

"May sustainable transport systems be at the heart of Adelaide's success as a people-friendly and environmentally responsible city."

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## Response to Burnside Draft City Masterplan

Dear Belinda,

Bike Adelaide is the leading voice engaging with local governments on cycling for transport issues across Greater Adelaide on an ongoing basis. We have prepared comments in response to the Burnside Draft City Masterplan for consideration.

We commend the Burnside City Council staff in their efforts to develop this master plan and their efforts to include active transport. This demonstrates an acknowledgment of the crucial role walking and cycling play in improving urban connectivity, social and economic inclusion and vibrancy, and of course in reducing congestion, road fatalities and carbon emissions.

### **Future mobility**

#### ***Post COVID-19***

The response to COVID generated an increase in people using bicycles for transport and recreation, however; this trend is not mentioned. This increase reinforced the need for safe cycling networks to support improved accessibility for people moving between Burnside and the City of Adelaide, and crucially, within the City of Burnside. The move towards more localised living and an ongoing trend towards working-from-home has highlighted how many more walking and cycling journeys can be unlocked in the wake of COVID if local connections are developed and enhanced.

#### ***Emerging technology***

It is notable that only motor vehicle technology is discussed in this area, referring to electric cars. While there are benefits of transitions to electric cars, they do not alter the fundamental demands for parking and road space, and contribute to congestion in the same measure as internal combustion cars. Electric bicycles (e-bikes) are a potential game-changer, particularly as a replacement for a second household vehicle. E-bike have proven especially popular for seniors and families, enabling greater independence and reduced cost-of-living.

Other micro mobility options are also potentially significant and are currently being actively explored by neighbouring Unley and Norwood, Payneham and St Peters Council. We encourage Burnside Council to actively engage with these councils to share information and experiences with a view to implementing its own e-scooter and e-bike hire program. This can contribute to decreases in very short journeys within Burnside which would otherwise be taken by car. This focus on emerging technology should principally prioritise the reduction of car journeys using these emerging technologies in active transport and micromobility.

### ***Environmental policies***

There is significant community support for conserving the urban tree canopy, however; only a shift to electric vehicles is mentioned as a way to improve environmental outcomes in the draft plan. It is known from recent experience that ever-increasing reliance on cars for transport including electric cars will require more road expansions and car parking space leading to tree loss, increasing friction in the community and between Council and the community. It is therefore important to recognise the essential role walking, cycling and public transport play in improving the environmental outcomes from transport; lowering emissions and increasing efficiency (more movement for less space). To achieve this, it is essential to provide real transport choice for people willing to switch a percentage of their trips to walking, cycling and public transport.

### **Planning for an Integrated Transport System**

Bike Adelaide strongly supports the transport themes developed as they are in line with world best practice. If implemented the themes will provide residents with real transport choice including critically for children. The flow-on effects include a more attractive place for people reside, a healthier and happier population, and more available green space for trees and recreation.

### ***Traffic planning in local streets***

Bike Adelaide takes the stance that 40 kph streets are the future, providing a safer environment for everybody regardless of age or ability. We believe this because peoples' lives should be considered a greater priority than motor vehicles, as does fair access for people who would wish to walk and cycle. Bike Adelaide supports a progressive rollout as proposed to bring the community along on the journey but we express our encouragement for the Master Plan to be more ambitious by expanding the 40kph zones to be uniform across the entire council area. All experiences points to motorists being unwilling to return to 40kph after moving through a 50kph area and this inconsistency may produce a high level of non-compliance. However, it requires bravery to take the first steps and hopefully Councillors and the community are appreciative of this and we welcome Burnside joining many of its neighbours in reducing neighbourhood road speeds.

In relation to comments that increased urban density has resulted in street tree loss and increased driveway crossovers, we recommend the Council investigate more creative solutions. We note mentions of implementing some mixed-use development which is an excellent measure to reduce some local car journeys by improving accessibility and amenity. In addition to this, we advise Council investigate options for car-free developments, providing options for residents who choose not to own a car, or shared driveways. It is disappointing that the Master Plan equates urban infill to the removal of street trees as this is something that is frequently avoided in other council areas. Notably in Unley and Prospect, which have both been active in retaining street trees even during densification developments.

### ***Improvements to promote cycling***

It is important to recognise the significant global movement to provide safe and accessible cycling options. Significant progress has been made in many council areas across Australia. Bike Adelaide supports the Draft Master Plan's suggestions to improve the cycling network and encourage Council to develop a network that allows for independent movement for anyone aged 8–80+. As well as low speed local streets, this will require some protected bikeways where traffic volumes are higher as well as the other proposed infrastructure including road crossing improvements. Space will become contested at times between that provided to cars and that needed to provide for cycling. There is value in recognising this conflict to assist with future management.

### **What's missing?**

#### ***Commentary on education***

There is also the necessity to invest in community education to help people understand why improving the cycling network is a positive step, as the UK Government has recently rolled out. This step has been critical for cities who have successfully delivered change on their local streets. It takes time and requires effort and resources to build support for vital changes to facilitate active transport transitions.

### ***A bicycle strategy***

A notable omission is mention of an overarching active transport strategy to meet the Master Plan's stated aims. Developing a bicycle plan with a mapped cycling network will provide essential direction for meeting the Master Plan's aims and allow Council to more easily prepare projects for design and consultation when funding is available. Sydney's COVID recovery approach demonstrated that having bikeways and active transport projects prepared well in advance awaiting the opportunity to implement was critical to the success and efficacy of those projects and overall strategy.

The intent of this strategy is best aimed at allowing options for residents to increase the number of journeys they can make by leaving their cars at home, not to "force" all residents to cycle instead. Cities and communities are more resilient, efficient and vibrant when people have options and people feel safe travelling outside of a car.

We commend the Burnside City Council for its vision as shown through the Draft Burnside Masterplan. The approach set out will assist your community to grasp future opportunities for a healthy and happy lifestyle. Importantly it will also help secure local natural assets including many trees and provide residents with safer streets to travel and to live on. Bike Adelaide believes providing your citizens with real transport choice is an essential step forward.

I trust you will give our comments due consideration in good faith.

Regards,

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Chairperson  
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