

MEDIA RELEASE

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Plan ready to guide North West Coastal Pathway

A master plan for a 110 kilometre shared walking and cycling path connecting the five municipalities between Latrobe and Wynyard is now complete. The North West Coastal Pathway master plan and accompanying design tool kit have been developed to inform each council's construction funding applications and own local pathway planning.

The suggested North West Coastal Pathway route takes advantage of existing paths and has been selected to utilise current road reserves and rail corridors, avoid private land, maximise the distance from cars and active rail lines, highlight natural locations and views, avoid places of environmental significance, encourage commuting activity and ensure user safety.

The construction estimate for the remaining sections of the North West Coastal Pathway is up to \$26.4 million. Local Councils have already completed about 44 kilometres of shared pathway and it's hoped that sections will continue to be added as funding becomes available.

Central Coast Council General Manager and North West Coastal Pathway steering committee member, Sandra Ayton, has seen firsthand the popularity of the Ulverstone – Turners Beach shared pathway and believes that the new master plan and tool kit will be a useful resource for councils. "The plan consolidates pathway experiences and knowledge from the five councils and identifies best practices from around Australia," Ms Ayton said. "It will help with council planning and ensure that sections are built consistently to one day connect and create a great regional asset."

The pathway plans were developed through the Cradle Coast Authority with a steering committee comprised of representatives from Safer Roads for Cycling Tasmania, Sport and Recreation Tasmania, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Infrastructure Energy and Resources Tasmania and local councils. Funding for the plan was provided by the State Government's Trails and Bikeways Program with contributions from Latrobe, Devonport City, Central Coast, Burnie City and Waratah-Wynyard Councils.

Based on economic analysis of similar pathway projects in Victoria, estimates indicate that a completed North West Coastal Pathway has the potential to attract an additional 10,000 visitors to the Cradle Coast region annually, equating to an injection of \$2.5 million to the local economy each year. The health and wellbeing benefits of shared pathway infrastructure are also well recognised.

Copies of the North West Coastal Pathway master plan and tool kit can be obtained from the Cradle Coast Authority web site: www.cradlecoast.com/north_west_coastal_pathway.html

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