

Stellenbosse Belastingbetalersvereniging *Stellenbosch Ratepayers' Association*

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COMMENT ON THE DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE INTEGRATED TRANSPORT PLAN (CITP) FOR STELLENBOSCH

The Stellenbosch Ratepayers' Association (SRA) refers to the above-mentioned draft document which was released for public comment by the Municipality on 14 May 2021, with the closing date for such comment being 14 June 2021.

1. As a point of departure, the SRA considers that the CITP should be what it is meant to be, i.e., **a comprehensive transport plan**. This plan should and must be a "strategic pro-active plan" and not as currently appears to be the case; "a reactive tactical plan". In the absence of a strategic approach, Stellenbosch is heading along the route of "death by a thousand cuts". In addition to the contents of this letter, please take note of the attachments marked as **Appendix "A"** and **Appendix "B"**. These documents have been prepared by technical working groups of the SRA and form an important part of the submission and representations made by the SRA.

2. In summary the SRA sees the proper point of departure for a CITP policy to be as follows:

- *"The Municipality's transport vision and objectives need to be updated to ensure:*

- *Connecting of the outlying communities with the CBD in a safe and dignified manner, ensuring access to opportunities.*
- *Striving towards car-free living and a modal shift in Stellenbosch CBD, towards public transport, walkability, and cycle-ability.*
- *Supporting and advancing social and inclusive economic development.*
- *Alignment with the key imperatives of poverty alleviation and reduced inequality.*
- *A road network which supports the Municipality's transport vision."*

3. The above vision and objectives strive towards achieving more and better public transport facilities and NMT but as the saying goes "the devil is in the detail". The current draft plan, however, goes on to focus on more and bigger roads – which is counter-productive. If the Municipality really wants to implement and realise its transport vision, the proposed road network would look vastly different from what is now proposed. (Structure follows strategy)

4. The draft CITP Report then states that:

"The 2019-2020 update of the CITP also takes into account the recently approved Municipal Spatial Development Framework (MSDF) and proposes a more effective approach to improve transport (including freight), public transport and NMT (non-motorized transport)."

The MSDF proposes exactly the right approach, i.e., a focus on public transport, improved transport and NMT. The draft CITP, however, focusses more on roads and the use of private motor vehicles. The draft CITP also in no way complies with or conforms with the seven fundamental principles and policies contained in the MSDF.

5. One cannot keep on building more and bigger roads, based on a projection that motor vehicles (especially private motor cars) will always be the preferred or the biggest demand/mode of Transport. The more road capacity that is provided, the more attractive it becomes to use privately owned vehicles.

Public transport, freight and NMT will inevitably be less attractive, thereby defeating the stated objective.

6. The capacity of a road is not only determined by its width but also by the capacity of intersections along the road to permit movement. That is why the improvements, suggested for the R44 between Somerset West and Stellenbosch, will constitute fruitless and wasteful expenditure. The Consultants for this project have in fact admitted that the traffic flow and queuing time at Stellenbosch will not improve. Probably, it will worsen, as more vehicles will arrive at the entrance to Stellenbosch in a shorter time and then be forced to stop. Added to this there is an increasing tendency by local authorities to continue installing Traffic lights at intersections instead of following the worldwide strategy of providing roundabouts. Even in America the idea of bigger and better "routes" has been scrapped. The average number of occupants per vehicle on the R44 is 1,25. Obviously, measures to double the occupancy rate of vehicles would be far more effective and efficient than building additional road space, as more road space simply attracts more vehicles.

7. The idea of a Western Bypass is an equally fruitless and wasteful objective, because the percentage of through traffic does not justify the construction of such a road. Several studies have already proved this fact. Furthermore, the provision of such a road will have an extremely negative impact on the unique rural and agricultural character that forms the backbone of historic Stellenbosch. Additional roads will also immediately shift or expand the urban edge, reduce opportunities for densification, and counter the development of smart cities.

8. The current tradition of unsustainable development and urban sprawl with ever more privately owned vehicles will continue. One does not have to be a specialist to observe that the largest percentage of motor cars entering or exiting Stellenbosch, during peak periods, is not through traffic (i.e., traffic that does not have its origin or destination in Stellenbosch). The upgrade at the of the R44/Adam Tas intersection with Bird Street is an excellent example which demonstrates this fact. During peak periods, the double lanes provided for through traffic have very few vehicles, while the single lanes in and out of Stellenbosch have long que lengths. These que lengths are also exacerbated by the Traffic lights at the Kayamandi intersection, and at the entrance to Welgevonden.

9. Stellenbosch claims to be and seeks recognition as the innovative capital. If, however, Stellenbosch continues with its antiquated idea of providing more and bigger roads and focuses on the demands generated by privately owned vehicles, as this draft CITP does, money will be wasted, the character of Stellenbosch will be destroyed, and opportunities to build and implement smart city concepts will be lost. Stellenbosch cannot keep on moving people further and further from job opportunities.

10. Stellenbosch surely needs be more innovative than is evident from the current plans. The policies and principles contained in the approved MSDF promote the right sort of things that need to be implemented. Stellenbosch Municipality, accordingly, needs to act responsibly and do what is in the best interest of Stellenbosch residents. The Municipality may take note of the contents of the draft CITP, but it should not implement its recommendations.

Kind regards,



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