



Shoalhaven Active Transport Strategy Appendices
including Pedestrian Accessibility & Mobility Plan Update and Bike Plan Update
for
Shoalhaven City Council

Appendix H: Notes to Scoring Criteria and Project Rankings

Notes to Scoring Criteria and Project Ranking Spreadsheets

As project scoring criteria has evolved over time, so too have many of the technical and explanatory notes to past PAMPs and Bike Plans evolved or been refined over time.

As these notes provide useful background information that might assist the community to understand how and why certain projects have been ranked, or why some projects may not have been considered at all, the notes have been consolidated into one convenient location here in **Appendix H**.

The notes have been reviewed as part of the Strategy update, and a brief summary at the end of **Appendix H** also provides an insight into the project scoring outcomes; costs and statistics; and what it all means, very broadly, to the future of active transport in Shoalhaven.

It should be noted that a detailed review of costs for individual projects has not been undertaken at this time, but rather the most current “*unit rates*” (provided by Council’s Asset Management team) have been applied to project lengths/widths to provide a high-level, strategic indication of the minimum likely cost of delivering a projects, and to provide some context around just how big and costly the backlog of active transport projects is in Shoalhaven. A review of these costs (and number of projects) of course demonstrates that a significant increase in funding for active transport infrastructure will be required across all levels of Government if we are ever going to achieve a significant change to active transport utilisation.

A more detailed cost estimate on a project by project basis will be required, going forward, and this is only likely to see the cost estimates increase further. The costs provided as part of this review should therefore not be used for budget planning, grant application or project delivery purposes, but as a general guide to the minimum likely costs involved across the broader Active Transport Program.

PAMP 2002 Scoring Criteria

With the PAMP needing to be managed as a living document going forward (as completed projects were continually added, and new project nominations needed to be considered and ranked), the PAMP 2002 Scoring Criteria needed to be expanded so as to allow better differentiation of projects

Amendments to the PAMP 2002 Scoring Criteria were flagged to be addressed as part of the subsequent PAMP 2005 update, with the primary issues for redress including:

- The simplified scoring process using the PAMP 2002 Scoring Criteria was too subjective.
- Limited scoring criteria resulted in numerous projects returning the same score.
- Concerns being raised regarding a perceived unfair distribution of projects across Shoalhaven.

The outcomes of the resulting review of the PAMP 2002 Scoring Criteria as part of the PAMP 2005 update process are discussed in the PAMP 2005 Scoring Criteria notes below.

PAMP 2005 Scoring Criteria

As part of PAMP 2005, amendments were made to the original PAMP 2002 Scoring Criteria to:

- Separate projects that were on the same score.
- Provide a fairer distribution of projects across Shoalhaven.
- Provide greater justification (and transparency) for projects returning relatively higher ranking.

At the time of testing and adoption, the PAMP 2005 Scoring Criteria were generating more acceptable outcomes across Shoalhaven based on the number of projects included in PAMP 2002 at the time. Going forward however, as the number of projects being requested by the community continued to increase, and more concerns were raised by some communities suggesting that their towns and villages weren't being fairly prioritised (compared to larger population centres), further amendments were flagged to try and improve on these outcomes.

Post PAMP 2005, the main focus areas were to expand on the PAMP 2005 Scoring Criteria to ensure that:

- Projects were less likely to return the same score (with some future proofing, and the anticipation that significantly more projects were likely to be added over time).
- Addressed concerns in regard to the distribution of projects by moving away from scoring criteria reflecting population, to scoring criteria that more broadly considered accessibility, connectedness, and walkability.
- Regardless of the location, that the scoring criteria continued to reflect the broader project needs fairly across all towns and villages in Shoalhaven.

Notwithstanding the inclusion of these considerations, rather than undertake a more extensive review of PAMP 2005, Council staff were directed in Councillor briefings to broaden the PAMP 2005 Scoring Criteria considerably, and ensure the criteria were fit for purpose going forward to cater for the considerable growth anticipated across Shoalhaven, as well as addressing current and emerging issues, but always with an underlying consideration of connectedness, equity, inclusion and accessibility.

Several attempts were made to improve on these outcomes as part of the evolution of PAMP 2005 over time, and by 2010 the dust had settled on a more extensive criteria set specifically related to pedestrian projects; those scoring criteria remained in operation until 2023 until the review provided in the Strategy.

PAMP 2010 – 2023 Scoring Criteria

As discussed in regard to the PAMP 2005 Scoring Criteria, the PAMP 2010 – 2023 Scoring Criteria have been applied since 2010 until now, but have now been reviewed as part of the Strategy.

The PAMP 2010 – 2023 Scoring Criteria are considerably more detailed than the original PAMP 2002 and PAMP 2005 Scoring Criteria and, deliberately so, with a focus on connectedness, equity, inclusion and accessibility, so as to not be overly influenced simply by traffic volumes and location. Up until the preparation of the Strategy, the PAMP 2010 – 2023 Scoring Criteria have been considered fit for purpose, as they still cater for the considerable growth anticipated across Shoalhaven, while ensuring to as great an extent possible an equitable spread of projects across Shoalhaven even given our funding limitations which means that the expansion of our active transport networks do not suit the needs of all communities.

When reviewing both the PAMP 2010 – 2023 Scoring Criteria and the now proposed Active Transport Scoring Criteria, it must be remembered that project scores - while an important guide for Council - are not the only factor that Council considers when determining which projects to support in the budget. This includes of course the ability for communities to seek the support of Council for individual projects that are of importance to them as part of the annual budget process.

It is also important to keep in mind that some projects (regardless of their score) may not be able to be supported in a given year due to the likely project costs or funding limitations that year. Grant programs (a significant factor in determining the extent of a delivery program each year) have their own program criteria, which can be highly variable and also subject to change each year.

As part of the preparation for the development of the Strategy (and update of the PAMP and Bike Plan) a pre-consultation process was undertaken in 2023 whereby Council invited feedback from all 24 Community Consultative Bodies; all 8 Chambers of Commerce; as well as local active transport groups (for example the Shoalhaven Bicycle Users Group) and other interested local community members. This included an invitation to provide feedback on the PAMP 2010 - 2023 Scoring Criteria and how that might be improved, going forward into the broader PAMP and Bike Plan updates undertaken as part of the Strategy.

The feedback received has been taken into consideration in preparing the new Active Transport Scoring Criteria; essentially, the community told us that the PAMP 2010 - 2023 Scoring Criteria was far too complex, and that the Bike Plan 2013 Scoring Criteria was far simpler, easier to understand, and more user friendly. Notwithstanding, it was also acknowledged that the Bike Plan 2013 Scoring Criteria would need to be expanded a little to make it more readily applicable to pedestrian projects as well as bike projects, or in short, to make it more suitable as a single set of Active Transport Scoring Criteria.

Bike Plan 2013 Scoring Criteria

Similar to the PAMP, the Bike Plan also needed to be managed as a living document going forward (as completed projects were added, and new project nominations were proposed for consideration and ranking). The Bike Plan 2013 Scoring Criteria also needed to be expanded as the number of projects increased.

Amendments to the Bike Plan 2013 Scoring Criteria were also flagged to be addressed as part of subsequent reviews, whereby – in a similar manner to the earlier PAMP 2002 and PAMP 2005 Scoring Criteria - the main issue with the Bike Plan 2013 Scoring Criteria was that the limited criteria resulted in numerous projects returning the same score. The Bike Plan 2013 Scoring Criteria was subsequently reviewed in 2018 (see below).

Bike Plan 2018 – 2023 Scoring Criteria

The Bike Plan 2018 Scoring Criteria has been applied since 2018 until, but has now also been reviewed as part of the Strategy.

In 2018, a working group was established to review the Bike Plan 2013 Scoring Criteria to address the main issues with the criteria, again being that their application resulted in numerous projects returning the same score. Notwithstanding, only two changes resulted from the 2018 review:

- Firstly, scoring was made more flexible so that values weren't fixed and absolute (0, 1 or 2) but the scores instead now treated as a range (between 0 and 1, or 2).
- More significantly, the PAMP 2010 – 2023 Scoring Criteria were slowly integrated into the Bike Plan 2018 – 2023 Scoring Criteria as a way to differentiate projects that initially had the same Bike Plan score.

At the time, completed projects were removed from the project list, but then new projects added: Bike Plan 2013 identified 28 priority projects, but the Bike Plan 2018 review identified 40 priority projects even further to the removal of completed projects.

The Bike Plan 2018 – 2023 Scoring Criteria still reflects the Bike Plan's unique scoring requirements, while recognising and encompassing the principles of the PAMP 2010 – 2023 Scoring Criteria to aid in the prioritisation of projects. Moreover, between 2018 and 2023, the 2018 – 2023 Bike Plan Scoring Criteria have been considered fit for purpose as they still cater for the considerable growth anticipated across Shoalhaven and – as with the PAMP 2010 – 2023 Scoring Criteria – have resulted in an equitable spread of projects across Shoalhaven.

As discussed in regard to the PAMP 2010 – 2023 Scoring Criteria, funding limitations remains the key constraint to Council being able to significantly expand the active transport network to suit everyone's immediate needs, but it is considered that the Bike Plan 2018 – 2023 Scoring Criteria are still providing acceptable outcomes based on the number and spread of active transport projects currently included in the PAMP and Bike Plan.

When reviewing both the Bike Plan 2018 – 2023 Scoring Criteria and the new Active Transport Scoring Criteria, it must again be remembered that project scores - while an important guide for Council - are not the only factor that Council considers when determining which projects to support in the budget. This includes of course the ability for communities to seek the support of Council for individual projects that are of importance to them as part of the annual budget process.

It is also important to keep in mind that some projects (regardless of their score) may not be able to be supported in a given year due to the likely project costs or funding limitations that year. Grant programs (a significant factor in determining the extent of a delivery program each year) have their own program criteria, which can be highly variable and also subject to change each year.

With reference to the notes above describing how Scoring Criteria have evolved over time, it is important to acknowledge that at every opportunity Council has engaged with the community to ensure that their views are thoroughly considered in the ongoing evolution of how we prioritise our active transport projects.

This consultation will now focus on the new Active Transport Scoring Criteria, and the Strategy and updated PAMP and Bike Plan more broadly, initially through the exhibition of the Draft Strategy, but then continue over time in the same consultative manner that we have always adopted.

Paths Review Ranking Notes

The following notes are provided in regard to the ranking of path projects under the new Active Transport Scoring Criteria; the application of the criteria to path projects; and certain caveats/disclaimers relevant to the assessment of all or specific projects.

- The Path Project Ranking Spreadsheet does NOT include every location where a future proposed path has been identified in the PAMP Maps. The PAMP Maps are intended to show the full proposed path network; however the Path Projects Ranking Spreadsheet is intended to allow ranking of projects competing for Council funding, or Council initiated projects, for grant funding consideration. As such, projects (for example) that TfNSW might deliver, or that may be delivered as part of new developments (or by other third party's) don't need to be ranked for comparison.
- The Path Projects Ranking Spreadsheet does NOT include some projects that are still subject to design investigations (see "Paths for Investigation" notes below) before Council can be confident of a feasible alignment and estimation of cost. Some projects also require the dust to settle first on development approvals before knowing where Council may/or may not have to tie in to a particular path network in future.
- The Path Projects Ranking Spreadsheet generally does NOT include paths where they might be proposed within a public reserve or community park; in such instances, it is more often the case that a Master Plan or the like would be prepared on a needs basis, which may or may not include new paths. Once constructed though, new paths within public reserves and community parks will be absorbed into the PAMP Maps.

It is noted that as part of the Paths Review, every endeavour has been made to try and capture all Master Plan programs and the like to try and ensure the PAMP Maps are as up to date as possible.

- Similarly, the Path Projects Ranking Spreadsheet may NOT include proposed paths through Council's parks and reserves generally, which would otherwise attract other funding for upgrades. This means that these projects are not competing for "**transport**" funding, particularly where path improvements within parks and reserves are solely to add value to those parks and reserves for recreational purposes, and cannot be demonstrated to have a specific "**transport**" purpose).
- The Path Projects Ranking Spreadsheet may NOT include every location where an existing footpath is proposed to be upgraded to a shared user path; as a general rule, unless upgrades as part of a broader project, the intention in most cases is to undertake widening only when the existing footpath is due for replacement.
- The Path Projects Ranking Spreadsheet may NOT include proposed beach access improvements, primarily where those improvements are largely within foreshore or coastal reserves. The Path Projects Ranking Spreadsheet generally includes paths within road reserves (to connect to foreshore access points to improve accessibility and connectivity), but may not extend to include the beach/foreshore access points themselves (within coastal reserves).

There may be some exceptions, considered on a case by case basis, considering coastal erosion, environmental factors, and whether or not grant funding for path improvements is able to be extended to individual coastal access points. These considerations are typically captured in Coastal Management Plans (i.e. outside of the Paths Review); however, and in a similar manner to the provision of paths in public reserves and community parks, once constructed, these access points will be absorbed into the PAMP Maps.

- Where paths are considered to be relatively low priority but are being prioritised by local community groups, and are proposed to be largely constructed by the community (even if part funded by Council), those projects also may not be included in the Path Projects Ranking Spreadsheet, which is intended to rank and compare priority projects across Shoalhaven that specifically require Council/and or grant funding consideration.
- As a general rule of thumb, it is not sustainable, practical, or feasible - or indeed in some cases physically possible - to expect that paths will be provided in every street in Shoalhaven. When considering the significant increase in the number of community requested/proposed paths and the enormity of the current [and ever growing] number of path projects, in many cases it is not justified nor could be anticipated that Council will ever be able to construct paths in low volume, low speed residential streets, particularly those with wide flat unobstructed verges that already exist as an off-road alternative for pedestrians if sharing of the road space is not possible at times.

Simply, some locations might never be ranked high enough by any reasonable or logical means to ever feature among the highest project priorities, particularly when considering an equitable allocation of projects across all of Shoalhaven.

- As a general rule of thumb, many “**on-road**” sections of path previously proposed have been removed from current path projects list.

When PAMP 2002 was prepared, [off-road] paths requested in roads by the community that weren’t considered feasible or practical were originally allocated an “on-road” classification, essentially meaning that pedestrians and cyclists were able to share the road with vehicular traffic (in circumstances consistent with NSW and Australian Road Rules); or use the available verges that existed in those roads. This was done irrespective of the road, and as such included some roads that were low traffic, low speed residential streets; or other roads where it wasn’t feasible or physically possible to construct any formal off-road facilities.

As road authorities around the world started to construct more and more physical on-road cycling space, the original designation of “on-road” within the PAMP was regularly being broadly misinterpreted, and the obvious step to take as part of Paths Review was to remove many of those original designations unless it was actually feasible and logical to consider a future “on-road” facility. The remaining “on-road” designations in the path projects list are primarily those where shared zones are envisaged as a solution, or where sealed shoulders for safe cycling are envisaged as part of the broader active transport network.

- Notwithstanding the above comment about “on-road” designations, generally the provision of wider sealed shoulders capable of accommodating cyclists is considered separately as part of the roads program; this is appropriate considering that the provision of sealed shoulders is a standard requirement, pursuant to Austroads, for a broad range of reasons, including the provision of an important, separated space between cyclists and vehicles. That said, often funding limitations can unfortunately dictate a reduced footprint for many road upgrade projects, and for this reason the updated Bike Plan in particular has sought to include a selection of specific “on-road” designations primarily for those roads providing important strategic connections to the broader active transport network, or those roads of strategic significance to the cycling community, as originally adopted as part of the Bike Plan 2013.

Importantly, Council has embarked on a process of providing widening of road shoulders wherever possible as part of ongoing road works, as well as installing more warning signs of cyclists on the road, and specifically marking shoulders with bike stencils.

- One of the most significant missing [path] links in Shoalhaven is a proposed Princes Highway “**active transport corridor**” running close to and parallel with Princes Highway. This corridor is strategically important to not only provide important connections to otherwise isolated coastal and rural communities, but also to incrementally deliver on a key component of the broader NSW Cycling Strategy which envisages - when ultimately completed - a single, continuous coastal active transport corridor between Sydney and Melbourne.

The staged provision of the Princes Highway active transport corridor envisages that an allocation of space for the corridor will be provided as part of every significant Princes Highway upgrade. The initial “path” in that space may be an off-road gravel/dirt track, but in time would be incrementally upgraded to a formal path, and most likely a shared user path so as to be accessible for both cyclists and pedestrians.

At present, the only space available for cyclists along Princes Highway is a 2.5m – 3.0m sealed shoulder directly adjacent to high speed traffic. The vision now absorbed into updated Bike Plan (and PAMP) envisages a separate off-road space for cyclists and pedestrians, completely separate (“**other side of the barrier**”) from traffic. This space can be provided incrementally on a project by project basis until ultimately completed.

Once completed, the Princes Highway active transport corridor will provide a vital “**strategic spine**” for cyclists and pedestrians, from which Council will be able to prioritise the provision of strategic local connections to isolated coastal and rural communities. As well as being a vital active transport link for residents, the Princes Highway active transport corridor is anticipated to have very significant benefits to the local tourist industry, providing cyclists and pedestrians (walkers/hikers) alike the opportunity of a seamless safe connection to other regionally significant cycling and walking tracks.

To protect the confidentiality and strategic options associated with the alignment and scope of future Princes Highway upgrades, the future active transport corridor is currently represented in the PAMP Maps by way of a proposed future link alongside the existing Princes Highway corridor (with the exception of the Milton Ulladulla and Nowra Bypass corridors, which are specifically identified in the Shoalhaven LEP).

On a project by project basis though, opportunities may also be explored to divert the active transport corridor via the local road network (where space permits). This could then cater for local needs (while still satisfying the strategic spine objectives) and provide rest areas, amenities, and refreshment options along the active transport corridor. This approach might also help to minimise the wider footprint of the Princes Highway upgrades in some cases, while again still achieving the objectives of the strategic spine.

- As a general rule of thumb, the path projects list may not reflect every proposed future path, or the exact alignment of every proposed future paths, that may be captured in respective development consent conditions (following merit based development assessments); nor may the PAMP Maps reflect every path warranted (pursuant to Shoalhaven DCP objectives) in currently undeveloped zones. This is to ensure that path alignments in the PAMP Maps aren’t misconstrued as being mandatory alignments that could hinder development flexibility.

Developments must still provide those path networks required to satisfy the Shoalhaven DCP requirements or pursuant to merit based assessments as determined on a case by case basis, and provide reasonable connectivity with existing path networks as required pursuant to DCP Chapter G11 and DCP Chapter G21.

- Further to the comment above, the original PAMPs and Bike Plans were developed to address improved transport connections within existing developed areas; this was similarly to ensure that the path alignments shown in the PAMP Maps through greenfield areas (including Urban Release Areas) weren't misconstrued as being mandatory alignments, that could hinder development flexibility.

This approach however was itself misinterpreted, with some suggesting that because a designated path was not shown in the PAMP Maps, paths (or path networks) weren't required in future development areas, which of course was absolutely not the case.

Accordingly, a number of changes have been made to address this issue and improve the planning of path networks going forward; the requirements of DCP Chapter G11 and DCP Chapter G21 have therefore be further clarified to ensure the provision of path networks in all new development areas. To as great an extent as possible, the PAMP Maps therefore reflect future path networks where Master Plans, site-specific DCPs or the like have been developed/are known, or - in the absence of Master Plans, site-specific DCPs or the like - to at least show strategic connections from future development areas to/from the broader active transport network.

Notwithstanding, due to confidentiality or the preliminary nature of some planning processes, the identification of these paths (even at a high level) has not been possible in all future development areas. Again though, this does not mean that future paths won't need to be provided as part of future developments; all developments must still provide path networks that satisfy the DCP Chapter G11 and DCP Chapter G21 requirements or, pursuant to merit based assessments as determined on a case by case basis, provide reasonable connectivity back to existing path networks.

Finally, it is noted that where the PAMP Maps does show a path network, or sometimes at best only a strategic stub (point of connection), the underlying intention is not to hinder development flexibility, but only show where paths are anticipated to be required. The actual location of paths may be altered where required to accommodate development design changes, but the objective of providing an internal network, with external connectivity to the broader network, must still be addressed.

- Further to the comment above, there are still numerous paths projects that may not be included in the Path Projects Ranking Spreadsheet due to an expectation, or identified potential, that these projects could be provided by adjoining or nearby developments, subject to merit based assessments. It is considered logical that these projects be initially omitted from the ranking analysis until further details of these developments are available, and moreover when it is known for certain exactly which (if any) path components may be left for Council to complete (post development). This may create a timing issue, or lag between completion of a development and timing of when Council may be able to complete a newly created missing link; unfortunately, this is often unavoidable, even though every attempt is made to minimise any such time lags.
- Whilst the PAMP Maps have always reflected projects along the State Road network, not all of those projects were originally identified as potential projects (in past ranking analysis) as Council was often not able to seek grant funding for projects along State Roads. However, these funding mechanisms have changed over time, and as such more (but not all) State Road projects have been included in the Paths Review.

- At present, projects along Princes Highway and Moss Vale Road have only been included in the Paths Review where Council may be required to initiate and/or manage the project delivery. That is, where it is expected that TfNSW will deliver active transport upgrades as part of its delivery of State Road upgrades, those projects have not been captured by default in the Paths Review. As a general rule of thumb, projects within slower speed areas (town centres) are mostly included, whereas the more visionary projects in more rural (higher speed) areas have not been included, and would likely be delivered as part of future State Road upgrades.

This does not mean that the State Road projects have lesser importance, but only that they have not been specifically ranked for comparison with other projects that Council needs to consider, which also means that the significant cost of some of these State Road projects doesn't unduly inflate the overall sum/cost of projects that remain outstanding for Council to consider.

- Further to the above comments, as the primary purpose of the Path Projects Ranking Spreadsheet is to guide Council's budgetary decisions, listed Princes Highway projects are typically those that are ONLY in sections of Princes Highway that are/could be transferred to Council following respective Princes Highway upgrade/Bypass proposals, for example along the current Princes Highway alignment through Milton and Ulladulla.

Due to funding limitations (both State and local) and the sheer number of path projects, surveys of demand along some of these sections of Princes Highway are not typically undertaken, and therefore this type of data is not available to aid comparisons/ranking. As such, other generic ranking parameters have been adopted to guide the selection of these projects in some circumstances.

- Seasonal fluctuations in many towns and villages across Shoalhaven can be considerable; given that new survey data for all periods of the year is not always available, seasonal fluctuations have been considered by use of other criteria/parameters reflected in the Active Transport Scoring Criteria so that increased seasonal demand is considered in project selection.
- While the Active Transport Scoring Criteria (and Path Projects Ranking Spreadsheet) is the starting point for guiding project comparison/project selection across Shoalhaven, Council may consider other factors when determining which projects to support when preparing its annual budget.
- In addition, more detailed costings will evolve following an allocation of funding for detailed design on a project by project basis. Given the significant number of proposed paths across Shoalhaven, at this stage the estimated unit costs are primarily to ensure that some level of allowance is being identified to aid in Council's budgeting decisions and ongoing campaigning efforts to raise the importance of NSW and Federal Governments significantly increasing their allocations of funding to aid Council (and indeed all Councils across NSW) in the expansion of our active transport networks, which as discussed is critical to providing a sustainable transport future.
- Similarly, the distances of new paths identified in the Path Projects Ranking Spreadsheet are also to provide a general guide only; notwithstanding, these distances have been estimated for planning purposes and consistency across all projects using Google and other sources to determine a general project length (i.e. the length of new path from A to B). No allowance has been made for – for example - driveways or road crossings, noting that this adds a further conservative factor in the cost estimation for many of the projects.

- The cost estimates included in Path Projects Ranking Spreadsheet assume – for the purpose of establishing an indicative total project cost - that all paths will be formal concrete paths. However, material selection will be considered as part of the design process on a project by project basis once funds are ultimately allocated for design investigation. As such, it should not be immediately implied that the paths identified in the Path Projects Ranking Spreadsheet and PAMP Maps will be concrete constructed, even though this is anticipated to be the case for the majority of paths.

Material selection will be a design consideration for each project based on its merits, and again the design process will also consider a range of other factors that may include (not exhaustive) project need; available funds; impact on services; impact on trees/vegetation; environmental and/or archaeological factors; aboriginal heritage; and community consultation. These design investigations will necessarily be undertaken ahead of each project construction.

- Footpaths may vary in width across Shoalhaven, dependant on factors such as available road reserves and pedestrian demand (and in turn appropriate width for the number of pedestrians in different environments). Footpaths typically have a minimum width of 1.2m, however often wider paths are provided if additional space permits (for example 1.5m). In town centres, Council has previously resolved that footpaths shall be a minimum of 1.8m, and indeed even wider footpaths are often provided in town centres (and other higher activity areas) where additional space (and funds) permit. As an example, full width paved verges are common in commercial centres where higher demands are prevalent, and this also facilitates alfresco dining and other uses.
- In other areas, narrower footpaths may be provided if (for safety reasons) it is considered that providing a narrow footpath is better than not providing a path at all. Standards identify an absolute minimum of 900mm for a footpath, however there are locations where narrower paths have been built to provide a safe off-road option for pedestrians. For the purposes of estimating net project costs, path widths have been carefully considered, however where insufficient information is available 1.5m has been adopted as the default footpath width (again providing a conservative factor in the estimate of net project costs across Shoalhaven).
- In 2021, TfNSW amended their project selection criteria (NSW Active Transport Program - grant funding) to allow footpaths to be nominated for selection for the first time; prior to 2021, only shared user paths and cycleways were permitted to be nominated for grant funding, in addition to pedestrian crossings. Footpaths may be nominated of variable width. Where not grant funded, the width of a path is at Council's discretion, noting Australian Standards and Austroads guidelines, and of course a common sense approach to achieve a greater length of off-road paths for the greatest number of our residents and visitors!.
- Shared user paths also may vary in width across Shoalhaven dependant on available road reserves and demand, and subject to grant criteria where relevant. Austroads guidelines have changed over time, and have typically been adopted by TfNSW as changes have occurred over time. When Council adopted its first Cycleway Strategy in the 1990's and started constructing more shared user paths in accordance with that strategy, Austroads permitted shared user paths to be constructed at 1.8m (accepted minimum); accordingly, this was the adopted general minimum width parameter for Council (and TfNSW) at the time. As such, many of our shared user paths are 1.8m wide, or in some cases 2.0m wide where additional width was available.
- Since that time though, and in response to a steady increase in the uptake of cycling more broadly, Austroads incrementally increased the minimum width of a shared user path firstly to 2.0m, and then 2.5m as a general minimum width. More recently, Austroads has increased this width even further, indicating that widths of 3.0m – 4.0m should be provided where additional width is available.

- Consistency of width across the shared user path network is very important, and moreover there is little point in having isolated sections of 3.0 – 4.0m wide shared user paths if more broadly only 2.0m has been constructed or is achievable given road reserve constraints. Other than through public reserves, most Councils would struggle finding locations where 3.0m – 4.0m shared user paths could be provided continuously along a path network.
- Notwithstanding, TfNSW has more recently recommended that shared user paths be constructed with a minimum width of 4.0m; indeed, the provision of this width is a specific criteria in the latest round of Get Active NSW grant considerations, with TfNSW providing advice that if this width can't be achieved, Council's must only apply for a project as a footpath. This is extremely limiting and has forced most Councils to apply for path projects as footpaths in the latest round of Get Active NSW grant funding, even if a narrower shared user path would be the superior outcome.

In response to the variation in shared user path width parameters over time, Council has adopted a common sense approach whereby most of Council's own funded shared user paths are typically constructed at 2.0m unless additional width (and funding) permits; this is consistent with most of the shared user path network constructed to date. Notwithstanding, where grant criteria dictates that shared user paths have to be wider, then every attempt is made to comply with the criteria to be assured of the grant funds.

The debate around path width is in a constant state of flux; however, Councils generally do whatever possible to maximise the inflow of grant funds to continue to expand their path networks, working within whatever is the available grant program/criteria at the time, to achieve the greatest length of off-road path network – or greatest bang for buck!.

- As a general rule of thumb, longer projects with multiple segments (including multiple road or street components) can have those individual segments ranked separately if required; this reflects the potential for some segments to be delivered as a higher priority, as well as the fact that it may not be necessary, and/or potentially more cost effective, to deliver a project in stages instead as a more expensive single continuous project up front. Based on the criteria, some segments will return higher ranked scores than other segments of the same project, and it is important that the lower ranked segments don't detract from the overall importance of the project, particularly where a practical and affordable staged approach can be identified.
- Note that in many locations there will be construction challenges and challenging road reserve constraints, and in many cases it may not be possible to provide a full width footpath or shared user path. Notwithstanding, the general view taken is that is far safer to have a narrower, off-road path than standards suggest than to have no path at all, which would result in pedestrians and cyclists having no alternative other than to traverse the road in conflict with traffic. This is of course subject to traffic volumes - in low volume, low speed environments, it may be acceptable for pedestrians and cyclists to share the road space, or a project in that environment may be assigned a lower priority compared to other projects.
- The PAMP Maps do not show every location where pram ramps are required to facilitate safe efficient crossings, or assist those that are less mobile. Where proposed future footpaths and shared user path are identified in the PAMP Maps, or where any new paths are proposed, project planners and engineers will ensure that an appropriate investigation be undertaken to identify where pram ramps are required to provide appropriate connectivity, and safe/efficient connections to both existing and future proposed networks. It is always easier and more cost effective to provide pram ramps up front than to have to come back at a later date and retrofit paths to provide pram ramps.

- Accordingly, all known and anticipated desire lines should be determined and sufficient pram ramps proposed as part of standard project planning protocols. As part of this process, Council's Disability Inclusion Access Plan should be at the forefront of thinking about how to appropriately connect all new path works back to existing and proposed networks, considering all current and anticipated users of the network (both the mobile and those that are less mobile).
- Note that the Path Projects Ranking Spreadsheet, along with the PAMP Maps, need to be updated on an annual basis, taking into account new works undertaken; projects to be removed from the separate ranking analysis spreadsheets as works are completed; new works to be reflected via mapping amendments; project details refined as detailed investigations are undertaken; and project costs are refined as detailed investigations are undertaken.
- Note that where a path project is primarily a shared user path project, but might include some minor footpath connections to tie back into existing path networks that adjoin the project, the entire length of the project has been calculated on the basis of the shared user path unit rate for simplicity in providing initial cost estimates.
- Note that where a path project requires a pedestrian or Shared User Path Bridge (**SUP Bridge**) - and the predominant cost of a project is associated with that bridge infrastructure - the project may not be listed above in Path Projects Ranking Spreadsheet, but is more likely to be listed in the separate SUP Bridge Ranking Spreadsheet. Similarly, where existing path links are required on either side of an existing bridge, and that bridge is due for an upgrade or requires considerable maintenance, it is assumed that any short path links required to improve access to the bridge will be completed as part of the bridge improvement/bridge upgrade works, and as such these path links won't be separately ranked in the Path Projects Ranking Spreadsheet).

Crossings Review Ranking Notes

The following notes are provided in regard to the ranking of crossing projects.

- The Crossings Ranking Spreadsheet is intended to list every location city wide where a proposed future pedestrian crossing needs to be considered for specific funding, or at the very least, continue to be monitored for potential safety improvements, and compared against other prioritised projects across Shoalhaven. There may be other locations across Shoalhaven that have greater P x V values than those identified in the Crossings Ranking Spreadsheet; however, locations that have already been upgraded to pedestrian crossing treatments have been removed from the Crossings Ranking Spreadsheet, as the intention is list outstanding crossing projects only.
- The Crossings Ranking Spreadsheet includes locations where future pedestrian crossing improvement(s) needs to be considered. There may be multiple desire lines to be addressed at each of these locations (for example, multiple legs of an intersection, or a broader length of road where multiple treatments may need to be considered for broader safety improvements. To that end, the Crossings Ranking Spreadsheet is not a list of outstanding crossing locations, more so a list of "sites" where attention needs to be focused on a safety solution for pedestrians/cyclists.
- The Crossings Ranking Spreadsheet does NOT include every pedestrian crossing proposal/or site of concern along Princes Highway, as the primary purpose of the list is to guide Council's budgetary decisions. Those listed on Princes Highway are ONLY on those sections of Princes Highway that are/or could be transferred to Council following respective Princes Highway upgrade/Bypass proposals (for example along the current Princes Highway alignment through Milton and Ulladulla). There may be some other locations included on the State Road network (for example along Moss Vale Road within the Kangaroo Valley township, due to community concerns and/or related proposals being investigated by Council).
- While pedestrian safety when crossing at intersections is vitally important, the Crossings Ranking Spreadsheet may NOT include every leg of an intersection where an improvement may be required. For example, where pedestrian refuge or raised crossings may provide enhanced safety for pedestrian and cyclists when crossing a particular leg of an intersection, these may not necessarily be flagged separately. Only those projects with particularly high demand/conflicts are likely to be included, and the intention is that the Crossings Ranking Spreadsheet be reviewed annually and updated where required to highlight any new locations that may have emerged as a concern. Where any intersection is being considered for an upgrade, pedestrian and cyclist safety must also be considered as part of any potential suite of intersection improvements.
- Where the P x V of a site is much higher than the historic upgrade warrant, it won't be resurveyed (i.e. traffic and pedestrian surveys) unless there is concern that the priority may be affected by recent surveys at other sites, in which case inflationary growth estimates could be applied to the values in lieu of resurveying (in the first instance).
- Due to funding limitations, not every site has had a survey, but the intention is that every site will eventually be surveyed. Surveys that have (or will soon) been undertaken have been prioritised based on local knowledge of those locations with higher volumes; higher risks; a crash history; or specific community concerns relative to other sites.

- A site may not be scored if it is proposed to be delivered as a part of a broader project - the intention of the scoring is to guide prioritising of Council and grant funding. If a project is already a proposed deliverable as part of another project or as a development condition, it does not need to be ranked, but to ensure that the Crossings Ranking Spreadsheet provides a comprehensive list of outstanding crossing improvements, the protocol is for all projects (whether council funded or otherwise) to remain in the list until such time as it is completed/delivered), but generally surveys won't be undertaken at sites that are proposed to be provided as part of other projects.
- Seasonal fluctuation in the Shoalhaven can be considerable. While surveys have been undertaken across a range of dates depending on the site, for those that to seasonal fluctuation, surveys will typically be undertaken on a Saturday in January to capture peak demands. School or town centre surveys are typically undertaken on a Thursday or Friday in school term (due to Fridays typically being the busiest traffic day, however Thursdays can be just as busy in town centres regarding pedestrian demands). Any variations from this approach (to suit inclement weather for example) could be noted as initial data and flagged for resurvey in a following program, as the intention is to ensure consistency over time in terms of the timing of surveys, to allow fair comparison between sites.
- Some discretion may be applied when determining P x V outcomes; this is because often pedestrian crossing patterns change when a pedestrian crossing treatment is provided (as pedestrians have an opportunity to cross at a new facility, whereas prior to that that may have crossed at a different location). This is why surveys often capture a broader location range to determine current and estimated P x V values for comparison on a site by site basis, and depending on the proposed treatment options.
- Traffic volumes and pedestrian crossing demands may increase over time (more at some sites, compared to others). Accordingly, new surveys should be undertaken every few years to keep track on any changes to the above P x V values, particularly where changes in patterns are likely; for example, the opening of Bishop Drive in June 2023 has diverted traffic away from the Golf Avenue/Shepherd-Mitchell Parade corridor, potentially reducing P x V values along that corridor. It is not recommended to apply growth factors to the historic P x V values which may falsely adjust the data and priorities.
- Note that there are many circumstances that may lead to changing P x V values over time. More current surveys may return lower P x V values than previous assessments, but these circumstances are assessed for merit on a site by site basis. However, for the sake of consistency and equity across Shoalhaven, the latest P x V survey values will generally be reflected in the Crossings Ranking Spreadsheet unless there is concrete evidence to maintain former P x V values (i.e. if there is suspected error in more recent surveys, or for some other legitimate reason).
- Whilst P x V is typically the primary indicator of demand/risk and therefore the prioritisation of pedestrian crossing projects across Shoalhaven, Council may consider other factors when determining which projects to support when preparing its annual budget.
- It is not intended that the cost estimates in the Crossings Ranking Spreadsheet are highly accurate; that detail will evolve following an allocation of funding for detailed design on a project by project basis. Given the significant number of proposed pedestrian crossings across Shoalhaven, at this stage the purpose of the costs estimates is to ensure that some level of allowance has been provided for the additional costs of pedestrian crossing improvements at these locations, in addition to the estimated cost of expanding the path network.

- It is noted that designations currently reflected in the PAMP maps to represent existing and proposed crossings are an initial designation and may have been inconsistently applied (for example “C” (Crossing Upgrade to be determined) “R” (Raised Crossing) “W” (Wombat) “Z” (Zebra) “R” (also for Pedestrian Refuge) as well as other crossing types. These have initially been designation to capture the location for ongoing monitoring and review; actual crossing types may still be subject to review once funding is allocated and project scope is determined following design review and community consultation, etc. Accordingly, it should be considered that the initial designation of a crossing type does not necessarily imply a final crossing type.
- Notwithstanding, the updating of the PAMP maps to improve the consistency and application of pedestrian crossing types is a work in progress, and those referencing the PAMP maps can expect to see constant improvements to the mapping over time.
- Where future proposed pedestrian crossings are shown in the PAMP Maps, not all of those locations will show path connections back to the existing path network; those connections are of course vital. However, until a detailed design has been undertaken and approved, Council cannot always guarantee that the locations reflected in the PAMP Maps are the exact locations of future crossing improvements, and accordingly the path connections may also need to be amended to suit a future design. As a general rule, it should be assumed that where a future pedestrian crossing improvement is shown, that the associated path connections must also be provided to link the future pedestrian crossing back to the path network on both sides of the proposed treatment.

Shared User Path Bridge Ranking Notes

The following notes are provided in regard to the ranking of Shared User Path Bridge (**SUP Bridge**) projects under the new Active Transport Scoring Criteria; the application of the criteria to SUP Bridge projects; and certain caveats/disclaimers relevant to the assessment of all or specific projects.

- The SUP Bridge Ranking Spreadsheet is intended to list every location city wide where a proposed future SUP Bridge project needs to be considered for specific funding, or at the very least, continue to be monitored for potential accessibility/active transport improvements, and compared against other priority projects across Shoalhaven. The SUP Bridge Ranking Spreadsheet is primarily focused on connectivity of communities via the existing road network; it is not intended to include SUP Bridge projects that may be requested or considered within public reserves or along foreshore areas primarily for recreational purposes unless identified for a specific transport purpose.
- Notwithstanding, the SUP Bridge Ranking Spreadsheet may not be exhaustive, and was last reviewed as part of the preliminary development of the Strategy (and SUP Bridge Review). Provision for pedestrians and cyclists should be considered as part of design due-diligence to ensure best practice for every nominated transport project (Council and TfNSW)
- Due to funding limitations, not every site has had a survey, but the intention is that every site will eventually be surveyed. Surveys that have (or will soon) been undertaken have been prioritised based on local knowledge of those locations with higher volumes; higher risks; a crash history; or specific community concerns relative to other sites.
- A site may not be scored if it is proposed to be delivered as a part of a broader project - the intention of the scoring is to guide prioritising of Council and grant funding. If a project is already a proposed deliverable as part of another project or as a development condition, it does not need to be ranked, but to ensure that the SUP Bridge Ranking Spreadsheet provides a comprehensive list of outstanding crossing improvements, the protocol is for all projects (whether council funded or otherwise) to remain in the list until such time as it is completed/delivered, but generally surveys won't be undertaken at sites that are proposed to be provided as part of other projects.
- Seasonal fluctuation in the Shoalhaven can be considerable. While surveys have been undertaken across a range of dates depending on the site, for those that to seasonal fluctuation, surveys will typically be undertaken on a Saturday in January to capture peak demands. School or town centre surveys are typically undertaken on a Thursday or Friday in school term (due to Fridays typically being the busiest traffic day, however Thursdays can be just as busy in town centres regarding pedestrian demands). Any variations from this approach (to suit inclement weather for example) could be noted as initial data and flagged for resurvey in a following program, as the intention is to ensure consistency over time in terms of the timing of surveys, to allow fair comparison between sites.
- Some discretion may be applied when determining P x V outcomes; this is because often a SUP Bridge project will change desire lines as pedestrians and cyclists have an opportunity to cross at a new facility, whereas prior to that that may have crossed at a different location. This is why surveys often capture a broader location range to determine current and estimated P x V values for comparison on a site by site basis, and depending on the proposed treatment options.

- Traffic volumes and pedestrian/cyclist demands may increase over time (more at some sites, compared to others). Accordingly, new surveys should be undertaken every few years to keep track on any changes to the above P x V values, particularly where changes in patterns are likely. It is not recommended to apply growth factors to the historic P x V values which may falsely adjust the data and priorities.
- Note that there are many circumstances that may lead to changing P x V values over time. More current surveys may return lower P x V values than previous assessments, but these circumstances are assessed for merit on a site by site basis. However, for the sake of consistency and equity across Shoalhaven, the latest P x V survey values will generally be reflected in the SUP Bridge Ranking Spreadsheet unless there is concrete evidence to maintain former P x V values (i.e. if there is suspected error in more recent surveys, or for some other legitimate reason).
- Whilst P x V is typically the primary indicator of demand/risk and therefore the prioritisation of SUP Bridge projects across Shoalhaven, Council may consider other factors when determining which projects to support when preparing its annual budget.
- It is not intended that the costs estimates in the SUP Bridge Ranking Spreadsheet are highly accurate; that detail will evolve following an allocation of funding for detailed design on a project by project basis. Given the number of proposed SUP Bridge projects across Shoalhaven, at this stage the purpose of the costs estimates is to ensure that some level of allowance has been provided for the additional costs of SUP Bridge projects at these locations, in addition to the estimated cost of expanding the path network.

Paths for Investigation Notes

- The Paths for Investigation Ranking Spreadsheet identifies a number of future “**possible**” paths which have been suggested or requested by either the community or Council, but are currently not mapped and remain separate - only “**for investigation**” at this point. An allocation of funding will be required for each project to progress those investigations in the first instance, subject to Council also considering how these projects compare with the broader list of projects ranked “**for delivery**”.
- Many of these projects (but not all) are quite aspirational, and reflect requests from either the community or Council for longer term priorities for active transport connectivity. However these projects can’t be mapped until they are first found to be feasible (or not), primarily due to their potential direct or indirect impact on third party land (either private land or State land holdings).
- Many of these projects haven’t been formally captured in our active transport planning in the past; however as part of new Strategy, these projects have been separately categorised and scored/ranked using the new Active Transport Scoring Criteria for consistency and fairness, and a separate allocation of funds will be needed to initially progress these projects.
- It is noted that the NSW Government’s Get Active NSW program now permits “**projects for investigation**” to be considered; however, it will be a matter for Council to balance up these priorities, which will inevitably have to compete within the same bucket of funds as other projects eligible and ready for construction. Following initial investigations, some projects may not be supported to progress in the Strategy, while others may be supported if found feasible; at that point, these projects would be included in the PAMP Maps (once an alignment is confirmed with more accuracy), and moved to the broader Path Projects Ranking Spreadsheet for re-scoring and prioritisation against other projects across Shoalhaven.
- Note that with regards to the length of path parameter for Projects for Investigation, these are relatively crude planning distances for the purposes of estimating an indicative cost of the entire project, and do not reflect (for example) an adjustment for driveways and road crossings. Notwithstanding, the distance measurements provided are sufficient at a planning level based on the unit rates used to extrapolate the cost of these projects. Exact distances and more detailed cost estimates will be determined once design/investigation funding is allocated in the first instance.

Path Projects Cost Assumptions

Costing table - Assumptions for 2023/24 FY				Current
Path Rates Adopted - 2022/23 FY - Roads Revaluation - 2022/23				
Gravel Path	\$	45.32	/m2	
FRP	\$	198.28	/m2	
Timber	\$	198.28	/m2	
Birumen	\$	87.55	/m2	
Concrete	\$	157.82	/m2	
Paved	\$	294.58	/m2	
Path Rates Adopted - 2023/24 FY - Roads Revaluation 2022/23 Rates x 6% (Asset Mgmt. Staff advice)				
Gravel Path	\$	48.04	\$ 60.05 /m2	
FRP	\$	210.18	\$ 262.72 /m2	
Timber	\$	210.18	\$ 262.72 /m2	
Birumen	\$	92.80	\$ 116.00 /m2	
Concrete	\$	167.29	\$ 209.11 /m2	
Paved	\$	312.25	\$ 390.32 /m2	
Extrapolated - Assumed Path Costs /using Unit Rates - 2023/24 FY (Roads Revaluation 2022/23 Rate)				
FP		1.2	\$ 250.93 /lm	
FP		1.5	\$ 313.67 /lm	
FP		1.8	\$ 376.40 /lm	
SUP		2	\$ 418.22 /lm	
SUP		2.5	\$ 522.78 /lm	
Guide for adding additional costs - Assumptions for 2023/24 FY				
where K&G Required	short lengths	\$	1,500.00 /lm	
where K&G Required	medium lengths	\$	1,200.00 /lm	
where K&G Required	long lengths	\$	900.00 /lm	
where pram ramps require	1	\$	8,000.00 each	
where pram ramps require	2	\$	7,000.00 each	
where pram ramps require	3	\$	6,000.00 each	
where pram ramps require	4	\$	5,000.00 each	
where pram ramps require	5 or more	\$	4,000.00 each	

The above unit rates were obtained from Council's Asset Management staff based on the 2022/23 roads re-evaluation exercise, and adjusted up to 2023/24. The unit rates have been used to extrapolate the project lengths for every project included in the Path Projects Ranking Spreadsheet so as to provide a high level strategic estimate of the likely minimum cost of delivering the entire current path project backlog. The "**guide for adding additional costs**" was also prepared initially to ensure consistency in determining potential additional project costs, on a case by case basis. However, given the time constraints in preparing the new Strategy and PAMP and Bike Plan updates, this additional cost review hasn't been possible, but will be specifically considered as part of a future review. It is noted that there is the potential for this to result in an upward trend in costs compared to these high level strategic planning estimates.

Crossing Projects Cost Assumptions

Crossing Treatment	Estimated Cost
Raised Zebra - Pedestrian Crossing - Minor	\$150,000
Raised Zebra - Pedestrian Crossing - Medium	\$200,000
Raised Zebra - Pedestrian Crossing - Major	\$350,000
Zebra - At grade pedestrian crossing - minor	\$10,000
Zebra - At grade pedestrian crossing - medium	\$15,000
Zebra - At grade pedestrian crossing - major	\$20,000
Refuge - At grade pedestrian refuge - minor	\$75,000
Refuge - At grade pedestrian refuge - medium	\$125,000
Refuge - At grade pedestrian refuge - major	\$175,000
Signals - Traffic (pedestrian) signals - minor	\$300,000
Signals - Traffic (pedestrian) signals - medium	\$500,000
Signals - Traffic (pedestrian) signals - major	\$950,000

The above generic pedestrian crossing costs were only assumed for the purpose of getting an initial handle on the likely quantum of the pedestrian crossings backlog (the likely, minimum, high level strategic cost estimate) to simplify the strategic cost estimation, and ensure consistency in determining the minimum strategic cost of the backlog.

Similarly, costs were also assumed for different pedestrian crossing types, used to extrapolate every project included in the Crossings Ranking Spreadsheet, again to provide a high level strategic estimate of the likely minimum cost of delivering the entire current pedestrian crossing project backlog.

Shared User Path Bridge Cost Assumptions

Shared User Path Bridge	Estimated Cost
Small sized culvert	\$150,000
Medium sized culvert	\$300,000
Small SUP bridge	\$500,000
Medium SUP bridge	\$1,000,000
Large SUP bridge	\$2,000,000
X Large SUP bridge	\$5,000,000
XX Large SUP bridge	\$10,000,000
Allowance to Incorporate the SUP bridge component into future bridge replacement	\$500,000

Again, generic costs were only assumed for the purpose of getting an initial handle on the likely quantum of the SUP Bridge project backlog (the likely minimum high level strategic cost estimate) to simplify the strategic cost estimation of the entire SUP Bridge project backlog.

2024 Paths and Crossings Costs – What's it telling us?

Extracts from Council's DPOP for the 2023/24 FY indicate (current statistics) that the current length of the "**Council maintained**" road network is some 1,822km, while the current length of our path networks (footpaths, share paths and cycleways) is some 275km, i.e. only 15% of the total maintained road network currently has paths. As such, it is clear that there is so much more to be done!

The detailed assessments of active transport projects undertaken as part of the new Strategy identifies more than 700 path projects; more than 200 crossing projects; more than 40 SUP Bridge projects; and almost 20 Paths for Investigation. These are just the projects for consideration by Council (i.e. they do not include projects that might be delivered by TfNSW or as part of new development), yet still the total cost of completing these projects would amount to hundreds of millions of dollars!

Breaking down some of the numbers...

- The current strategic cost estimate of the path projects backlog is \$104m.
- The current strategic cost estimate of the crossing projects backlog is \$66m.
- The current strategic cost estimate of the SUP Bridge projects backlog is \$64m.
- The current strategic cost estimate for the Paths for Investigation initial investigations only is \$1m.

In summary, the total current strategic cost estimate of the active transport project backlog is \$235m.

Again, these are high level minimum cost estimates based on unit and generic rates only. When determining high level strategic minimum cost estimates for application to the backlog of projects, there has been no detailed design costs or other [potential cost] factors taken into consideration, such as projects that might need acquisition or easements; service adjustments; vegetation/tree impacts; drainage/kerb and guttering solutions; sealing works; signs/line-marking; or a myriad of other local factors.

As more detailed investigations are undertaken, the more refined the cost estimates can become; however at the "**strategic planning**" level (represented by the new Strategy and updated PAMP and Bike Plan) the application of standard unit rates at least paints the picture of minimum likely costs

In turn, this of course clearly shows the enormity of the task ahead, and moreover the very significant increase in funding that will be required if we are ever going to put a dent in the ratio of paths/roads across Shoalhaven, and in turn to ever achieve a quantum leap in the proportion of active trips.

In very general terms, the budget for path construction in Shoalhaven (projects delivered by Council) has been "**on average**" approximately \$1m per year over the last 10 years, including approximately \$100k - \$200k in Council funds and \$900,000 - \$1m in various grant funds (which itself varies year to year). This generally allows construction of approximately 2.5km of new paths each year at current rates.

The NSW Government's "Get Active NSW" program continues to provide funds for active transport infrastructure, but even with our excellent record of obtaining grant funds through what is a competitive process, Council has historically been awarded less than \$1m per year, and given recent reductions in the NSW Government's active transport budget, these grant funds could be further reduced.

The Federal Government's Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts also continues to fund major roads and public transport projects nationally; however, they provide no regular funding programs for active transport projects (yet!).

That said, by way of a very recent update - on the 31 October 2024, the Federal Government advised of a new \$100m National Active Transport Program available across the period 2024/25 – 2028/29. However, the new program requires a Co-Contribution for eligibility, which disadvantages Council's like Shoalhaven City who have limited financial capacity at the present time following the compounding impacts of natural disasters

Notwithstanding, to facilitate an increase in the paths to roads proportion of just 1% per annum (from the current 15% proportion of length of paths to roads), reference to current unit rates indicates that will would need an increased investment in path construction of more than 7 times the current rate of investment, noting again that actual costs are likely to be even higher when detailed design factors are taken into consideration.

This situation primarily reflects the enormity of Council's road network; and a significant under-investment in active transport infrastructure. Following the finalisation of the new Strategy (and updated PAMP and Bike Plan), managing community expectations in the current financial climate will continue to be a significant challenge for Council given the extent of the current active transport project backlog, and ongoing community requests for new active transport infrastructure.

Continued advocacy efforts across all levels of Government will be paramount to secure additional funding for active transport projects in Shoalhaven.