



Great Southern 2050 Cycling Strategy

Frequently asked questions

Q: What is the Great Southern 2050 Cycling Strategy?

A: The Great Southern 2050 Cycling Strategy will set out a long-term vision for cycling across the region, including an aspirational bike network covering key townsites and interregional connections. The strategy will also identify a range of travel behaviour change and community initiatives to encourage more bike riding across the region.

Q: Who is developing the strategy?

A: The strategy is the initiative of the Department of Transport (DoT) in partnership with the 11 local governments of the Great Southern region. Outdoors Great Southern (OGS) has been contracted by DoT to assist in developing the strategy.

Q: When will the strategy be completed?

A: The draft strategy will be completed by 2023. The document will then be sent to each local government to be endorsed by Council.

Q: Why is the strategy needed?

A: The *Western Australia Bike Network (WABN) Plan 2014-2031* identifies a key action to improve planning for bike riding in the regions – specifically, to identify any gaps in existing networks, plan for future growth corridors, and produce strategic and operational plans for key regional centres and their surrounding areas. This action reflects the growing demand for high-quality cycling infrastructure in regional Western Australia (WA).

As regional centres grow, residents and visitors expect a higher level of bicycle connectivity between work, home and key destinations. In some regions there are also opportunities to improve connectivity between towns. Cycle tourism, in its various forms, is increasingly popular and there are many opportunities in regional WA to capitalise on this industry.

Q: Are similar strategies being developed in other regions?

A: Yes. The Great Southern 2050 Cycling Strategy is one of eleven regional strategies completed or in development. The regional strategies are being developed alongside the Long-Term Cycle Network for Perth and Peel. Combined, these documents will establish the long-term vision for cycling across the State. Further information is available at:

<https://www.transport.wa.gov.au/activetransport/long-term-cycle-network.asp>

Q: Which local governments are involved in the strategy?

A: The strategy defines the Great Southern region by the Great Southern Development Commission boundaries and includes the following local government areas: Albany, Broomehill-Tambellup, Cranbrook, Denmark, Gnowangerup, Jerramungup, Katanning, Kent, Kojonup, Plantagenet, and Woodanilling.

Q: How is the strategy being developed?

A: The strategy is being developed in partnership with the eleven local governments in the region. Each local government is represented on the Project Working Group. Their role is to participate in the development of the strategy by identifying priority projects and programs, contributing to the five-year action plan, and assisting with the stakeholder and community consultation process.

Q: Who is being consulted on the strategy?

A: There are two phases of community and stakeholder consultation.

Phase 1: Key stakeholders (such as schools, cycling groups, and tourism organisations) will assist each local government to identify priorities and develop cycle network plans.

Phase 2: The broader community and other stakeholder groups (such as government agencies, peak bodies, and utility providers) will be invited to provide feedback on the draft network plans.

A Noongar Advisory Group has been established to inform the consultation process with Aboriginal communities and provide feedback on the draft strategy.

Q: Does the strategy focus on short-term initiatives as well as a long-term vision?

A: Yes. Positioned as a long-term strategy to 2050, the final document will include a short-term implementation program (action plan) to prioritise future delivery of infrastructure, activation and capacity building projects through DoT's Western Australian Bicycle Network Grants Program and other funding sources as appropriate.

Q: We already have a local bike plan, why do we need a regional strategy?

A: The regional strategy will identify common themes and opportunities to enable bike riding across the region and produce strategic and operational cycle network plans for identified regional centres and surrounding areas. Projects of regional significance are more likely to engage larger numbers of people (both residents and visitors), facilitate regional connectivity, and support new social and economic opportunities. For example, for many small communities, cycle tourism provides an exciting means to work collaboratively across the region to grow visitor numbers. Such regional initiatives are unlikely to be captured in local bike plans.

Q: Is the purpose of the strategy to build new bike paths?

A: No. While the strategy may recommend the construction of new bike paths in some locations, the primary focus is encouraging more people (residents and visitors) to bike ride.

This can be achieved through a range of initiatives, including improvements to the cycle network plan (such as bike paths, bike lanes, shared-use paths, rail trails); infrastructure to support cycling (such as bike racks and end-of-trip facilities); programs to improve safety and skills development; and community education and activation projects. The strategy aims to capture and promote a diverse range of initiatives to encourage cycling.

Q: What is a cycle network plan?

A: The strategy will incorporate a series of maps which outline the aspirational cycling routes for the region – together these maps form the cycle network plan. These cycling routes will be categorised according to the Western Australian Cycling Network Hierarchy which designates routes by their function, rather than their built form. The Cycling Network Hierarchy identifies five routes - Primary, Secondary, Local, Road Cycling, and Transport Trails. You can download

a copy of the Cycling Network Hierarchy which contains descriptions of each route here: <https://www.transport.wa.gov.au/activetransport/long-term-cycle-network.asp>

Q: Will the strategy replace local bike plans?

A: No. Local Bike Plans and/or Path Network Plans are important planning tools for local government. These plans identify local priorities and will inform the regional strategy. However, not all local initiatives listed in the local plan are of regional significance. There should be strong correlation between local plans and the regional strategy, particularly for projects that are seeking funding through DoT's Western Australian Grants Program.

Q: Our local bike plan is out-of-date; do we need to update it now?

A: Resourcing and other constraints may make it difficult to update your local bike plan while the regional strategy is being completed. However, it will be important to review the local plan to identify which initiatives have been completed, and which initiatives remain high priorities. An internal review will inform the regional strategy and could form the basis for a project scope to develop a new plan in the future.

Q: Our local government doesn't have a local bike plan; do we need one?

A: The need for a local bike plan will be determined by each local government in the context of their Strategic Community Plan and associated planning framework. Some local governments have the capacity to develop a bike plan internally, while others may decide to outsource its development to an expert consultant. DoT has developed a set of guidelines on the purpose, structure, and content of local bike plans which you might find useful.

Q: How can I find out more about the project?

A: There is a project page with more information, including email contact details on DoT's website: <https://www.transport.wa.gov.au/activetransport/long-term-cycle-network.asp>