



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

Appendix B: Active Transport Scoring Criteria

2025 Active Transport Scoring Criteria

Criteria #	Paths Projects (including Path Projects for Investigation)	Score
1	Addresses a current missing link/or constraint in an existing network:	
	Less than 50m	3
	More than 50m	2
	Where alternative path exists	1
2	Does it complete or extend an existing network	1
3	Is it Consistent with the DIAP (removing obvious barrier and representing a significant improvement to local accessibility)	2
4	Is the location in a growth area or experiencing rapid increase in demand (from residential, commercial, or tourism growth)	2
5	Is the location is in a town/village but currently no other form of active transport linkage exists, or existing facilities are inadequate	2
6	Location is within an established populated town/village area (2) or is more isolated/further out (1)	2
7	Deduct Points in a low speed residential environment and/or where a suitable off road alternative already exists	-5
8	Deduct Points for a widening proposal (widening of existing paths should be undertaken when path due for replacement)	-5
9	Traffic Risk (range of 1 - for local road, 2 lower volume collector, 3 higher volume collector, - to 4 for higher volume main road or road with a high volume of heavy vehicles that could impact pedestrians or bicycle riders).	4
10	Does it provide a significant improvement to safety (minimise or removes conflict with vehicles)	
	Yes - high speed environment (>=60kph)	3
	Yes - low speed environment (<60kph)	1
	Fatal or serious pedestrian accident	3
	Minor pedestrian accident	1
	Run-off-road adjacent pedestrian demand	1
	Run off-road no adjacent pedestrian demand	0
11	Evidence of regular use by pedestrians & cyclists (including use by walking & cyclist groups, or for planned events) - some locations are obvious- from observations, local knowledge, or anticipated due to adjoining generator - refer also to events calendars, strava heat maps, and other indicators of current demand where available:	
	50+ ped/cycle movements per day	2
	Less than 50 ped/cycle movements per day	1
12	Does it connect to at least one of the following destinations? (*Add/sum all relevant points)	
	Commercial/Retail (including local & neighbourhood shops)/shopping centre/CBD or civic/entertainment centre precincts	1
	Retirement, Seniors Living, Aged Care, hospitals, medical precincts	2
	Education facilities - of any type for discussion	2
	Community facilities (includes pre-school, day care, churches, library's, clubs, evac centres, etc) for discussion	2
	Recreational facilities for discussions	1
	Caravan Parks or other local generators of demand	1
Transport Nodes (bus zones and shelters, train stations, taxi ranks, other multi-modal facilities)	1	
13	Does it have the potential to be used or promoted as a scenic / or tourist activity ?	1
14	Has the project been specifically identified as a priority by the Community?	5
	Sub-Total (maximum score possible)	40

Path Projects and Path Projects for Investigation

While many of the individual Active Transport Scoring Criteria (**ATSC**) are relatively self-explanatory, sections below provide additional information in regard some of the ATSC that were revised during the preparation of the Shoalhaven Active Transport Strategy (the **Strategy**), as well as other specific considerations, in Council's determination of the prioritisation of Path Projects and Path Projects for Investigation.

Heavy Vehicle Considerations (Criteria #9)

In response to community feedback during the 26 August – 29 September 2024 exhibition of the Draft Strategy, the "**Traffic Risk**" criteria (Criteria #9) has been expanded such that 4 points can now be awarded to both higher volume main roads and to any road with an unusually high percentage of heavy vehicles, or where heavy vehicle traffic (including through traffic) impacts residential areas or local road safety generally.

Some discretion has been applied to ensure that short term impacts (such as additional heavy vehicles generated during the construction of a new development) aren't unfairly prioritised over locations that require permanent solutions.

As many of these locations has been identified as possible, with assistance from Council, and in response to community feedback, to apply the new heavy vehicle criteria in the revised ranking of Path Projects.

Community Advocacy (Criteria #14)

With reference to the ATSC, another key change has been the introduction of the ability of Community Consultative Bodies (**CCBs**) and other special interest groups to effectively "play around" with the reported default list of scores within their own communities.

This effectively means that, following the rigorous independent and objectively raw scoring process, if a CCB is not happy with the "order" of their priorities, they can request that the order of their own town or village priority path projects be adjusted up or down, so long as this doesn't elevate their "highest" priority to a score higher than what was the default highest score for their town or village (i.e. so that it doesn't change their highest priority **relative to other projects across Shoalhaven**).

More plainly, what this effectively means that is if a town or village's highest priority project was scored as being (just as an example) 22 points, then in requesting that a lower priority project be "moved up" to a higher (or highest) priority for that town or village, the highest it can be moved up is to a score of 22 points and the previously highest priority project will have to be moved down the list (i.e. scored lower) so that path projects in other parts of Shoalhaven are not unduly demoted.

This is simply empowering local communities and CCBs to have more say in the "order" of their own path projects, without upsetting their overall ranking across Shoalhaven.

Notwithstanding, Council will still have the discretion of considering a whole range of other factors when it determines its active transport budget each year, and the path projects it chooses for delivery on an annual basis.

Project Timing

While not specifically identified in the ATSC, an additional criteria that has been individually assessed (by Council) relates to the whether or not a path project can actually be constructed at this time, or moreover at the time that funding might become available.

Many of the identified path projects relate to infrastructure in close proximity to (or indeed adjoining) new residential subdivisions and other similar developments, where a path project would effectively tie in with the future active transport infrastructure provided as part of those developments.

This means that there is little point prioritising these adjacent path projects, even though they may be ranked highly further to the application of the ATSC, until these adjacent developments are underway.

As such, while these path project have not been negatively scored, they have been demoted in the ranking until such time as the development that they will tie into has been completed. Again, it is noted that the PAMP and Bike Plan are live, evolving documents, and as such when these developments are under way, these path projects will be reinstated to their proper ranking.

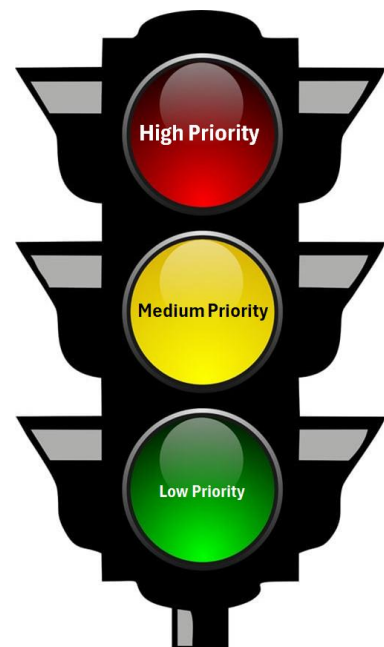
Path Projects Priority Level

So as to further breakdown the ranking of path projects for greater clarity for Council and the community (when advocating for projects), an overriding **Priority Level** index was determined which divides all active transport projects into 3 basic levels, being:

- **High Priority.**
- **Medium Priority.**
- **Low Priority.**

Generally, **High Priority** projects represent the top 15% of scores; **Medium Priority** projects represent the next 25% of scores; and **Low Priority** projects represent the lowest 60% of scores.

The intent of this “*traffic light*” methodology is to further simplify the reporting of project rankings for Council’s consideration of some 700 current path projects identified in the PAMP and Bike Plan.



Paths for Investigation

Briefly, as part of the **Paths & Crossings Review** undertaken during the development of the Strategy some path projects have been identified as being “*for investigation*.” These path projects (but not all) are generally quite aspirational, and reflect requests from either the community or Council for longer term priorities for active transport connectivity.

However these projects will not be included in the Interactive PAMP Maps until such time as they are firstly found to be feasible (or not); and also whether or not they can be constructed without unduly impacting third party land (either private land or State land holdings) either directly or indirectly.

These projects generally haven’t been formally captured in the PAMP in the past; however, these projects have now been separately categorised, and scored/ranked (also using the new ATSC for consistency and fairness in consideration). A separate allocations of funding will need to be identified to initially progress investigation into these path 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 these priorities, which will inevitably have to compete within the same funding that could be used for other eligible and construction ready path projects.

Following any investigations of these projects, it is anticipated that some of these projects may not be supported for progression, while others may be supported if found feasible. At that point, these projects will need to be mapped (once an alignment is confirmed with more accuracy), and moved to the broader Path Projects Ranking Spreadsheet for re-scoring and prioritisation against all other path projects across Shoalhaven.

These Paths for Investigation are detailed in **Appendix G (Paths for Investigation)** of the Strategy, and some more notes about these projects are also provided in **Appendix I (Notes to Scoring Criteria and Project Ranking Spreadsheets)** of the Strategy, noting that in some cases significant investigation work (and as such a significant allocations of funds) will be required *in the first instance* to undertake the proper and appropriate assessments of each of these projects, in consultation with potentially affected land holders and the broader community. Again, it is only further to these investigations that these projects can be properly considered; properly mapped; ranked; and then considered for delivery by Council.

Finally, it is noted that these investigation projects will also be faced with the same funding challenges facing Council, and the success of any individual project may be at the discretion of the NSW Government as they determine grant priorities amid their own funding constraints.

Crossing Projects and Shared User Path Bridge Projects

While the application of the ATSC is more specifically relevant to path projects (including path projects for investigation), for crossing projects and shared user path bridge (**SUP bridge**) projects the primary consideration for ranking will remain the basic mix of pedestrian/bicycle rider volumes and vehicular traffic volumes, or **P x V**, as this provides a direct and measurable indicator of demand relative to other projects across Shoalhaven.

The application of P x V is most often considered where new road projects or high pedestrian generating developments are proposed, as it provides an initial indication of whether new or improved active transport infrastructure might be required. Moreover, P x V remains the best means of prioritising crossing projects and SUP Bridge projects, again to simplify further the reporting of project rankings for Council's consideration. In this regard then, P x V is akin to an early warning system, even if only to alert Council that a certain location may be added to the current projects list, or be prioritised higher in the ranking of these projects.

Broadly again therefore, High Priority is given for the top 10% - 15% ranked crossing and SUP bridge projects; Medium Priority for the middle 25% - 30% ranked crossing and SUP bridge projects; and Low Priority for the remaining paths projects.

As discussed, the use of P x V as a specific volume threshold warrant has always been controversial, with many communities struggling to understand how locations just under threshold warrants for crossing projects are not prioritised, but as soon as a warrant is reached – sometimes simply due to an extra 100 vehicles per day, or 10 additional pedestrians in an hour - a location all of a sudden becomes a priority.

Again therefore, it is important to reiterate that crossing warrants have always been treated with a level of discretion, and that P x V remains a useful and reliable means for Council to prioritise large numbers of potential crossing projects, and as such have been formally absorbed into the ranking of crossing projects.

SUP bridge projects are very significant in the context of the broader Strategy for a number of reasons; they directly move pedestrians and cyclists from constrained roadways; they more often than not address critical missing links; and they can be game changing in terms of the connections and accessibility that they provide.

Unfortunately though, they are also extremely expensive!

The Strategy identifies some 40 SUP bridge projects across Shoalhaven, the costs of which represent approximately 30% of all active transport projects. This makes the ranking of these SUP bridge projects very important, and the formula of P x V is supported as the simplest and most effective means of prioritising these important projects.

Active Transport Project Ranking Spreadsheets

The full list of identified active transport projects across Shoalhaven, and their ranking further to application of the ATSC, is provided in **Appendix D (Paths)**; **Appendix E (Crossings)**; **Appendix F (SUP Bridges)**; and **Appendix G (Paths for Investigation)**.

Critically though, the **Project Ranking** is designed to provide an empirical assessment of each project based on specific, tangible criteria (i.e. either the ATSC or P x V). As such, while there is certainly merit in considering the higher ranked projects, this should not be seen as prescriptive, as there are many subjective factors that also need to be considered by Council and the community, including:

- Cost of the works.
- *Bang for buck.*
- Community priorities.
- Potential funding sources.
- Timing of new developments.
- Changes in public transport routes/services.
- Changes to the road network.
- State and/or Federal Government Priorities and funding criteria.
- Alignment to other programs, initiatives and projects.

Notwithstanding, the Ranking Spreadsheets will continue to be the prime reference for the prioritisation of future active transport projects subject to Council's regular review of the Community Plan, and the annual review of the DPOP, and in turn application of Council's own discretion amid a range of other factors when determining which projects it may or may not support for delivery as part of its annual budgetary deliberations.

Project Notes

There are a number of relevant notes/caveats identified in regard to the ranking of projects, and more specifically to each of the individual Active Transport Scoring Criteria. These include a discussion of costs/units rates for different types of paths and crossings; the length of active transport paths compared with the length of roads; and some of the individual factors that can relate to specific projects.

Moreover of course, it is important to provide the community with more information in this regard given the extent of the backlog of active transport projects, currently being more than 700 path projects and 200 crossing projects.

These notes/caveats are detailed in **Appendix H**, and should be read in conjunction with the Project Ranking Spreadsheets in **Appendix D (Paths)**; **Appendix E (Crossings)**; **Appendix F (SUP Bridges)**; and **Appendix G (Paths for Investigation)**.

Further Scoring Criteria Information

For those interested in seeing how the Scoring Criteria have changed over the years, there's a full write up in Section 10 of the Strategy report. In a nutshell, and in response to ongoing community feedback since the original Scoring Criteria were determined in PAMP 2002, the Scoring Criteria has been simplified as part of the new Strategy (and PAMP and Bike Plan updates) and to make them more applicable for the assessment of all active transport projects.

Finally, one of the objectives of refining the Scoring Criteria over time has been to reduce the number of projects that might attain the same ranking. However, with over 700 active transport projects current on the books, projects attaining the same score is simply inevitable! Notwithstanding, in response to community feedback the ATSC remains robust yet simplified, and can be relied on by Council as an objective prime reference for the initial prioritisation of path projects, prior to Council considering a broader suite of other factors before determining its annual delivery program.