



Robert Fish
General Manager
Port Macquarie Hastings Council

30/04/2026

SUBMISSION: The Port Macquarie Hasting Region Operational Plan 2026-27

Dear Mr Fish,

We at Better By Bicycle Port Macquarie support the PMHC 2025 Walking and Cycling Plan's vision:

to create a vibrant, sustainable and connected community where safe and accessible walking and cycling infrastructure empowers people of all ages and abilities to thrive.

We were pleased to see the *PMHC 2025 Walking and Cycling Plan (WCP)* outline plans for many shared paths and footpaths as part of a future walking and cycling network. In viewing the PMHC Operational Plan 2026-27 we are disappointed that there is almost no support for funding or creating this network detailed in the plan. With numbers of bike riders booming across our region and the recent fuel crisis, now more than ever is the time to get behind and fund active transport infrastructure. This lack of funding seems out of step with both the priorities outlined in the PMHC 2025 WCP, the 2024 Integrated Transport Plan (ITP) and what the people of our region increasingly want.

We understand that much of Councils' funding is committed to renewing Wastewater Treatment Plants in this year's OP, however, the lack of any funding for active transport initiatives indicates a lack of will, as well as a shortage of funding. There are many low-cost options to support safer



and more inclusive active transport across our region. Keep in mind that for every person that rides rather than drives a car traffic congestion and demand for parking is decreased, so money spent on active transport benefits all road users.

Measuring and communicating improvements in our shared path network

We note that page 13 of the 2026-27 Operational Plan details the number of kilometres of different transport infrastructure in our region such as roads, bridges and footpaths. Given PMHC commitment to increase active transport, as detailed in the 2025 WCP and the 2024 ITP, it is surprising that the number of kilometres of shared path or cycleways is not included. We suggest that in future Operational Plans the distance of shared paths/ cycle ways and quiet streets in our LGA is measured and communicated - thus showcasing all the work that Council does in improving our infrastructure for cyclists.

Communicating the progress of projects funded under Get Active NSW

There is no mention of the progress of the design (and construction) of the shared path to the Education Precinct that received funding under the Get Active NSW Grant in 2025. We are unsure as to whether this has stalled or not being complete. We support the ongoing funding of the design and construction of this shared path. Likewise, the Schools to Schools Path received funding from Get Active NSW Grant for design - yet there are currently no plans that we are aware of to gain funding to construct further sections of this shared path. We request that funding is allocated to progress these projects in the 2026-27 Operational Plan as it would be a pity to shelve such worthy and heavily invested in projects.



Our suggestions to improve our cycle network utility in 2026-27

Beyond this we have some low(er) cost - but big impact suggestions to improve accessibility and utility of our cycling network and enhance tourism opportunities.

- 1. Formalise a trail from Port CBD to the start of the Googik Track on Lake Road as per our Town to Googik Trail Proposal**
Rationale: The Draft Lake Innes Plan of Management (Feb 2026) proposed extending the Googik Track all the way to Lake Cathie - making it approximately 20 km long. This proposal received significant community support with NPWS receiving more than 300 positive submissions for the planned extension. There is an opportunity for PMHC to leverage off this to create a trail linking the town to the Googik Track. A relatively small investment is needed to link existing shared paths from the CBD to the Googik Track to create a Town to Googik Trail. We have outlined a detailed proposal for the [Town to Googik Trail](#) as a presentation and are submitting it as a part of our submission.
- 2. Create and install wayfinding signage to enable pedestrians and cyclists to navigate on key shared path routes.** This wayfinding signage could be piloted within Port CBD, on the proposed Town to Googik Trail, from Port CBD to the netball courts and on the Beach to Beach Shared Path.
Rationale: Wayfinding signage is an effective means to help cyclists (and walkers) move safely from A to B on the existing cycle network. This means more people will learn how to safely access town or their workplace on existing networks increasing uptake of cycling and will have further benefits for tourism.



3. Create and install courtesy signage and markings for shared paths.

Rationale: As numbers of riders increase on our shared paths – the potential for conflict and even collisions with pedestrians also increases. Courtesy signage alerting riders and walkers how to safely share the path combined with line markings (such a centre line, or indicators to slow near bus stops or in underpasses) will give riders and walkers guidance on how to share the space increasing safety and awareness for path users. As per wayfinding signage, this signage could be piloted within Port CBD, on the proposed Town to Googik Trail, from Port CBD to the netball courts and on the Beach To Beach Shared Path.

4. Develop Quite Streets as outlined in the PMH Walking and Cycling Plan

Rationale: The creation of quiet streets is a low-cost way to support creating a safe cycling network as it requires only signage and line markings. When paired with wayfinding signage, quiet streets can be effective in diverting cycled traffic to safe streets and ensuring motorists are mindful of this. We note, despite many proposed quiet streets being outlined in the 2025 PMH Walking and Cycling Plan (p. 18 – p37) none have been constructed to date. We suggest this year's Operational Plan funds the extensive rollout of quiet streets (in keeping with this plan) in particular on Kooloongbung Close, on Bay Street (where bike lanes were recently removed).

5. Create a pop-up cycleway on Park Street.

Rationale: The long flat road to Settlement Point on Park Street is currently flanked by bike lanes that are well used by recreational and sporting cyclists alike. We are impressed with council's recent action to stop residents parking in these lanes – however as the saying goes, paint is not protection. This stretch would be perfect



for the creation of a pop-up cycleway on both sides of the road. Such a cycleway would benefit serious cyclists, recreational cyclists and users of mobility devices living along the canals. Further grant funding could see the pop-up cycleway transformed into a permanent cycleway.

6. Fund a project partnering with NPWS to improve access and signage of the Googik Track.

Rationale: The Googik Track has recently increased in length and now exceeds 6.5 km from Lake Rd to the Ruins Way. It provides a safe off road way for people to travel between Lake Innes, Crestwood, the Industrial area and the CBD. It also has potential to become a tourism drawcard. However, lack of signage and access means it is underutilised by tourists and locals alike. Improving access and signage has potential to massively increase usability and connectivity of our town.

In summary

For all of these potential projects Better By Bicycle Port Macquarie, as the peak bicycle user group in our region, is more than happy to assist and share our knowledge as end users with council in their development. We are also be more than happy to promote Council's successes on these projects through our social media channels.