



Wyong Walk 'n' Ride

Newsletter

June 2009

Welcome to our first edition of Wyong Walk 'n' Ride. The newsletter is an initiative to keep you up to date on the development of the Wyong Bicycle and Shared Pathway Strategy.



What is it?

Wyong Shire Council is developing a strategy aimed at establishing a long term vision for cycling and shared pathways and to identify the framework required to achieve an improved cycling environment over the next 20 years. Specifically, the strategy will consider:

- How to provide a safe and interconnected network;
- Actions which can encourage, support and promote cycling and shared pathway use;
- How to integrate bicycle considerations within all strategic planning and development;
- Actions necessary to maintain and support the existing and future pathways;
- An action plan for the delivery of the proposed network;
- Costs associated with the delivery and maintenance of the network.

Why do we want bicycle lanes and shared pathways?

There are a range of demonstrated benefits obtained through the provision of walking and cycling infrastructure and from participating in walking and cycling activities. A few of these benefits include;

Health

- Walking and cycling is an excellent low impact exercise. It's good for cardio-vascular fitness.
- Increased fitness also means; a longer life, increased quality of life, feeling strong, experiencing fewer aches and pains, enjoying better posture, balance and prevent falls.
- Walking and riding a bicycle is good for your body and your mind. Physical activity alters brain chemistry and leads to feelings of wellbeing. People who regularly cycle or walk report that they have an increased sense of vitality, feel more positive and enjoy life more.
- Walking and cycling is an ideal way to lose weight.



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What have we been doing so far?

A number of discussions regarding bicycle and shared pathways have recently been held with the Wyong community. This includes:

Warnervale Fair

At the recent Warnervale Fair, a number of maps of the Shire which identified the existing shared pathways and on-road cycle paths were present. People had great fun suggesting locations for future pathways, planning future networks, together with ideas on the specific facilities which should be connected. It was great day with a lot of great ideas.



Seniors Week

As part of the National Seniors Week Celebrations, a number of discussions were held with senior members of the community. Valuable information was provided on how the existing paths are being used, how to overcome existing challenges and where future pathways should be located. It was great to hear that so many people were utilising shared pathways, for both walking and cycling, and "YES - LOTS MORE" was the unanimous response to the questions of whether shared pathways should be provided in the future.



Cycling Clubs

Cycling clubs operating within the Shire, including the Central Coast Cycling Association and Toukley and District Cycling Club have been providing valuable input on competitive and recreation related cycling issues. A series of discussions and bike rides have been held to identify the key actions necessary to support and promote competitive and social cycling throughout the Shire.

Social

- Walking and riding bicycles are great ways to meet people. You will be surprised how friendly people can be when you go for a stroll or are riding a bicycle and not travelling enclosed in metal and plastic!
- Walking and cycling are great low cost and accessible activities for people of all ages and fitness levels and enables you to explore your neighbourhood.
- Communities which are walking and bicycle-friendly are also communities where people are more likely to know each other and look out for each other.

Environmental

- About half the greenhouse gas emissions produced by an average Australian household each year are from transport. Making our communities more walking and bicycle friendly provides more opportunities for people to ride and walk instead of using their cars and significantly reduce their contribution to the pollution that causes climate change.

Financial

- Transport costs represent a significant proportion of total household expenditure. Given that the cost of petrol has been increasing considerably in recent years, replacing trips with cycling or walking can save money.
- The operating cost of a bicycle is minimal and parking is free.
- Walking is free!
- Cycling can be a real time saver. You can save time getting to and from work or study, and save time by cycling instead of going to the gym.

Source: <http://www.cyclingpromotion.com.au/benefits-of-cycling/>
<http://www.walkinginfo.org/why/benefits.cfm>



How can I be involved?

A range of engagement opportunities have been planned to obtain valuable input from the community on how to achieve a successful cycling environment and connected communities. Keep an eye out for updates in future editions of Wyong Walk 'n' Ride and on Council's Web page for details.

Do you know of someone who should be involved with the Bicycle and Shared Pathway Strategy? Do you have an idea yourself? Send me an email with your suggestions to stephen.prince@wyong.nsw.gov.au or give me a call on (02) 4350 5461.

