature strip). If the street is so desperately dangerous that few dare risk either walking or riding, (yet many schoolchildren are forced to because there is no alternative) then collected data is skewed beyond use.*

*Pushing Transport for NSW to integrate a SUP as part of the Milton Ulladulla Bypass project during this planning stage is critical. Integrating a SUP as part of the project construction, rather than retro fitting later would save significant money.*

*It would be great to see more council workshops or hubs to support cyclists. Via education, access to tyre repair tools or pumps etc. Discounts for cyclists etc*

*It needs to recognise connecting communities safely as a priority (e.g. Kings point to Ulladulla)*

*Link the villages! This should be a catch phrase. Create aspirational pathways connecting the Shoalhaven villages to each other and villages to beaches, rivers, parks where possible*

*There needs to be shared paths to and from town, towns, and a bike path in town, along with undercover storage areas for bicycles.*

*All of the plan maps are around town centres. Which is great! However, many of the gaps in the active transport, safe route network, with cycle lanes or road shoulders, are the regional roads between town centres.*

*Project priorities should be higher where people are walking along the edge of the road, in grave danger of being hit by motor vehicles.*

*The majority of paths are going to south Shoalhaven. It should be the aim to deliver at least one project in each village at a minimum*

### 2.7.3 Negative Responses

The most common issues raised by those who simply do not support the Strategy in any way specifically related to their concern that funding – and specifically Council funding - will be provided for active transport infrastructure when (in their view) that funding should be directed in the first instance to other key infrastructure projects, and specifically fixing our roads after numerous natural disasters have heavily impacted the Shoalhaven.

Some of the other common themes of these responses include:

*We don't have basic infrastructure like kerb and guttering yet the Shoalhaven is scoping active transport strategies*

*Council need to fix the existing infrastructure, especially roads*

*Councils main focus should be on improving the condition of existing roads not new bike and pedestrian paths*

*An overreaction and quite unnecessary*

A number of negative responses also related to projects with the potential to cross or be in close proximity to private land, with comments such as:

*I don't support anything to do with allowing public access past my home, placing my family in possible danger.*

*This would dramatically increase the noise and traffic through our quiet neighbourhood, and expose our quiet neighbourhood to many passers-by who may have ulterior motives.*

Based on a detailed review of all responses, there were 15 respondents in particular (out of the 97 Get Involved Survey respondents, and over 1700 views) who simply did not support any active transport projects or the prioritisation of active transport at this point in time, as the funding in their view would be better spent elsewhere.

#### 2.7.4 Most Discussed Projects

Based on our review of all responses, key projects where respondents stated that active transport infrastructure should be given a higher (or in some cases lower) priority generally align with the number of respondents per suburb as previously summarised in **Table 4**.

These include (**only in alphabetical order**):

- **Badagarang:** Moss Vale Road between Main Road and Princes Highway (SUP).
- **Berry:** Safer connections to Nowra; Beach Road (Berry to Seven Mile Beach SUP).
- **Callala Bay/Callala Beach Villages:** Expansion of the SUP network.
- **Cambewarra Village:** Main Road link to Moss Vale Road and Bomaderry (SUP).
- **Conjola Park and Lake Conjola:** Lake Conjola Entrance Road from Princes Highway to Conjola Park, from Conjola Park to Lake Conjola, and through the village of Lake Conjola to the beach (SUP).
- **Falls Creek:** Very negative responses received to the concept of providing any public bike access along Falls Road, Falls Creek.
- **Nowra/Bomaderry urban area:** Expansion of the SUP network.

- **Sanctuary Point:** Complete the missing link between Paradise Beach Road and Loralyn Avenue via Walmer Avenue or Macleans Point Road (SUP).
- **Vincentia (to Hyams Beach):** Expansion of the SUP network.

It should be noted that in addition to Get Involved survey responses, there were many other projects also strongly supported by the community (or verbally communicated but not represented in the survey responses) primarily where people were already satisfied that their projects of interest were already ranked very highly in the Strategy.

## 3 Key Stakeholder Submissions

### 3.1 Overview

As discussed, the Draft Strategy was issued to a high number of key stakeholders for their review and comment; sections below provide a summary of the responses from these key stakeholders.

### 3.2 Transport for NSW

#### 3.2.1 General Comments

In their submission, TfNSW's Get NSW Active team (**GNA Team**) provides support for the Draft Strategy, stating that:

*The Strategy's objectives are supported. These are aligned with Transport's focus areas for active transport (and the GNA program guidelines) – including network connectivity, safety, enabling more short everyday trips by walking and cycling, and catering for users of all ages and abilities.*

*Similarly, we support the proposed prioritisation framework, which sets an emphasis on improving connectivity to trip attractors and addressing safety issues.*

One of the principles underpinning the Draft Strategy is that a path (or other active transport infrastructure) that might not fully meet current standards is better than providing no safety improvements at all for pedestrians and bike riders. TfNSW provides a limited endorsement of this principle, but notes the following considerations to ensure path widths remain fit-for-purpose:

- *Achieving Council's objectives for increasing the share of trips by AT [Active Transport]*
- *Expected future demand (population growth, land use change)*
- *Intended path function*
- *Achieving and maintain a specified level of service (design AT level of service)*
- *Potential increase in conflicting uses on footpaths and shared paths, such as recent increased legalisation of cycling on footpaths; take-up of e-bikes and e-scooters increasing pedestrian exposure to higher speeds on paths.*

However, the TfNSW (GNA team) support was then caveated by the following recommendation:

*Align all AT path projects identified as a high priority with the facility selection and path width recommendations in the GNA program guidelines. This will contribute to competitive GNA funding applications for any of these projects.*

With regard to the response provided by the GNA Team, it remains the case that Council will adopt a common sense and practical approach when developing plans for new active transport infrastructure based on available funding, and moreover in line with Council's position that a path (or other active transport infrastructure) that might not meet the full GNA guidelines in all respects (but results in the best outcome that can be achieved given the prevalent constraints, on a case by case basis), is better for the community than there being no safety improvements or active transport improvements at all.

Ongoing discussions are occurring with TfNSW representatives in regards to these points of difference, with the aim to maximise the flow of grant funding towards continuous improvements to safety and active transport in the Shoalhaven.

Council has pointed out that TfNSW has constructed many kilometres of SUPs as part of numerous major project upgrades (the Nowra Bridge project being the most recent), none of which would comply with the very wide path width requirements specified in current GNA guidelines. Yet practical local solutions were found that delivered the best possible outcome given the site and budget constraints, and those SUPS have been delivered (and are warmly welcomed!) and continue to serve a key purpose and provide significant active transport benefits for the communities they serve.

Council simply seeks to apply the same approach to deliver the best possible outcomes within the constraints of its own network, and continues to discuss the issue of current GNA guidelines with TfNSW to get the best possible outcome and the greatest amount of available grant funding flowing to Shoalhaven communities. Council is of the opinion that this is the only way by which we can continue to walk and cycle towards Council's (and TfNSW's own) objectives to significantly increase active transport trips over the next 20 years.

### 3.2.2 Milton Ulladulla Bypass

An additional submission was received from TfNSW's Milton Ulladulla Bypass Team (**MU Bypass Team**), that specifically responds to the future SUP along the proposed alignment of the MU Bypass, which is shown in the PAMP Maps. The response states that:

*Whilst the project is still in development and the design has yet to be finalised, there is currently no allowance for a shared path along the new alignment. Provision for on-road cyclists is anticipated to be provided by a paved shoulder.*

*Where the Milton Ulladulla bypass crosses existing and proposed active transport connections, provision would be made to facilitate these active transport connections.*

Council is continuing to discuss the matter with TfNSW, and has pointed out the inconsistency between the current MU Bypass concept (which currently does not cater for an off-road path along the MU Bypass route) – and TfNSW's GNA guidelines and Safe Systems objectives.

Council will continue to advocate for an off-road path as part of the MU Bypass, even if in the short term this is simply providing an adjacent corridor that may – for example – provide a gravel track before being further upgraded in the future.

It is also acknowledged that there are environmental concerns contributing to the desire for a small project footprint, but these investigations by TfNSW are ongoing.

While discussions with TfNSW continue, Council is also investigating potential solutions to maximise the safety and route choices available to bike riders if a direct link along the MUP Bypass is not provided. In this regard, Council is examining the provision of a continuous SUP route which would divert bike riders “through” Milton and Ulladulla, noting that much of the active transport network supporting such a proposal has already been planned as part of the Draft Strategy. However unless it is delivered in full as part of the MU Bypass, there is a risk that a SUP project of this scale may not be subsequently deliverable under other available grant funded programs. Accordingly Council is obviously hopeful that the complete SUP in this part of Shoalhaven can be delivered as part of the MU Bypass project.

Finally, arc traffic + transport notes that the TfNSW response (from the MU Bypass Team) appears to be at odds with the commitment from TfNSW to ensure that walking and cycling infrastructure is provided as part of all TfNSW projects. In this regard, TfNSW’s Providing for Walking and Cycling in Transport Projects Policy 2021 states:

*We recognise that walking and cycling are integral to the greater good of our communities and customers. Active transport delivers significant health, environmental and economic benefits, creates communities that are resilient, and enables our communities to be more equitable, inclusive and liveable for everyone. Walking and cycling are also integral to our transport system to enable access to key destinations including public transport, and to enhance places.*

*Every transport project funded by Transport for NSW must include provision for walking and cycling within the core scope of the project.*

*In order to deliver the best outcomes for our customers in line with Future Transport 2056, the walking and cycling components of a project must be incorporated from the outset and followed through to delivery and maintenance.*

*This is particularly relevant to infrastructure projects, where early consideration and delivery of safe, integrated, reliable, accessible and connected walking and cycling infrastructure will enhance the local environment, help to drive behavioural change and achieve a sustained uptake in mode share of walking and cycling. The project must ensure that, once delivered (and throughout construction), the walking and cycling infrastructure is well maintained and kept operational.*

As acknowledged by TfNSW, planning for the MU Bypass is ongoing, and as such Council will continue to strongly advocate for the inclusion of active transport infrastructure as part of the project in accordance with TfNSW’s own active transport commitments.

### 3.3 Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District

A detailed submission was received from the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (**ISLHD**). While the ISLHD fully supports the underlying strategy to increase active trips, particularly noting the significant health benefits from greater exercise (and lower vehicle emissions), the ISLHD submission raises a number of issues for further consideration as part of the finalisation of the Strategy. These issues can generally be summarised as follows:

- Focus on reducing trips of 1 km or less by private vehicles.
- Provide more information about the environmental benefits of active trips
- Focusing on short trips within towns and village.
- Increasing the number of formal crossings
- Additional consideration of vehicle speeds in the Strategy, and moreover the introduction of 30km/h speed limits in local roads.
- Providing more frequent and longer duration pedestrian crossing phases at traffic signals.
- Ensuring 15-minute walking, cycling and micromobility networks are under development from the start of new developments .
- Increasing the number of medium and higher density buildings around public transport hubs and town centres.
- Increase the number of EV charging points for e-bikes and e-scooters, and secure and covered storage and charging points for e-scooters and -bikes.
- Providing more multi-directional (Barnes Dances or Scramble) crossings, reducing the need to press the beg button twice to cross two adjacent roads.

These issues have all been considered in the finalisation of the Strategy (see also **Section 4**).

### 3.4 Bicycle NSW

A late but detailed submission was also received from Bicycle NSW. While Bicycle NSW fully supports the underlying strategy to increase active trips, their submission also raised a number of issues for further consideration as part of the finalisation of the Strategy. These issues can generally be summarised as follows:

- Increased advocacy for State Government funding in collaboration with Bicycle NSW
- Further definition of the road hierarchy, and moreover means by which walking and cycling can be prioritised over vehicle movements.
- Maximising path widths, though appropriately considering spatial and funding constraints.
- Reducing local road speed limits to 30km/h.
- Regular maintenance of verges on rural roads, and the inclusion of verge widening/formalisation wherever possible when upgrading existing roads.

- Strongly consider removing parking from town and village centres to provide better pedestrian and bike rider outcomes.
- Prioritise pedestrians at traffic lights.
- Cycle tourism.
- Promotion strategies.

The Bicycles NSW submission was accepted and these issues have also been considered in the finalisation of the Strategy (see also **Section 4**).

### 3.5 Community Consultative Bodies

A detailed submission was received from a number of CCBs, including:

- Callala Beach Progress Association.
- Cambewarra Residents and Ratepayers Association.
- Culburra Beach & Orient Point Community Forum.

Broadly, these submissions strongly supported the objectives of the Strategy, but raised concerns in regard to the ranking of some (specific to each CCB area), and moreover their opinion that some projects should be allocated a high priority than is currently the case.

A further review of all of the projects specifically raised by the CCBs has been undertaken as part of the finalisation of the Strategy. As noted previously in regard to the Get Involved survey responses, most of the CCB responses were able to be addressed further to consideration of the “community support” points in the ATSC, although this has not necessarily been possible in every instance.

Council will continue to work closely with all CCBs as part of their commitment to ensure that the Strategy goes forward as a live document where projects can be revised/prioritised as new information (or funding) becomes available.

### 3.6 Shoalhaven Bicycle User Group

A late and brief submission was also received from SBUG, which was also accepted; it is noted that SBUG were awaiting the final submission from Bicycles NSW prior to finalising their submission.

SBUG fully supports the Draft Strategy, and particularly the strategies by which to support and increase cycling as a mode of transport. Notwithstanding, the only concern raised by SBUG relates to the means by which funding for bike projects will be made available so as to ensure safer, connected active transport corridors across Shoalhaven.

It is agreed that – fundamentally - while the new Strategy provides a very broadly supported vision and framework, the current funding model remains the greatest challenge to delivering the vision of both Council and the NSW Government to significantly increase active transport over the next 20 years.

Significantly more funding is required from the NSW Government, and new annual funding streams will also need to be provided by the Federal Government to really make a difference and allow delivery of the Strategy within an acceptable timeframe.

## 4 Strategy Amendments

At the Ordinary Meeting of Council 15 August 2024, it was resolved (MIN24.451) *That Council:*

1. *Exhibit the draft documents (Active Transport Strategy 2024 – including PAMP and Bike Plan Updates) and associated Appendices, for a minimum of 30 days and delegate staff to make minor changes to prepare for exhibition as required.*
  - a. *If feedback results in no significant changes, finalise the documents and deem adopted; or*
  - b. *If significant adverse feedback is received, update the documents and report the outcomes to Council for final adoption - before December 2024.*
2. *Thank Transport for NSW for collaboration and grant funding.*
3. *Consider funding opportunities for adopted pathway networks, where appropriate, through the preparation of the new Contributions Plan project that is currently underway, or as part of a future plan update.*
4. *Report back on a temporary bicycle access along the gated Falls Public Rd alignment due to the safety issues associated with the Jervis Bay Road intersection works and that this temporary legal access be subject to review in any future investigations for permanent access and any environmental impacts.*

Pursuant to Item 1 of the Resolution, a detailed review has been undertaken of all responses/submissions received from the public and key stakeholders; consequently, minor amendments have been throughout the Strategy to address this feedback.

A summary of key revisions to the Strategy prior to its finalisation is provided in sections below.

### 4.1 PAMP Maps

A number of respondents identified that some path and crossing projects were (at the time of the exhibition) not shown or not shown correctly on the Interactive PAMP Maps (**PAMP Maps**), or - for example - a path is shown as a footpath rather than a SUP.

During and subsequent to the exhibition period, Council has addressed as many of these mapping issues as possible; however there is much more work to be done! As discussed in the Strategy, Council will continue to regularly update the PAMP Maps (and future Interactive **Bike Maps**) to ensure that the community is provided with the most up-to-date information possible.

It is noted that at the time of finalising the Strategy, there were still some ongoing issues with the PAMP Maps: these include:

- The display of “footpaths to be upgraded to SUP”;
- Some SUPs are still shown as footpaths,
- Many completed projects are still shown as “proposed”

- The designation of pedestrian crossings
- The display of pram ramps and bike racks

All of these issues are being addressed in as timely a manner as possible, and Council will continue to improve the interactive experience with available resources. Even with some of these revisions still to be completed, the PAMP Maps still represent the best way for the community to visualise existing and proposed active transport infrastructure, and Council welcomes (and will continue to address) all feedback where the community identifies any further anomalies in the PAMP Maps.

## 4.2 Active Transport Scoring Criteria – Community Advocacy

An important aspect of the new ATSC is whether or not there has been community advocacy (including specific advocacy by a CCB) for a particular project, and/or whether a CCB concurs with the particular ranking of a project within the specific communities they represent (effectively allowing a CCB to request a shuffling of their own priorities, but not changing where those projects sit across Shoalhaven, relative to other projects).

Where there has been advocacy, an additional 5 points has also been assigned to the project, which in many instances elevates the projects identified by the CCBs from Low or Medium Priority to Medium or High Priority.

As part of the development of the Strategy, [arc traffic + transport](#) was provided with much of this information by Council (from previous community feedback). However with the exhibition came some new representations and reminders of community support for existing proposed projects, and [arc traffic + transport](#) has therefore undertaken a broad review of the rankings analysis to make sure all projects with evidence of community support have been fairly ranked. This has resulted in some changes to the project rankings.

As discussed in [Section 3.5](#), not all CCB's responded to the exhibition, or indicated prior support for a particular project of their interest. Going forward, subject to their individual priorities, direct community input should be considered by all CCBs and other key stakeholders. While Council takes numerous factors into consideration when determining its allocation of funding, without this specific advocacy Council can at times be unaware that there is high interest in a certain project, and as such it may not be considered for funding.

## 4.3 Active Transport Scoring Criteria – Heavy Vehicle Volumes

As discussed in [Section 2.7.2](#), a number of respondents noted that the evaluation of path projects did not specifically consider the percentage of heavy vehicles, but rather only the general type of road (Criteria 10 of the ATSC). This is an entirely valid observation, as many lower order roads – which would otherwise be considered 'safe' for pedestrians and bike riders – have seen heavy vehicle volumes increase over time. It is of course also the case that many of the roads which are now seen as providing active transport potential already have a high percentage of heavy vehicles.

As such, an additional 4 points will now be provided for roads with a high percentage of heavy vehicle trips under Criteria #9 of the ATSC. A high heavy vehicle volume would generally be considered as being more than 15% of total volumes, but this will also take into account the type of heavy vehicles, and – particularly in regard to local roads – whether the heavy vehicle volume is disproportionate to total volumes, even in total volumes are relative minor.

This new criteria has been applied to numerous paths projects in the updated ranking spreadsheets.

Respondents also identified the potential absence of heavy vehicle considerations in the application of P x V for crossing and SUP bridge projects. When reviewing surveys of possible project sites, Council does already consider the composition of the total traffic volumes, i.e. heavy vehicle volumes, as well as the composition of the total pedestrian volume, i.e. (for example) students, the elderly or mobility impaired etc.

These factors will continue to be specific considered in all future evaluations referencing P x V.

#### 4.4 Ranking Spreadsheets

Amendments have been made to the rankings analysis to reflect all known feedback to the exhibition of the Draft Strategy, including addressing community advocacy as detailed in **Section 4.2**. It is again also critical to state that the project rankings (like the PAMP Maps) are considered live documents, which Council staff will continue to keep as up to date as possible at all times, reflecting new projects as they emerge; removing completed projects; and/or amending rankings in accordance with the ATSC as the characteristics of project locations change over time.

This would include (for example) changing traffic, pedestrian or bike rider volumes; ongoing review of crash data; community advocacy; the completion of adjoining works (which might then lead to the elevation in priority of an adjoining project); and the creation of new missing links, potentially arising from new developments where Council is able to control project timing.

Specific NSW State or Federal Government grants might also become available to address a political need or priority that might also favour a specific project or type of project; there is therefore the potential for a lower ranked (but almost always still High Priority) project to move forward because of the funding being tied to a certain type of project.

Notwithstanding, while the new ATSC and P x V have been broadly supported and will continue to remain the primary reference for ranking of active transport projects, changes to the ranking spreadsheets will continue to be managed by Council staff as an operational function, and kept as up to date as possible, responding to the wide variety of potential input changes over time.

Council will also consider the project rankings as an important input into their annual budget cycle process, notwithstanding an acknowledgement that Council necessarily takes numerous factors into consideration before ultimately determining its budget and the projects it is able to/or not able to fund each year.

## 4.5 Whole of Government Changes

Many of the submissions from key stakeholders, and indeed from community respondents, raised issues that either fall out of Council's jurisdiction or will require a "**whole of government**" response, i.e. the collective work of Council, the NSW Government and/or the Federal Government, to progress further.

These issues include:

- Changes to speed limits on local roads to enable a greater sharing of local roads, making it safer to walk and cycle in local communities, or indeed the greater prioritisation of pedestrian and bike riders over vehicle traffic (see also the discussion of Shared Zones and Quiet Streets in Sections 9 of the Strategy).
- Achieving higher dwelling densities in close proximity to existing major centres and transport hubs to maximise active trips for everyday services in accordance with the principles of the 15 Minute Neighbourhood (see Section 5 of the Strategy).
- Legalising the use of e-scooters and other e-mobility devices, as well as defining where they can be used (i.e. on roads, shared user paths and cycleways only, or permissible on footpaths for minors, under 16, for example) before developing a strategy for implementing new charging locations and other supporting infrastructure (see Section 9 of the Strategy).
- Providing improved priority to pedestrians and bike riders at more signalised crossings, even if it means an additional minor delay to motorists.
- A commitment to a significantly increase in funding for active transport infrastructure by all levels of Government, including funding from the NSW Government and a new annual allocation of funding the Federal Government, will be required if we are to put a significant dent in the delivery of active transport projects across Shoalhaven, and take step us closer towards meeting Council's active transport objectives and indeed the NSW Government's own target of doubling active transport utilisation over the next 20 years.

In addition to the requirement for a significant increase in funding, perhaps the equal most critical barrier that currently needs to be addressed with the NSW State Government is a relaxing of GNA criteria to permit local Council's to apply the same level of discretion as applied by TfNSW on their own major projects. This will allow Council to provide practical local solutions that meet the prevalent road reserve constraints; fit available budgets; and allow projects to be integrated with adjoining networks to complete missing links.

Again, the aim is to provide as comprehensive an off-road path network as possible, and as many safer crossings as possible, to continue enhancing active transport networks within the constraints of local communities, not penalising local communities by applying stringent theoretical criteria that can't be met in most existing built local environments.

As discussed in response to the TfNSW submission (**Section 3.2**), departures from current standards are evident in almost all TfNSW projects (including the recent Nowra Bridge Upgrade, and numerous other major projects across NSW such as WestConnex), yet Councils are not permitted the same flexibility when they apply for grant funding under the GNA program, which is currently the only regular annual program funding for active transport infrastructure.

Ongoing discussions are occurring with TfNSW representatives in regards to these points of difference, with the aim to maximise the flow of grant funding towards continuous improvements to safety and active transport in the Shoalhaven.

Council and arc traffic + transport were also very appreciative of the detailed submissions from ISLHD and Bicycles NSW, and as much of that feedback as possible has also been incorporated and/or addressed throughout the final Strategy. Notwithstanding, it is again important to acknowledge that some of the issues raised could not be fully addressed given current timing and funding constraints, and the significant challenges faced in Shoalhaven due to the geographical spread of its 50 towns and villages).

In particular, the size and geographical spread of Shoalhaven, and the very significant backlog of active transport projects being requested by the community, has meant that replicating some of the more simplified active transport strategies prepared by much smaller local Council's simply hasn't been possible. However, we are confident that the Strategy still provides a robust and contemporary document that is consistent with NSW Government active transport policies and strategy, and moreover provides a framework to ensure projects are delivered fairly across Shoalhaven, and that active transport infrastructure remains on of Council's highest priorities.

Council will continue to work with the NSW State Government and/or the Federal Government, to address the issues and barriers identified in the strategy, and progress as many of the identified active transport improvements as possible for our local communities.

## 4.6 Additional Strategy Amendments

### 4.6.1 Strategy Structure

One of the points made in the submissions from ISLHD and Bicycles NSW was that the new Strategy was too long, and that the Strategy's Priorities and Actions were buried within the large report and not succinct and/or easy to find. As such, the key Priorities & Actions have now been extracted from the primary Strategy Report and detailed in a separate **Appendix A**.

The way individual elements of the Strategy were provided to the community via the Get Involved webpage (which received great feedback from the community) will also be replicated via an updated Active Transport Strategy webpage; this will be constructed as soon as possible once the dust settles on the new Strategy, anticipated by the end of December 2024. This includes the addition of the new Appendices, being the Active Transport Strategy Priorities & Actions Report (**Appendix A**); and this Exhibition Outcomes Report (**Appendix I**).

#### 4.6.2 Falls Road, Falls Creek – Bike Track Proposal

As discussed previously, a number of exhibition responses related to the proposed bike track along Falls Road, Falls Creek. This matter was raised as Item 4 in the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 15 August 2024 (MIN24.451), which resolved *That Council:*

4. *Report back on a temporary bicycle access along the gated Falls Public Rd alignment due to the safety issues associated with the Jervis Bay Road intersection works and that this temporary legal access be subject to review in any future investigations for permanent access and any environmental impacts.*

Pursuant to Item 4 of the Resolution, a separate report to the new Council on the Falls Road bike track proposal was prepared.

As outlined in Section 2.3.7 of the ATS, at the Ordinary meeting of Council 11 March 2025 a report on the Falls Road bike track proposal was considered by Council (file reference 7010E, related report D25/30564, Report Item #CL25.74) it was subsequently resolved unanimously (MIN25.107) that:

*“Council receive for information, the report on the Falls Road Bike Track Proposal and in future considerations of the bike track proposal, Council liaise with the Shoalhaven Bicycle User Group and explore options for direct consultation with landowners and stakeholders”.*

Consequently, the project will not be mapped in the ATS at this stage, and will remain on the list of “Paths for Investigation” until an allocation of funds is committed in the first instance for design investigations.”

#### 4.7 Finalisation of the Strategy

Following any final changes to the Strategy that might be required subject to the outcome of the Council report on the Falls Road, Falls Creek Bike Track; and Pursuant to Item 1 of the 15 August 2024 Council Resolution, the Strategy will then be considered “adopted” and made available through the updated Active Transport Strategy webpage.

Going forward, the mapping and ranking spreadsheets will continue to be considered as live operational documents, and kept as up to date as possible by Council staff, to respond to the numerous changes that constantly occur over time such as adding new projects; removing completed projects; addressing mapping errors; and properly applying the ATSC.

Council and arc traffic + transport wish to once again thank all of those who viewed and provided comments on the Draft Strategy. As stated in the Strategy,

***It is only through our work together that we will be able to meet the needs of the community, and ensure that active transport plays a greater role in our daily transport needs.***