

Submission to the Draft NSW Future Transport Strategy 2056



1 December 2017

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Executive Summary

The NSW Government has developed a Future Transport Strategy with the following components:

- i) draft Future Transport Strategy 2056
- ii) draft Regional NSW – Services and Infrastructure Plan
- iii) draft Road Safety Plan 2021
- iv) draft Tourism and Transport Plan – Supporting the Visitor Economy October 2017.

This document serves as the submission from Eurobodalla Shire Council to these draft plans noting that Council has already made a separate submission to the Draft Road Safety Plan 2021 during the exhibition period which can be found at the following link:

<http://www.esc.nsw.gov.au/inside-council/project-and-exhibitions/advocacy/infrastructure-priorities/Submission-to-Draft-NSW-Road-Safety-Plan-2021.pdf>

Council's submission to the draft Road Safety Plan 2021 highlights the fundamental need for the NSW Government to better recognise the role Councils play in looking after 90% of the road network in New South Wales and the need to implement a ***new NSW Government funding program to provide for improved active transport for pedestrians***. A specific funding program is required to provide for pedestrian facilities, specifically footpaths. This funding program should be in addition to the existing Active Transport Program which only addresses shared pedestrian/cycling pathways as compliant shared pathways cannot reasonably be provided in many brownfield situations.

Eurobodalla is highly dependent on road, bus and air transport with no rail service south of Bomaderry. Our gross domestic product is estimated at \$1.3B per annum with \$408M related to the visitor economy. The vast majority of our visitors arrive via road, with the Kings and Princes Highways providing the critical links to our region. Investment in transport infrastructure is essential to enable ongoing safe and effective connectivity of the Far South Coast region with the rest of the State and the ACT.

The recognition of ***Canberra as a global city*** and the fundamental role ***Canberra international airport*** in the draft transport plans is a welcome fundamental shift in the transport and economic planning for New South Wales. The NSW Government and Transport for NSW are to be commended for this strategic and common sense decision.

The proposed ***'hub and spoke'*** model is to be commended as is the strong recognition throughout the documents that the ***NSW Government must shift focus to provide vastly improved east-west linkages, specifically upgrading of the Kings Highway***.

Eurobodalla Shire Council has worked with the South East Australian Transport Strategy Inc. (SEATS) to identify key infrastructure projects which when implemented, will have a marked impact on meeting the current and future transport needs of Eurobodalla and our region, supporting an improved quality of life for our residents and visitors. This will also help meet growing international trade, investment and tourism markets that support current domestic and interstate activities.

This document contains recommended transport infrastructure priorities for our region. These priorities cover both NSW Government infrastructure and key Eurobodalla specific projects where Government support will be required to deliver economic, safety and social outcomes.

The areas covered by the submission include:

- Road transport (Kings and Princes Highways)
- Moruya Regional Airport
- Marine infrastructure
- Key local road projects
- Pathways
- Bus transport.

We seek your support for funding the projects outlined herein on behalf of Eurobodalla residents and business community to realise the NSW Government's objective to drive the regional economy and improve the social outcomes.

Connecting Rural and Regional Customers

Canberra is recognised as a global city with a high growth rate and is expected to grow by about half to 500,000 people by 2030.

Canberra is our key regional influence with growth in the city expected to drive unprecedented increases in our visitor market and on our highways.

Canberra International Airport also provides significant opportunities to increase freight options, as well as freighting high value regional products internationally. ***Passenger movements at Canberra airport are expected to more than double by 2028-29 to almost 7,400,000, with international tourism and visitation predicted to grow from zero in 2012-13 to over 800,000 in the same period.*** International destinations already includes Singapore and New Zealand, with direct flights to the middle-east and 23 European cities in February 2018.

Eurobodalla is the closest coastal centre to Canberra by a substantial distance and is working with Canberra airport to secure ***international visitors who will travel to the Eurobodalla coast via the Kings Highway.*** International visitors injected more than \$500m into the ACT economy during 2016-17 alone.

Goulburn also provides a logistic hub for our region with significant transport coming from either Goulburn or western Sydney via the Hume Highway and Kings Highway to the Eurobodalla coast. The large growth proposed in south-western Sydney will inevitably increase activity within the Hume Highway corridor.

These factors will drive unprecedented growth in traffic on the Kings and Princes Highways in the short to medium term and increase the challenges in delivering road transport outcomes. **The Kings and Princes Highways must be brought up to a level to meet these growing needs.**

Ensuring the right solutions are developed for future of the **Kings Highway requires the allocation of funding to undertake more detailed planning inclusive of preliminary design work**, particularly to resolve challenges:

- i) east of Braidwood to Batemans Bay
- ii) to extend 26m HML B-double access to Eurobodalla
- iii) and for the future by-passes of Bungendore and Braidwood

There are substantial costs that can be avoided and significant efficiencies that can be achieved by looking at combinations of projects rather than single projects, due to the terrain. Additionally, with a clear overall plan, all works undertaken by the Roads and Maritime Services' assets group can be designed to better work toward the final road alignment. This common sense approach requires a modest allocation of specific funding for this preliminary design work and corridor acquisition.

The standard approach of relying on a Corridor Strategy will not be sufficient for the section east of Braidwood. Transport for NSW should recognise the nuance and avoid a 'one size fits all' approach on the Kings Highway.

Eurobodalla Council seeks a progressive upgrading plan for the Kings Highway to be funded and rolled out over the next five years to deliver meaningful upgrades that will deliver the future highway our region needs.

In terms of effective freight transport, Eurobodalla is currently a 'black hole' in relation to the efficient supply of goods and services due to the lack of higher productivity access to the region. This is a significant disincentive to economic development within the region. **Both the Kings Highway and the Princes Highway should be upgraded to provide 26m HML B-double access.** Upon completion of the Nelligen and Batemans Bay bridges, there will be few remaining impediments to B-double access to the Eurobodalla coast. Appropriate **coupling/decoupling stations should be developed now** to permit access from the highway into urban, commercial and light industrial precincts.

For future air transport, the **further development of the Moruya Airport** has the potential to unlock significant tourism, economic and employment opportunities. Council has developed an airport Master Plan for Moruya airport and acknowledges the support of the NSW and Australian Governments in funding stages one and three of the eight stage Master Plan. We urge the NSW Government to prioritise further funding to support the completion of the Moruya Airport masterplan development. The web-site link to the masterplan is <http://www.esc.nsw.gov.au/inside-council/project-and-exhibitions/major-projects-and-works/moruya-airport>

The marine transport market is becoming an emerging market for the Eurobodalla economy. Eurobodalla is already experiencing significant growth in tourism via ocean going marine vessels now coming into Batemans Bay. With the establishment of Eden as a deep water port and cruise ship destination, there is significant potential to grow our economy through appropriate marine infrastructure including the development of Batemans Bay Marina and potentially a deep water marina off Batemans Bay. Effective marine infrastructure must also be supported by ongoing maintenance dredging to ensure access via our waterways.

Implementing Clever Vehicles and Smart Systems

Eurobodalla Shire Council is proposing that the Roads and Maritime Services integrates Smart City technology into the proposed replacement of Batemans Bay bridge as the first initiative to make Batemans Bay a pilot regional smart city.

Rapidly changing technology has many potential impacts on transport services and early investment in supporting infrastructure is essential. This will need to support our visitor-based economy, with infrastructure such as rapid charging stations strategically placed along the highway and in major towns, as well as future transport requirements for freight.

Longer term possibilities for connected and automated vehicles for freight mean it is essential that the Kings and Princes Highway upgrades provide the required service levels for future smart infrastructure development. This will be critical to ensure continuity of transport of affordable commodities to the region.

We also encourage the NSW Government to provide incentives to private enterprise to accelerate the development of smart technology and supporting infrastructure.

We encourage the NSW Government to work with the Australian Government to develop a new funding model for the provision of road funding as the fuel excise becomes a less viable funding source as the market moves away from fossil fuels over time.

Transport Infrastructure for Place Making

Well-integrated transport and land use planning can improve safety, reduce congestion and help make our communities better places to live.

The **sustainability of local and regional road infrastructure** remains a significant challenge across NSW regional areas. The [NSW Roads Congress Communique](#) provides a blueprint for the NSW and Australian Governments as to the actions required to better address this issue and should be considered in the Future Transport Strategy. This will be vital from a road safety, economic development and social equity perspective.

Transport for NSW has provided IPWEA NSW with funding to train road safety auditors in every Council by the end of 2018-19. This universal training program is well ahead of schedule and will lead to the development of formal road safety plans for every Council to deliberately focus on achieving the targets in the NSW Road Safety Strategy of a 30% reduction in road accidents compared to the 2011 level and work 'Towards Zero'.

The provision of formal off-road pathways is a key local transport option for community access within and between villages. Eurobodalla Shire Council has developed a holistic pathways strategy covering both footpaths and shared pathways across the entire Shire. This strategy includes \$11.7m worth of works with Council able to allocate \$3.5m over the next ten years. Planned pathways are prioritised to best provide connectivity between existing links to facilitate extensive safe, off-road transport options. Our strategy also integrates with existing public bus transport to encourage greater utilisation of this mode to reduce use of cars for short trips to our commercial and recreational precincts. NSW Government support to facilitate the progression of these pathways is a wise investment in a safer and environmentally sustainable future transport.

With pedestrians now representing 18% of all fatalities in NSW, we strongly urge the NSW Government to **introduce a new Active Walking Program** to provide for pedestrian pathways, including appropriate pedestrian crossing facilities. With only 23% of our urban road network having a pathway, a trend of increasing pedestrian related injuries, an ageing population and limited public transport, retro-fitting pedestrian pathways into our existing urban areas is essential to facilitate a connected and healthy community.

We recommend that the NSW Government provide \$50m per annum for this new Active Walking Program to supplement the existing Active Transport Program.

To ensure community connectivity, we also need investment in **subsidised, flexible and convenient bus and community transport**. With a higher than NSW regional average of population aged over 60, as well as high numbers of unemployed youth and socially disadvantaged community members, this is becoming a rapidly emerging future transport need. We believe the NSW Government can achieve significant improvements by focussing on provision of subsidised bus transport especially between the main town centres of Narooma, Moruya and Batemans Bay. We commend the proposed initiatives within the transport plans to cap the cost of public transport in regional areas.

There are over 83,000km of unsealed roads across NSW. Many of these provide basic access that address **social equity and connectivity for rural communities**. These roads often provide the only means of getting **agricultural product to domestic and international markets**. Many rural Councils have insufficient income from rates and rely heavily on the Federal Assistance Grants Scheme to sustain their communities. This however is insufficient to deliver the required outcomes given the very long lengths of roads and the low population density. Yet it is these same areas that provide the food for our city populations and export product internationally.

The NSW Government must work with the Australian Government to review the current distribution of Federal Assistance Grants with a view to re-distributing further funds from the high density city areas to low density regional areas where long lengths of road asset make delivering basic social equity more challenging.

The current distribution of the FAGS – Roads Component is heavily biased to the city Councils resulting in a far greater allocation per kilometre of road in the city compared to regional communities (as shown below). This is despite the greater capacity of the city Councils to fund roads.

- ▲ Average Sydney Council - \$2,817 per kilometre (Sydney City \$4,020 per kilometre)
- ▲ Average regional NSW Council - \$1254 per kilometre
- ▲ 17 regional Councils < \$1000 per kilometre

The NSW Government also has the ability to modify the current rating system for Councils in New South Wales to allow Councils to rates to take account of the height of building instead of land value only. This would allow city and urban Councils to achieve a reasonable rating income based on the number of dwellings, rather than only the individual blocks of land. This would offer greater incentive to Councils to plan for appropriately located medium to high density development along connected transport corridors and allow Councils to achieve a reasonable income to permit delivery of integrated transport solutions.

Future Customer Service: government, business and community

We applaud the NSW Government for recognising the key role that transport infrastructure provision plays in stimulating and sustaining the NSW economy, providing social wellbeing and equity for regional NSW. We encourage the NSW Government to continue with a more proactive approach to planning transport infrastructure and services and embed this culture within the responsible Government agencies.

There are significant opportunities to avoid unnecessary cost and social impacts through improved corridor and specific route planning, such as that outlined for the Kings Highway above.

To provide the basis for future transport across all levels, telecommunications infrastructure must also be developed to provide comparable levels of service to urban (city) levels. The Australian Government has committed to provide four new mobile telephone towers along the Princes Highway and Kings Highway routes within Eurobodalla. We encourage the NSW Government to advocate for the early completion of the vital projects.



The changing mix of road users brings both benefits and challenges

A. Future Transport for Advancing Eurobodalla

Eurobodalla Shire includes the main towns of Batemans Bay, Moruya and Narooma, with numerous additional small villages nestled along the 110km coastline. The residential population of 37,000 understates the typical population within Eurobodalla which further detailed analysis shows to be 50,000 on any given day due to visitors and tourists. This population swells to over 140,000 in summer months as Eurobodalla provides a recreational retreat for many, particularly coming from Canberra, Sydney and western areas of NSW.

The Eurobodalla economy, originally built on dairying, forestry and fishing, is now more diverse and is based around tourism, retail, health services, property services and a wide range of agricultural activities. Our community is highly dependent on road, bus and air transport with no rail service south of Bomaderry.

Our gross domestic product is estimated at \$1.3B per annum with \$408M related to the visitor economy. The vast majority of our visitors arrive via road, with the Kings and Princes Highways providing the critical links to our region.

In 2015, 1.26 million visitors came to the region. Tourism is a key driver for our future transport considerations with recent changes to Canberra international airport, the development of Moruya Regional Airport and Batemans Bay Marina all likely to have significant influence on changing transport demands and modes.

Planning for economic growth in Eurobodalla over the next 40 years will focus on strengthening the qualities that attract people to live, visit, invest and work in the area. High quality tourism and recreation opportunities, aquaculture exports (domestic and international), specialist manufacturing and agriculture, food and rural tourism, and heritage, cultural and natural experiences all provide drivers of offer growth. Building the transport infrastructure to support this will be essential.

The internet and telecommunications technologies, particularly reliable and fast broadband, are critically important in laying the foundations for a more diverse economy for Eurobodalla, for two key reasons. Firstly, to assist in leveraging existing sectors and businesses such as a tourism and its marketing and systems. Secondly, as a foundation for future development in such areas as transport, business and professional services. The current roll-out of the NBN will enhance the numbers of people currently working from Eurobodalla across Australia and internationally.

Eurobodalla Shire Council has a continued to focus on identifying, planning and advocating for key infrastructure improvements and major developments that enhance liveability in the region and can be a catalyst for economic growth.

In planning for and facilitating economic growth, we need to ensure the right kind of growth and development for Eurobodalla that reinforces and supports our values and capitalises on our strengths and advantages. We recognise and appreciate NSW Government investment in many projects and works throughout Eurobodalla, including Princes and Kings Highway upgrades, road safety programs and investment in the new south Batemans Bay link road and now seek the support of the NSW Government to ensure that we can provide the transport infrastructure to make future plans a reality.

The roads owned and maintained by National Parks and Forest NSW play a significant role in our tourism and visitor markets, as well as in managing fire and other emergencies. The NSW Government should ensure these roads are well maintained. The NSW Government should also explore private investment in tourism facilities and infrastructure within our Forests and National Parks to help deliver nature based experiences and derive additional income to help care for our forests and parks.

B. Connecting Rural and Regional Customers

Eurobodalla needs to ensure safe and effective connectivity to our region for visitors and freight transport now and in the future. Service levels are insufficient for current requirements and anticipated growth will place further pressure on our regional transport infrastructure.

Canberra is a key regional influence, with the population expected to grow from 350,000 to 500,000 in the medium term. This will drive growth in our visitor market and in the volumes and mix of traffic on our highways.

Additionally, in the short to medium term, Canberra International Airport will drive unprecedented growth in traffic on the Kings Highway, and, once at Batemans Bay, the Princes Highway. This will increase the challenges in delivering road outcomes, particularly with increased numbers of visitors and international drivers unfamiliar with Australian road rules or driving conditions. In addition to ongoing increases in freight requirements, Canberra International Airport will also provide significant opportunity to export regional high value product internationally. The Kings and Princes Highways must be brought up to a level to meet these growing needs.

The NSW Government is progressing major upgrade works to sections of the Princes Highway and Kings Highway.

The RMS has developed a Princes Highway Corridor Strategy, published in August 2016. This strategy that outlines priorities for the upgrade of the highway over the next twenty years from Yallah in the North to the Victorian boarder in the South. Approximately 115 kilometres of the Princes Highway passes through the Eurobodalla. This is about one quarter of the length of the highway covered within the Corridor Strategy and a key priority for our region.

To secure the economic and social prosperity of our community in the short and long term, further upgrades and excellent long term infrastructure planning for these highways, backed by the necessary Government funding, is essential.



Princes Highway/Kings Highway intersection constrains traffic moving from the west into Batemans Bay with long queues during shoulder and peak periods

Kings Highway

The Kings Highway is the lifeblood of Eurobodalla Shire. It provides the key east-west link to/from our region to Canberra, Queanbeyan, Goulburn and the Hume Highway to Sydney as well as other interstate and regional linkages.

The **Kings Highway provides a primary transport for the Eurobodalla coast to Sydney** via Goulburn and the Hume Highway. This already popular route is becoming increasingly important due to the many constraints along the Princes Highway and the provision of major transport links and facilities in western Sydney. The importance of the Kings Highway to Goulburn route will increase further with the Badgerys Creek airport development, the growth predicted in western Sydney, and the industrial park/logistics hub in Goulburn.

With no rail service and only limited air transport, the wellbeing and transport needs of our community depend on the Kings Highway. It is strategically a very important piece of infrastructure to the Eurobodalla's economy and for employment growth in the south coast region.

Ensuring the future of the Kings Highway requires the immediate allocation of funding to undertake more detailed planning inclusive of preliminary design work, particularly east of Braidwood and for the provision of by-passes of Bungendore and Braidwood. There are substantial costs that can be avoided and significant efficiencies that can be achieved by looking at combinations of projects rather than single projects, due to the terrain. The standard approach of relying on a Corridor Strategy will not be sufficient for the section east of Braidwood.

The Kings Highway is vital to our economic and social wellbeing, yet it has an appalling road safety record (much higher accident rates than the Princes Highway). The highway is not available to higher productivity vehicles despite transport operators wishing to utilise it for this purpose (eg from Goulburn logistics centre to the coast).

A clear strategy with adequate funding is needed to address the existing shortcomings on the Kings Highway and provide for future growth. We urge the NSW Government to provide a rolling funding program of a further \$1M per annum from 2017-18 for the next four years to provide the necessary planning, design and pre-planning activities (eg land acquisition, environmental reviews) to establish the required road corridor for future works on the Kings Highway corridor.

It is **essential that the road corridor is established now to avoid unnecessary costs** which will otherwise arise due to current conflict between proposed subdivision and development of rural lands along the Kings Highway, particularly between Nelligen and the Western Distributor. There are also opportunities to integrate projects to significantly reduce capital costs, and work with Forestry NSW to optimise outcomes.

Innovative arrangements are possible to maximise the outcomes for our community. An example of this is the potential to extract granite rock to provide a new road alignment for the Kings Highway (from west of Black Flat) for use in the proposed rock protection works at Casey's Beach in Batemans Bay

Priorities include further reconstruction and realignment of sections of the Kings Highway between Batemans Bay and west of Northangera Bridge (east of Braidwood). The desired outcome is the provision of consistent lane widths of a minimum 3.5 metres with lane widening on curves for heavy transport vehicles and sealed shoulders of widths 1.0 to 3.0 metres on both sides. Sufficient overtaking opportunities are needed to better manage the use of the route by transport vehicles during normal and peak times. Sub-standard curves need to be realigned to increase safety along this length of highway. In some cases, the realignment will require the acquisition of land from private land holders as well as from the Forests NSW and National Park to ensure these outcomes can be achieved.

The normal traffic analysis for overtaking lanes is applicable to the Kings Highway only on weekdays. Each Friday evening, Saturday morning and Sunday afternoon sees an extraordinary growth in the hourly traffic volumes. This is a completely different pattern to the normal diurnal peaks in traffic flow experience in an urban centre and requires more critical analysis to develop safe outcomes. This nuance in traffic results in periods of congestion and higher risk to the community and a greater need for overtaking lanes on this route.

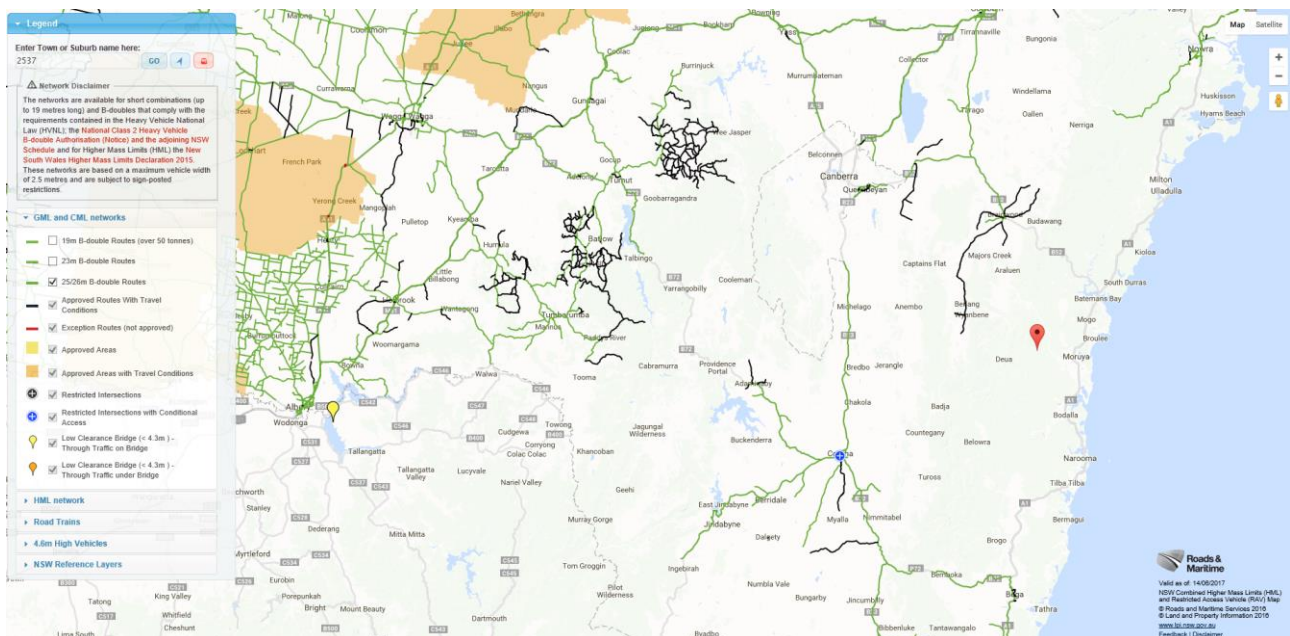
This is exacerbated further during the long weekends and holiday periods leading to lengthy delays in getting through to Batemans Bay and beyond.

Kings and Princes Highway 26m B-double access

The key priority for bringing Eurobodalla transport infrastructure in line with current needs is ensuring full B-double access on both the Princes and King Highways. There is currently no 26m B-double access to Eurobodalla either via either of these routes.

We urge the Future Transport Strategy to prioritise the necessary works to:

- extend the currently Gazetted Class 2B-double route south from BTU Road in South Nowra to Batemans Bay, Moruya, Bodalla, Dalmeny and Narooma commercial and industrial precincts
- undertake necessary works from Nowra to Narooma on select bridges, road alignments and overtaking lanes to accommodate Class 2B-doubles
- provide suitable combined truck rest stops and coupling/uncoupling areas at Batemans Bay, Moruya and Narooma. The RMS should assess the suitability of the truck rest area at Waldrons Swamp at North Moruya for this purpose
- fund the assessment of existing industrial and commercial precincts within Eurobodalla for suitability of Class 2B-doubles.



Extract from the RMS website showing the lack of efficient 26m B-double transport access to the region on the Princes and Kings Highways

Eurobodalla remains one of the few shires in the NSW without any access for 26m B-double transport vehicles. This places Eurobodalla in a 'black hole' when potential business investors look to establish commercial ventures.

It also results in higher than average prices for commodities such as food, fuel and the like, believed to be some of the highest in coastal NSW. This situation combined with our high aged population means the cost of these weekly basics are causing unnecessary strain on local families.

There are few impediments to B-double access along the Kings Highway. Goods and exports go to/from the Eurobodalla coast via this key east-west link (eg from Goulburn logistics centre and Canberra International Airport) and class 2B-double access already exists on the Kings Highway through to Braidwood.

Extending the B-double access along the Princes Highway will have significant positive regional impacts and has the support of South East Australian Transport Strategy Inc (SEATS) together with Eurobodalla Shire and Shoalhaven City Councils. Longer term Class 2B-double access must be extended along the entire length of the Princes Highway through to Bega and Eden Port.

B-double access should be addressed as a matter of priority to overcome the current adverse impacts on our economy, business investment, employment, existing business enterprises (eg agriculture) and the basic cost of living. This is a readily achievable outcome that will boost the regional economy and take advantage of regional and international trade and tourism opportunities.

Princes Highway

Princes Highway – National Highway

The NSW Government should advocate to the Australian Government to see the Princes Highway recognised as a highway of national importance from Sydney to Melbourne. This highway services approximately 10% of Australia's population and its critical importance to Australia should be recognised, as has the Pacific Highway.

Princes Highway and Glenella Road (South Batemans Bay Link Road)

It is now a matter of urgency that the NSW Government provide the funding to realignment the Princes Highway at south Batemans Bay and provide the appropriate intersection treatment to connect to the South Batemans Bay Link Road.

The Princes Highway between Berrima Parade, Surfside and the South Batemans Bay Link Road is the busiest section of the highway on far south coast of NSW. The *Northern Area of Eurobodalla Traffic Study* recommends four through lanes be provided along this section of the highway along with upgrades to select intersections.

The section of highway immediately south of Batemans Bay, known locally as the 'mad mile', has a devastating safety record. The RMS has undertaken some interim improvements, including a reduction in the speed limit and the provision of a central median to reduce the severity of accidents. This however has not reduced the frequency of accidents and when accidents do occur, it results in closure of the highway due to the limited working space now available between the central concrete medians and the protective fencing. There were another two serious crashes in this location in November 2017, bringing the total over just a few hundred metres of the highway to 10 serious crashes including a fatality.

The South Batemans Bay Link Road comes off the Princes Highway immediately south of Batemans Bay and will service an estimated \$800m worth of development identified between Batehaven and Broulee along the coastal route of George Bass Drive. This includes employment lands at Surf Beach.

The Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, and Member for Bega, Hon Andrew Constance MP secured \$10 million from NSW Government for the South Batemans Bay Link Road project. The Minister is actively pursuing the funding required by the NSW Roads and Maritime Service to complete the works on the Princes Highway.

This Link Road has now been officially named Glenella Road.

To oversight this project, the NSW Roads and Maritime Services formed an alliance with Council with the following responsibilities agreed:

- i) Council to construct:
 - a) South Bateman Bay Link Road (Glenella Road) from George Bass Drive to a location approximately 300m short of the Princes Highway (along the existing route of Ridge Road)
 - b) Works associated with connecting the Glenella Road to Heron Road urban precinct
 - c) The intersection between the Glenella Road and George Bass Drive
- ii) The RMS to construct:
 - a) Realignment of the Princes Highway south from Cranbrook Road
 - b) Construction of the Princes Highway intersection and connecting road to Council's end point

Council is well advanced with construction and has now sealed South Batemans Bay Link Road past Heron Road to just short of Ridge Road. Council has placed a locked gate across the western end of the by-pass road to prevent physical access to the highway until the RMS constructs an appropriate intersection.

The \$10m investment in the by-pass construction will only serve a useful purpose after the final connection is made with the Princes Highway by the RMS.

The priorities for this section of the Princes Highway include:

- upgrading the existing intersection on the Princes Highway with the existing Ridge Road to connect to the new South Batemans Bay Link Road (Glenella Road).
- widening and realigning the Princes Highway from Cranbrook Road to Glenella Road (distance 1.4km). This length currently has one lane northbound and two lanes southbound on a poor alignment and poor safety record including a fatality and a series of recent accidents immediately south of Council's Batemans Bay Depot entrance. The widening of the highway should allow for two lanes in both directions plus a channelised right turn treatment at Council's Batemans Bay Depot.
- realignment of the length of Princes Highway from Glenella Road to Deep Creek Dam Road (distance 2km) to address the appalling safety record.

Batemans Bay Bridge

Council is excited at the announcement by the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure Hon. Andrew Constance MP and Minister for Roads, Freight and Maritime Hon Melinda Pavey MP that the construction of a new four lane bridge across the Clyde River will be fast tracked to completion.

This is a critical project to removing traffic congestion in Batemans Bay and on the Kings Highway and Princes Highway. It also removes the disruption risks brought to reality over recent years when the lifting mechanism has failed to return to road level, with dramatic consequence to our community and the region.

The project will have a marked impact on the urban design of Batemans Bay as the entrance way to the Eurobodalla. We commend the NSW Government and the RMS for their level of engagement with Council and there preparedness to engage fully with our community prior to making decisions on the preferred solution.

Council accepts that the old bridge has significant on-going maintenance issues and costs, and that the existing bridge will be removed as part of the project. This removal also offers significant opportunity to further enhance the foreshore area of Batemans Bay CBD as part of the bridge project.

Council is working closely with the Roads and Maritime Services who has carriage of this project including engagement with the community.

Narooma Bridge Replacement

To reinforce the critical nature of these priorities, further detail on the current Narooma Bridge illustrates the current safety and freight impacts.

The northern approach on the bridge over Wagonga Inlet at Narooma causes trucks and buses to cross the incorrect side of the road to get onto the bridge. This is unacceptable and poses a safety hazard to the travelling public, a significant risk to the NSW Government and the Eurobodalla economy.

The bridge structure has already been damaged on a number of occasions after being hit by errant vehicles. It is a known risk. There is no acceptable alternate route if the bridge structure were to be damaged and the highway closed to traffic.



Normal semi-trailers regularly crossing the road centre-line to avoid hitting the bridge pylon

In 2016, Eurobodalla Shire Council submitted a proposal to the RMS draft Princes Highway Corridor Strategy that longer term plans should be developed for this bridge replacement. The Corridor Strategy correctly identifies the significant risk of catastrophic failure of the bridge due to impact of trucks into the bridge structure. A short term action to realign the northern approach onto the bridge should be implemented. The RMS has previously developed concept plans for this work.

The RMS advise that the existing bridge is unsuitable for higher productivity vehicles (or even concessional mass limit (CML) vehicles), meaning the structure is no longer 'fit for purpose' as a highway bridge.

We note that the RMS has previously secured land on the north side of the bridge and prepared designs for a new northern approach to the bridge, but it is now essential that this priority is acknowledged in the

Future Transport Strategy to fund a new bridge crossing over Wagonga Inlet and address the poor intersection at the Princes Highway/Centenary Drive intersection.

Princes Highway – Other Priorities

We congratulate the efforts of the NSW Government to upgrade the Princes Highway to an appropriate highway standard between Gerrigong and Bomedary. The provision of a four lane highway an appropriate by-pass at Berry is long overdue.

We also recognise the excellent work recently completed at Termeil and South Durras intersection, and now underway at Burrill Lake and Digmans Creek.

In the short-medium term the RMS should continue to deliver upgrades to the existing Princes Highway. The following is a preliminary list of works that should be addressed in the short term.

- i) Princes Highway coupling/decoupling area & rest stop north of Batemans Bay
- ii) Princes Highway/Old Highway, Batemans Bay – intersection upgrade & traffic lights
- iii) Princes Highway, Mogo – pedestrian activated traffic lights
- iv) Princes Highway, Mogo – bridge widening and intersection upgrade Tomakin Road
- v) Princes Highway/Congo Road – intersection upgrade
- vi) Princes Highway/Riverside Drive, Narooma – protected right hand turn intersection upgrade
- vii) Princes Highway/Field Street, Narooma –traffic lights with pedestrian facilities
- viii) Princes Highway bridge widening at Lemon Tree Creek, Middle Creek, Smarts Creek and Alsopps (near Brogo Hall)
- ix) Princes Highway – Mogo to Cullendulla (north of Batemans Bay) – road realignment with four through lanes
- x) Princes Highway – additional overtaking lane program (Ulladulla to Narooma \$50m)
- xi) Princes Highway - safety improvement program (Ulladulla to the Victorian border \$50m)
- xii) Princes Highway – new bridge Brogo River
- xiii) Princes Highway – Digmans Creek to Bermagui turnoff – road realignment and widening
- xiv) Princes Highway – other works as necessary to secure B-double access to Eurobodalla.

Should Eden be developed as a freight related port, this would require a full review of the requirements for the Princes Highway between Eden and Batemans Bay. The highway would need to be upgraded to a much higher standard with all B-double impediments removed.

Princes Highway – Future By-passes

In the medium to long term, by-passes will be required at Milton-Ulladulla, Mogo and Moruya. The RMS should be funded to complete the necessary corridor assessment, planning and acquisition to secure future by-pass corridors to ensure appropriate town planning. This should look at appropriate interim solutions so that the high cost of providing by-pass roads is met when required. This is particularly critical at south east Moruya which is now under-going urban residential growth which may impede a future by-pass route.

The timing of the by-pass at Mogo is anticipated to be medium to long term and will depend on the short term solution provided to widen Mogo bridge and provision of a suitable intersection treatment at the Princes Highway/Tomakin Road intersection.

Narooma already has an internal by-pass corridor reserved. This internal by-pass was previously assessed by the RMS as offering a high benefit cost ratio due to the significant reduction in travel time and distance travelled by avoiding the existing windy highway route. Whilst this internal by-pass is not required at this time, it will require consideration in conjunction with the planning for the new bridge over Wagonga Inlet. The majority of the internal by-pass route south of the bridge is relatively straight forward and can

integrated into the urban landscape with ease. However, the section of the internal by-pass nearer Davison Street is steep and would require careful design to provide a suitable urban design solution.

There is also a road corridor reserved north of the bridge at Narooma. This is far more challenging both from a physical terrain, construction and environmental perspective. This section of work would not be required to achieve the southern internal by-pass road, which could be delivered independently of the northern section.

To this extent, a number of community representatives have suggested the RMS should investigate an option to the west of Wagonga Inlet. This would be a hugely costly exercise and would not be justified for many decades.

Princes Highway – Long Term

Within the 40 year planning horizon of the NSW Transport Masterplan, it is inevitable that the standard of highway south of Nowra to the Victorian border will need to move to freeway standard to service the growth over time. That is, a standard similar to that being constructed now between Gerrigong and Berry will be required.

For the highway to be effective long term, the RMS must work closely with Councils to provide integrated transport solutions. The effectiveness of the current Princes Highway to perform as a primary transport corridor is significantly hampered by strip development along the highway frontage at Albion Park, Nowra, Wandandian, Milton-Ulladulla and other locations. Similarly, the alignment chosen for some past upgrades has reflected a desire to provide an access road, rather than a primary transport corridor, as occurred at Kiama.

Greater priority needs to be given to the long term needs of the Princes Highway to ensure the highway performs its function as the primary transport route along the coast of NSW south of Sydney.

Principles for Freight Transport Infrastructure Planning

Eurobodalla Shire Council is a member of The South East Australian Transport Strategy Inc. (SEATS), which advocates for transport network improvements in the region of south-eastern NSW, eastern Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory. To ensure a strategic approach to the ongoing delivery of logistics and freight, SEATS developed the following principles for the planning of the future freight transport network. SEATS recommends that all levels of government should consider these principles when planning freight transport infrastructure and we endorse them (as amended) for incorporation in the Future Transport Strategy.

1. Promote economic and employment opportunities through a regionally based approach to transport needs.
2. Integrate freight network plans and land use planning.
3. Maintain and improve existing and future business productivity, efficiency and viability in the safest way possible.
4. Strategic planning is network based which then informs freight corridors, ***with detailed preliminary design work on specific routes where required (such as the Braidwood to Batemans Bay section of the Kings Highway)*** and priority infrastructure projects.
5. The transport strategy integrates all transport modes – rail, road, seaports and airports; including suitable intermodal facilities, ***and caters for the need of pedestrians and cyclists.***
6. Strategic priorities are based on area wide needs, and economic outcomes, ***and taking into take account of social equity to deliver minimum service obligations and road safety outcomes across all of NSW.***
7. Freight network planning recognises environmental and climate change impacts.
8. Planning for freight infrastructure is carried out on a short, medium and long term basis as required by economic, industry and community drivers.
9. Longer term plans of overall transport requirements must result in setting aside suitable transport corridors at the earliest possible time. ***This is exactly the case for the section of the Kings Highway between Braidwood and Batemans Bay.***
10. Network strategic planning recognises Federal, State, local and industry policies and strategies.
11. Network strategic planning recognises cross border issues and influences from outside of the SEATS region that impact on the region.
12. General, local and tourism traffic, together with behavioural issues, are considered in freight planning in order to provide a safe outcome for all users ***including pedestrians and cyclists.***

Moruya Airport Development

The Moruya Regional Airport is a priority for Eurobodalla's future transport needs and ongoing investment into will enable transport connectivity across regions and borders and facilitate related economic development.

Moruya Airport is a key regional access point and seen as a driver for economic growth and tourism. It provides an important transport option for business, tourism, private air travel, government, medical and emergency and other services.

Eurobodalla Shire Council has adopted a Master Plan for redevelopment of Moruya Airport. The Master Plan identifies the strategic direction for this critical transport infrastructure and potential aerodrome redevelopment opportunities. The potential redevelopment opportunities include:

- Provision for new commercial aviation businesses
- Storage for private aircrafts
- Aviation-related tourism development
- A new aquaculture hatchery (for oysters and other aquaculture activities)
- Development of a residential airport
- Eco-tourist accommodation and/or facilities
- Tourism support businesses.

A business case based on the Master Plan identified that if all phases of the Master Plan are implemented, there would be a positive net present value to Council of \$9.3M, and approximately 256 full time jobs would be created generating \$42M to the regional economy.

To 2016, Council has been successful in attracting \$7.1M from the NSW (\$4.5M) and Australian (\$2.6M) Governments, to which Council will add \$2.5M to commence redevelopment activities. These will include runway upgrades, terminal improvements, improved passenger and aircraft parking facilities and general aviation hangars. The terminal upgrade is now complete and other works are scheduled for commencement in 2017-18 subject to finalisation of approvals.

This development will also increase the availability of commercial space for airport-related activities and provide the necessary power, water and sewer infrastructure to open up a tourism accommodation precinct. This, however, is only the start of the required development, funding stages one and three of the eight stage Master Plan, for this essential transport infrastructure to enable it to grow and service the region for the next 40 years.



Continued investment into the Moruya Regional Airport is essential for Eurobodalla's future transport needs.

Marine Infrastructure

An emerging market for the Eurobodalla economy is the marine transport market and investment in this area of future transport should be planned for in the short term to ensure the area is well-positioned for future growth. Eurobodalla is already experiencing significant growth in tourism via ocean going marine vessels now coming into Batemans Bay. With the growth of Eden as a deep water port, there is significant potential to expand our economy through supportive marine infrastructure and to build on the cruise ship market.

Batemans Bay remains the only coastal destination within the required distance of the global city of Canberra for cruise ships to be able to deliver a practical tourism destination and experience.

Batemans Bay Marina

The Economic Development and Employment Lands Strategy (ESC 2011) identified the Batemans Bay Marina as a critical piece of marine infrastructure for the Eurobodalla region, being the only significant marina along the Eurobodalla coast. There is both the demand and the potential for an expansion of the marina to increase the number of berths and improve the supporting infrastructure and activities, including marine service industries, commercial activities and tourist facilities.

The Batemans Bay Marina is advancing to become a productive and active development. This includes foreshore restaurants, oyster bar, businesses and office space. Continuing marina development will provide a trigger for confident investment in other development activities within Eurobodalla and region.

Incentives should be provided to aid in the development of the Batemans Bay Marina for the broader economic and employment benefits of the region.

The NSW Government should give consideration to low interest finance arrangements to an accelerated delivery program, subject to agreement by the Marina lessee. This could be achieved through renegotiated lease arrangements.

The NSW Government has already invested in collaboration with the Marina lessee to deepen the Clyde River sand bar. This is already showing direct benefit with yachts and cruisers over the 30m length now accessing Batemans Bay. The NSW Government must continue to monitor appropriate dredging to secure boating access to the Clyde River.

Properly developed, the Batemans Bay Marina, with certainty of the level of passage across the bar, will provide boating facilities for the longer term and complement other local boating facilities within the region to enhance connectivity via our waterways.

We encourage the NSW Government to assess the potential to expand the Batemans Bay Marina lease area to create additional capacity and land based commercial space on the western side of the marina to maximise returns to the NSW Government and facilitate tourist related commercial development.

This would further reinforce Batemans Bay as a key tourism boating destination on the NSW coast integrating perfectly with other coastal destinations including Sydney, Port Kembla, Shellharbour and Eden.

We further encourage the NSW Government to investigate the longer term potential to expand marina facilities within Batemans Bay through private investment under NSW Government leasehold to activate Batemans Bay as a regional boating mecca.



Marine transport has a strong future in Eurobodalla

Clyde River Wharf

The RMS has agreed to upgrade the T-wharf as part of the Batemans Bay bridge project. Council strongly supports the provision of a NSW Government owned wharf facility for use by commercial operators using the Clyde River estuary and to facilitate accessible tourism connection within the Batemans Bay CBD.

The potential users of this facility include houseboats, yachts, the oyster industry, tourism and commercial operators using the Clyde River, all of whom contribute income to the NSW Government. Once constructed, the NSW Government could potentially lease this wharf facility to private enterprise to enable maintenance of the facility under a user-pays system. The facility could also have provision to service recreational boaters seeking short term access to the Batemans Bay CBD.

The NSW Government currently owns marine infrastructure within the Bay, for example the T-wharf on Clyde Street, rockwalls and the Batemans Bay Marina. The arrangement for the proposed commercial wharf is a natural fit with the NSW Government's other commercially focussed infrastructure.

This proposal has major economic benefit to the NSW Government as it allows the international export license for oysters in the Clyde River to proceed. Austrade is already working closely with the Australia's Oyster Coast on advancing export proposals into Asia, including Singapore and China.

Waterway Dredging

To enable consistent and accessible waterway connectivity, the NSW Government needs to be responsible for all dredging of NSW waterways and develop a Centre of Marine Excellence to provide the expertise to facilitate accelerated outcomes for private investment as well as strategically placed public infrastructure.

We urge the NSW Government to introduce a fully funded dredging program for all boating access in NSW tidal waters. In particular for the Batemans Bay Sand Bar, Wagonga Inlet and Tuross Lake systems are current issues within Eurobodalla.

The NSW Government collects income from a wide range of sources from a wide range users of waterways including leases and licenses. These funds should be used to provide adequate boating access to waterway facilities including Council owned boat ramps.

We believe it is an unreasonable imposition on coastal Councils to expect our community will fund dredging operations for boating access.

We specifically ask the NSW Government to fully fund an ongoing review of boating access of all boating facilities in Eurobodalla.

Eden Port

Eden has the potential to serve as another significant freight port in the long term. As the transport masterplan has a 40 year horizon, this plan should recognise the need to more fully investigate the major investments that would be required on supporting highway, road and urban development infrastructure. This detailed study should be completed in the short to medium term to assess the likely opportunities and impacts of such a development.

In the meantime, the existing ports in NSW should continue to be supported, including necessary infrastructure upgrades to ensure the efficient delivery of freight to market, both inward and outward.

C. Implementing Clever Vehicles and Smart Systems

The future in automated and fully connected and automated vehicles (CAVs), particularly in the logistics sector will offers potential opportunities but will also necessitate significant investment to ensure that these opportunities can be realised. This will require supporting infrastructure (such as rapid charging stations) strategically placed along the highway and in major towns.

Improvements to the Kings and Princes Highways, particularly in terms of curve realignments and bridge upgrades are essential for B-Double access. This infrastructure will be critical for future CAVs and logistics supply to the NSW Far South Coast. Further, CAVs will need highly accurate and reliable real-time data on their own location, the location of other vehicles, the roads and the landscape. Such data can only be gathered by a network of connected 'smart' infrastructure, which is essential investment for major logistics routes as a priority.

Council is also working with the NSW Roads and Maritime Services on making Batemans Bay CBD a smart city in terms of way finding signage, traffic movement and parking provision.

In a low population areas with varied terrain and limited road networks, the opportunities for drone freight to deliver goods to more isolated areas or in emergencies may exist.

Subsidised flexible or 'on demand' transport may also have a place in the long term transport future of the region, to help address the needs of a dispersed community and fill the gaps where public transport is not available or runs infrequently. While future driverless vehicles may provide solutions for more urban areas, improved mapping and reliable real-time data or alternative solutions is likely may still have to be in place for rural areas with unpredictable hazards, such as wildlife.



D. Transport Infrastructure for Place Making

Well-integrated transport and land use planning can improve safety, reduce congestion and help make our communities better places to live. The sustainability of local and regional road infrastructure remains a significant challenge across NSW regional areas. We endorse the *NSW Roads Congress Communique*, which provides a blueprint for the NSW and Australian Governments as to the actions required to better address this issue. This will be vital from a road safety, economic development and social equity perspective.

NSW Roads Congress Communique can be found at:

<https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/IPWEA/c7e19de0-08d5-47b7-ac3f-c198b11cd969/UploadedImages/Congress/2017%20CongressNewFolder/Local%20Roads%20Congress%202017%20Final%20Communique.pdf>

Road funding in NSW to sustain the existing network is currently under-funded by an estimated \$447M per annum [source IPWEA (NSW) Roads & Transport Directorate Road Asset Benchmarking Project 2014 – Road Management Report – May 2015]. This excludes the necessary funding to upgrade local roads and bridges to release productivity improvements to address the ‘first’ mile transport impediments on the local and regional road networks across NSW.

We urge the NSW and Australian Governments to work with LGNSW to negotiate for a better long term funding model for Local Government for local and regional roads using the Congress outcomes as the basis for the way forward.

The high cost of road accidents in both trauma and economic terms (estimated at \$7.5B in 2016 in NSW), must be addressed. With 45% of these accidents occurring on roads under NSW Council control, the NSW Government must work with all Councils to develop formal Road Safety Plans for each Council area. We recognise the \$380,000 offered to IPWEA NSW to train Road Safety Auditors in each Council and applaud this initiative.



Evolving towns and increases in traffic require retro-fitting of existing road networks to provide for road safety – the Narooma Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan identified the need for traffic lights at the corner of the Princes Highway and Field Street, Narooma

Local road priorities

Eurobodalla Shire Council has invested in undertaking transport planning, traffic studies and asset management planning to better understand local transport needs and developing prioritised solutions. If implemented, the following key local infrastructure projects will have a marked impact on meeting the future transport needs of Eurobodalla and our region, supporting an improved quality of life for our residents and visitors. This includes growing international trade, investment and tourism markets.

Beach Road

Beach Road is a four-lane, two-way bitumen sealed road with two lanes in each direction running almost 9km from the Batemans Bay central business district to Surf Beach.

There is no separation of opposing traffic for the majority of its length with the exception of some of the northern section divided with a narrow centre island. Improving traffic and pedestrian safety must be prioritised as essential for this key regional transport infrastructure.

The removal of a proportion of traffic from Beach Road to Glenella Road provides the opportunity to introduce a more pedestrian friendly environment with activated traffic lights at the Beach Road/Pacific Street intersection with appropriate right turn bays. This was identified in the Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan (PAMP) developed for Beach Road.

The predominant accident type along Beach Road is between vehicles at intersections or rear end impacts. The RMS CrashLink database shows a total of 75 crashes in the five-year period from July 2010 to June 2015. Of these accidents:

- 53% involved vehicle(s) requiring tow-away but with no casualties
- 36% involved vehicle(s) with casualties (excluding pedestrians)
- 11% involved vehicle(s) and with pedestrian casualties (8 people).

The RMS CrashLink data also includes eight pedestrian injuries (including one death) for the period July 2010 to June 2015.

There are seven formalised crossing locations along this 3.5km roadway. Crossing at these roundabouts and signalised intersections is considered a low-risk activity. Crossing in other places by pedestrians, bicycles and motorised scooters users is considered a moderate to high risk activity.

Of the 2010-2015 accidents three were at roundabouts and the other five in areas where people were assumed to be attempting to cross Beach Road mid-block, well away from any intersections.

There are several locations where there is a high percentage of pedestrians crossing mid-block. There is also increased pedestrian activities within the Batemans Bay commercial precinct across Beach Road.

Council recently completed the construction of the Beach Road and Hanging Rock intersection with appropriate provision for pedestrian refuge treatments on the roundabout splitter islands. This has significantly improved the safety of pedestrians crossing to the Hanging Rock Regional Sporting and Educational Precinct.

To address increases in turning traffic and pedestrian related issues, the following priority traffic and road safety improvements are required:

- Beach Road (west of Orient Street to Vesper Street) – increase turning lanes and increased exit capacity to/from both MacKay Park precinct and Beach Road. This upgrade will service the Batemans Bay commercial district and the proposed redevelopment of Mackay Park. The funding for these works has already been committed by the Australian Government in the 2016 Federal Election. Design work and

detailed project planning will commence in 2017-18 subject to finalisation of the funding deed allocating the funding for the works.

- Beach Road/Pacific Street/Herarde Street intersection upgrade including new traffic lights. This will provide protected right turn lanes on Beach Road with appropriate pedestrian crossing facilities at the traffic lights. This will greatly enhance safety for motorists and pedestrians including improving access to Batemans Bay Hospital.
- Beach Road (Batemans Bay Soldiers Club to west of Orient Street) – widening of Beach Road with provision for right turn bays to the southern part of Batemans Bay CBD. The timing of these works will be impacted by the redevelopment of the southern sector of the CBD, particularly between Flora Crescent and Museum Place and the Batemans Bay Soldiers Club land.

George Bass Drive

George Bass Drive is a Regional Road connecting Batemans Bay to Moruya Airport and onto Moruya via North Head Drive. This is the primary road connecting all coastal villages and towns along the coast between Batemans Bay and Moruya. This road services the primary growth areas in Batemans Bay.

Another major thoroughfare, George Bass Drive, a 30km coastal road from Batemans Bay to Moruya, is also a priority for infrastructure improvements to improve safety and reduce congestion now and into the future.

Regional road funding in NSW to sustain the existing network is currently under-funded by an estimated \$89M per annum [source IPWEA (NSW) Roads & Transport Directorate Road Asset Benchmarking Project 2014 – Road Management Report – May 2015]. This excludes the necessary funding to upgrade local roads and bridges to release productivity improvements to address the ‘first’ mile transport impediments on the local and regional road networks across NSW. We encourage the NSW Government to restore adequate on-going funding to sustain the Regional Road network across NSW.

This would however not address the works required to support economic growth as areas such as Eurobodalla develop.

The following actions have been identified for construction along George Bass Drive over time to service future developments:

- Roundabout construction George Bass Drive/Tomakin Road/Sunpatch Parade, Tomakin. This will a new entry point to Tomakin township. The funding for these works has already been committed by the Australian Government in the 2016 Federal Election. Design work and detailed project planning will commence in 2017-18 subject to finalisation of the funding deed allocating the funding for the works.
- Provision of an intersection treatment – George Bass Drive/Calga Crescent.
- Duplication of George Bass Drive (Joes Creek to Glenella Road (the Link Road)).
- Duplication of George Bass Drive (Sunshine Bay roundabout northbound to Glenella Road).
- George Bass Drive realignment Grandfathers Gully south.
- George Bass Drive reconstruction and widening Baringa Crescent to Illuka Avenue. These works are required prior to construction of the formal shared pathway in the Eurobodalla Pathways Strategy June 2017.
- George Bass Drive reconstruction and widening Illuka Avenue to Link Road with intersection treatment. These works are required prior to construction of the formal shared pathway in the Eurobodalla Pathways Strategy June 2017.
- Roundabout construction George Bass Drive, Malua Bay.
- Roundabout George Bass Drive/Rosedale Parade, Rosedale (to be provided by developers).
- George Bass Drive/Guerilla Bay intersection upgrade.

- Widening of George Bass Drive rural precincts, where practicable, to 3.5m wide lanes and 2m wide sealed shoulders.

Accept as identified above, these works are currently unfunded and will be progressed as traffic volumes increase on George Bass Drive and funding from grants or other sources becomes available. Council will continue to advocate for grant funding to support these works.

Pathways

The provision of formal off-road pathways is a key local transport option for community access within and between villages for transport, safety and recreation purposes.

Eurobodalla Shire Council has developed a holistic pathways strategy covering both footpaths and shared pathways across the entire Shire. This strategy includes \$11.7M worth of works with Council able to allocate \$3.5m over the next ten years.

Planned pathways are prioritised to best provide connectivity between existing links to facilitate extensive safe, off-road transport options. Our strategy also integrates with existing public bus transport to encourage greater utilisation of this mode to reduce use of cars for short trips to our commercial and recreational precincts. NSW Government support to facilitate the progression of these pathways is a wise investment in a safer and environmentally sustainable future transport.

With pedestrians now representing 18% of all fatalities in NSW, we strongly urge the NSW Government to **introduce a new Active Walking Program** to provide for pedestrian pathways, including appropriate pedestrian crossing facilities. With only 23% of our urban road network having a pathway, a trend of increasing pedestrian related injuries, an ageing population and limited public transport, retro-fitting pedestrian pathways into our existing urban areas is essential to facilitate a connected and healthy community. We **recommend that the NSW Government provide \$50m per annum for this new Active Walking Program to supplement the existing Active Transport Program.**

Continual investment in our pathways network and further expansion will meet current needs for residents and the expanding visitor market, as well as providing for the growth in servicing people with personal mobility devices such as electric bikes and scooters.

By improving pedestrian and cycling infrastructure connectivity and safety, we encourages a more active and engaged community. Together with the obvious health benefits, the provision of formal connections to places of work, commercial business districts, recreation facilities, schools and other facilities reduces the need for people to drive, reducing environmental impacts.

The integration of pathways with bus routes, also encourages greater use of public transport, reducing the number of vehicle trips and the need for parking.

Eurobodalla Pathways Strategy

Council has adopted the Eurobodalla Pathways Strategy June 2017 at its meeting held on the 27 June, 2017. This is a guiding document for the development and implementation of new formal pathway facilities for pedestrians and cyclists within Eurobodalla. The strategy addresses footpaths, pedestrian crossing facilities and shared pathways.

The Pathways Strategy demonstrates Council's commitment to improving safe off-road transport options and community connectivity. To deliver the strategy, Council needs an increased level of support from the NSW and Australian Government. Council has set aside \$3.5M over the next ten years in our long term financial plan.

The Pathways Strategy identifies Eurobodalla has less than one in four urban roads with a formed pathway. Eurobodalla has an aged demographic (trending older) as well as youth, unemployed and socially

disadvantaged members of our community with limited transport options.

The delivery of the outcomes within our Pathways Strategy aims to:

- improve the safety of pedestrians and cyclists through appropriate separation with vehicles
- develop a practical network of facilities with continuous links to key destinations
- encourage walking and cycling as alternative modes of transport
- encourage greater use of public transport through better connectivity with bus routes and stops
- improve accessibility for people with differing abilities and ages
- improve social outcomes for young people and those without access to a motor vehicle
- allow people improved opportunities to get out for a walk or a bicycle ride to socialise with others, thereby helping their mental and physical wellbeing
- promote environmental, recreation, health and economic benefits of walking and cycling.



A cyclist enjoying one of our beautiful coastal shared pathways at Dalmeny

The Pathways Strategy recognises the economic benefit pathways provide by connecting pedestrians and cyclists to business activities, accommodation and recreation areas including beaches and popular lookouts.

The tourism value of the pathways network is also well recognised, with safe shared pathway networks now a feature for visitors to Eurobodalla. The Dalmeny-Kianga-Narooma, Tuross Head, Broulee, South Durras, Batemans Bay and South Head pathways are all examples of shared pathways used by visitors.

The Pathways Strategy also reinforces the need for developers to provide appropriate pathways as part of all subdivisions, medium density and commercial developments (where a nexus is evident), as part of the development approvals process. This ensures the provision of pathways is provided as part of the development, rather than adding to the future burden on ratepayers.

Council relies heavily on the funding from NSW and Australian Governments to implement this strategy, which would otherwise be beyond our ability to deliver.

Council will continue to advocate to Government seeking grants under existing programs, and work with community groups, property owners and developers, to maximise the works undertaken on a priority basis.

Council has developed an objective point score system to guide prioritisation of pathways across the Shire.

Active Walking Program

IPWEA NSW has advocated for the introduction of a new NSW Government Active Walking Program. This has been confirmed in the Congress Communique coming out of the NSW Local Roads Congress held at the NSW Parliament Theatre on 5 June, 2017.

With pedestrians now representing 18% of all fatalities in NSW, **we urge the NSW Government to introduce a new Active Walking Program worth a minimum of \$50m per year to provide for pedestrians, including appropriate pedestrian crossing facilities.** This program should be supplementary and in addition to, the existing Active Transport Program.

Subsidised Community and Public Bus Transport

Community transport plays a vital role in the lives of many people in Eurobodalla with Council providing over 24,000 trips per annum utilising funding from Government, and supported by 19,000 volunteer drive hours. The average age of the passenger is 72 years old. This service should continue to be funded by Government and increased as demand for the service increases.

Public bus services are however limited with commercial bus runs only existing in the Batemans Bay area and at Dalmeny, Kianga and Narooma.

Engagement with the Eurobodalla community via a citizens jury process indicated a strong desire to see the level of public transport between major town centres enhanced by the NSW Government.

Investment in subsidised inter-town bus transport would better address the needs of Eurobodalla's population, which is over represented in aged, youth and socially disadvantaged demographics. This would provide connectivity to education, work, and social interaction.

We urge the NSW Government to investigate options to better fund community and public transport options for our community.

E. Future Customer Service: government, business and community.

Telecommunications

Investment in telecommunications, including fibre, wireless and satellite, are also essential to ensure that the Eurobodalla is on par with the rest of the state and ready to move forward with future developments.

The Australian Government has committed to providing four additional mobile towers in the vicinity of Central Tilba, Bodalla, Nelligen and Clyde Mountain. The latter two will provide a significant boost in communications along the Kings Highway and for the township of Nelligen. This will aid response times to provide a better emergency response service to the high accident length of road along the Kings Highway and provide opportunities to make greater use of current and evolving road safety technologies.

NBN are currently working in Batemans Bay and proposed to roll-out NBN progressively across urban centres in Eurobodalla over the next few years. NBN have already installed wireless towers to service rural areas of Eurobodalla.

Improved connectivity is particularly critical to support current and future transport needs for emergency and other services, including:

- NSW Health – specifically in regards to the Batemans Bay helipad for emergency retrievals
- Regional NSW Service Hub – covering marine, air and road infrastructure.