



## Belangegroep Stellenbosch Interest Group

14 June 2021

Director: Infrastructure Services  
Mr Deon Louw (engineering.services@ Stellenbosch.gov.za)  
Stellenbosch Municipality  
Plein Street  
STELLENBOSCH

Dear Mr Louw

### COMMENT ON THE DRAFT NON-MOTORISED TRANSPORT (NMT) POLICY FOR STELLENBOSCH

The Stellenbosch Interest Group (SIG) refers to the following three documents, concerning the above, which were released for public comment on 14 May 2021 calling for comment by 14 June 2021:

- Non-motorised transport policy - draft version 1 - January 2021
- Review, Update and Consolidation of the Stellenbosch NMT Masterplan & Cycle Plan - Project Report - December 2020
- Annexure A & B Network Maps & Implementation Plan

The SIG commends the Municipality for embarking on a NMT policy initiative. The successful implementation thereof remains to be seen.

Although the SIG is in principle in agreement with the overarching ideals of the draft policy are we of the opinion that the actual Network Maps (specifically the one for Stellenbosch) are ill-conceived for the following reasons.

- In the draft policy it is stated: **6.3 Pedestrian-friendly streets in the CBD: All streets in Stellenbosch CBD will be managed in such a way that they become more pedestrian-friendly and prioritize the needs of more vulnerable road users.**

Yet, if one looks at the Network Map not ALL the streets will have some form of intervention. This needs to be clarified.

- There is nowhere in any of the documents a description of the Network Maps' legend/categories for the "proposed" and "existing" types. Ideally there should be a map for "proposed" and a separate map for "existing" because the overlay map is confusing and some of the information apparently disappears. For example, key streets in the CBD and surrounds are marked as "NMT facilities with Partial Separation (Class 2)". What does this mean? How will it be introduced in, for example, Dorp, Merriman or Bird Street? One is left guessing as to what is meant by partial separation. The SIG's understanding is that if a street such as Dorp Street, for example, should be partially separated it will imply that the street be converted into a one-way street (in the one lane) and the other lane be used as a cycling lane. Is this what is proposed?

- Although the SIG is not opposed to pedestrianization of streets in the historic core (in fact the SIG would like to see the pedestrianized street network expanded across the historic core) as the logic behind pedestrianising Church and Andringa Streets is at present perplexing. These streets are the "calmest" streets in the core where cyclists and pedestrians feel most comfortable and safe in moving about. The problem with these streets is, however, that they are cluttered with parking bays, while the sidewalks are cluttered with café and restaurant furniture. By removing all the parking bays in these streets without closing off the streets will go a long way in creating a better public space experience to be enjoyed. The roads can then be divided into cycling/walking and driving lanes.

In the Review, Update and Consolidation of the Stellenbosch NMT Masterplan & Cycle Plan on p. 20 it is stated

- "An investigation into the potential of cycling in Stellenbosch Town in 2015 indicated that the main barriers to cycling are traffic safety, the lack of cycling infrastructure and personal safety concerns. Only a complete urban network that provides safe and direct routes will have the impact to increase the status and utilisation of NMT, in particular cycling." Furthermore on p. 39 it is stated that: "Implement cycle routes in CBDs (cycle lanes and paths (sidewalk or off-street)): A continuous cycle network should be developed in the CBD that enables people to cycle from point A to B in the most direct manner, along a continuous network of lanes, paths and routes. In the same way that pedestrians can navigate across the CBD. Various tools are available to achieve this, and some actions include the following:

- Trade parking for cycle lanes.
- Share sidewalks with pedestrians but do not attempt to squeeze all users on a sidewalk if there is insufficient space. Note that a cyclists need 1.4m effective clear

space. If this space is not available due to conflicting pedestrians and street furniture, cyclists will start to use the road again.

- Bicycle priority/ accommodation at intersections.
- Share wide pedestrian routes and public space.
- Dropped kerbs at all level changes.”

However, if one scrutinizes Annexure B (the maps) it is clear that the above is not reflected as such in the network. The current plan fails to address this exact weakness identified in the 2015 study, namely, a complete network, with safe and direct routes. If one looks at Annexure B for Stellenbosch it is obvious that not a lot of logical thinking has gone into working out the cycling routes that link the surrounding neighbourhoods connected to the central/CBD core area of Stellenbosch. For example, bicycle lanes (indicated with red dots on the map) are confined to a couple of streets around the CBD. How the CBD will be connected to a complete bicycle road or route network is completely absent, thus nullifying the notion of all forms of NMT in the core.

- In the two documents a picture of Stellenbosch having reached full capacity is painted: yet the integrated transport plan that will provide for public transport networks, park and ride sites, and a pedestrianized historic core has not been implemented.

Several other issues in the Review, Update and Consolidation of the Stellenbosch NMT Masterplan & Cycle Plan that require clarity are the following:

- p. 73 - **The proposed TOD scheme for the Adam Tas corridor is illustrated in the four conceptual diagrams on the next page** - this is missing in the document, please ensure that it is inserted.

- p 75 - **SM confirmed that the implementation of the Adam Tas TOD project is on hold indefinitely, and the extent of the upgrades may be revised and reduced. Additional EMME modelling of the TOD proposals were also not required as part of the RMP update** - Clarity on this is needed. The Adam Tas SDF (currently in process of design) needs to feed into the NMT and ITP of the Municipality. With the proposed densification and development of the ATC the Municipality only has one chance to plan transport requirements properly for the future.

- p. 106 **Upgrade to dual carriageway. Increased capacity from CBD to Adam Tas and northbound traffic on the R44 can access Adam Tas without using the Adam Tas/R44 intersection** - This is a knee-jerk reaction suggestion and which the SIG does not support this as it will severely impact the most historic street in Stellenbosch.

- p. 119 **Public Transport can play a major role in reducing private vehicle dependencies, and Stellenbosch needs to invest much more time and effort toward these solutions considering the existing poor rail services and public transport availability from neighbouring municipalities, such as the City of Cape Town's existing and planned MyCiTi IRT network.** - the SIG fully supports this suggestion but does not understand why negotiations around this issue have not yet commenced. A MyCiti network feeding Somerset-West, Strand, Gordon's Bay and Stellenbosch will go a long way in alleviating traffic congestion between Stellenbosch and Somerset West.

- p. 97 - **The comparative results in Figure 7-15 show a very small general impact on the road system, with a slight decrease of trips into the Stellenbosch town area and vice versa for outbound commuters. The traffic increases in the town centre is expected to add marginally to those network elements that are already congested, but the overall impact appears to be relatively small and of short duration. The traffic growth is largely in proportion to the scale of the densification assumption of 20%. Although the Municipality is actively promoting NMT, no meaningful shift to NMT or public transport became apparent, largely because this exercise did not allow for additional employment in the town centre, or for the use of second dwellings as student accommodation or lower income housing.** - It is difficult to understand what this means.

- **The policy should also address the issue of delivery vehicles in the central core. A major contributor to traffic congestion in Dorp Street is the delivery trucks at Checkers. Bylaws should be introduced to prohibit delivery of goods during peak hour periods.**

- In the draft NMT policy it is stated that the Municipality will continuously consult with the "NMT Working Group". The SIG would like to be part of this working group to consult with other interest groups in Stellenbosch like the SIG.

**To conclude, although the SIG is in favour of a NMT policy; proper, more detailed, explanatory maps of the proposed interventions are urgently needed to provide more sound input.**

Kind regards

Patricia Botha (Chairperson)

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