



**Submission CCC 2003/04 Edition Draft Annual Plan
Circulation: Mayor, All Councillors, Cycle Planner**

Introduction

Spokes appreciates the opportunity to make a submission on the City's Draft Annual Plan. Our submission discusses a number of **general areas** where we feel that **more investment** is needed to allow cycling to fulfil its potential in improving our urban quality of life, and comments on **three specific projects** already included in the Plan where action is requested this year. These projects are the **Creyke Road Living Streets** project, the **Blenheim Road Deviation** and **Hagley Avenue Cycle Facilities**.

More Investment in the Cycling City

Having reviewed the Draft Annual Plan Spokes would like to make the following comments:

1. That the Council be **formally congratulated for ongoing investment in quality cycle facilities** and **cycling promotion/education initiatives** in the City, demonstrating commitment to the Christchurch Cycling Strategy.
2. That in light of the current **New Zealand Transport Strategy** (MoT, December 2002), the Council be further congratulated for having led the way nationally with provision for cyclists and pedestrians over the past five years. Now that the government's stated vision for New Zealand is "an affordable, integrated, safe, responsive, and sustainable transport system", we urge the Council to build on its efforts to improve the state of cycling in Christchurch, as an essential component of a sustainable, healthy city.
3. That Council recognises that there is still a huge amount of work to be done to **implement the Cycle Strategy and Associated Cycle Network Plan** and continues to allocate sufficient funding to ensure implementation within a reasonable time frame.
4. A reminder to Council that there is still a **marked discrepancy** between **percentage spend** on cycle facilities in the City Streets budget (average 2.2% over the 5 years), as compared to the census data for cycle trips (7.3% of trips to work by bicycle)
5. That the Council recognises that **Transfund subsidy** is available for increased investment in cycling projects and that subsidy should be sought to **construct projects additional to those budgeted in the 5 year plan**. Accounting procedures should be modified to ensure that Transfund subsidies are directly accounted against cycling facility budgets.
6. That Council **recognises the long term cost savings that cycling provision provides** when allocating funding for new cycling projects (due to far lower impacts of cycles on city streets relative to vehicular traffic and associated environmental and safety costs of motorised transport)

7. That Council makes a strong commitment in the short-term to **funding projects that implement the goals of the Council's Pedestrian Strategy, Central City Strategy, and Parking Strategy**. All of these policies have the potential to improve conditions for cyclists, as part of their traffic management outcomes. To date however we have yet to see much significant progress, despite the former two strategies being out for over two years.
8. That Council makes a strong commitment in the short-term to **funding projects that implement the goals of the Regional Council's Public Transport Strategy**. Projects such as bus-priority lanes have the potential to also improve conditions for cyclists, by both providing additional dedicated space and reducing traffic demand. Since the opening of the Bus Exchange we have yet to see much significant progress, despite the exponential growth in bus demand.
9. That Council continues to support and commit to **funding "Living Streets" Projects** throughout the city. Spokes is very supportive of the Living Streets concept, and we look forward to its continued progress in Christchurch. Although we feel that the current Living Streets implementations involve relatively "minimal" interventions compared with some truly "liveable" streets in European cities, we accept that this is a learning curve for both the Council and the community. We gather that the Council is concerned about the extra costs of a Living Streets make-over compared with a traditional street reconstruction. However this concern appears to be missing the long-term benefits, if it means improved property values, increased street "ownership" by the community (resulting in reduced crime and vandalism), reduced accident costs (due to slower traffic speeds and more people walking/cycling), and reduced pavement maintenance costs (due to more people walking/cycling). Spokes would like to see the Council tackle a central city (CBD) arterial street as a Living Streets project in the near future. We feel that this would demonstrate how well "people-friendly" environments, rather than "traffic-friendly" ones, enhance the city for residents, businesses and visitors.

Quality Cycling Facilities

10. That Council **recognises and supports the investment required to provide good-quality off-road cycling facilities**, where this is desired over arterial road provision. Such routes need to have similar directness and rights of way as the arterial route alternatives. This may require strategic property purchases to be progressively made by Council, to enable the most optimal routes. The pathways must also be built and maintained to an appropriate standard in terms of widths, geometry, safety, smoothness, and street connections. Council must also accept that there will still be a demand for cycling along main arterial roads (due to the many destinations along them) and this should be provided for too.
11. That Council ensures that funding is budgeted for **audit and review of existing cycle facilities**. Christchurch's cycling infrastructure has been built up over many years. Some facilities have been built to standards no longer considered adequate and should be upgraded. We recommend the allocation of \$100,000 this year for safety audits and reviews of existing cycling facilities. Specific projects to upgrade facilities should be identified this year for funding in future years
12. That Council commits to funding a **dedicated road/path-sweeping** programme focussed specifically on maintaining cycleways. We understand officers are currently working on such a proposal for the 2004/5 year and we fully support this proposal.

13. That Council commits to funding the installation of **more cycle parking facilities**, particularly in the central city. It is evident that demand often exceeds supply at many central sites. One possibility that has been suggested to your staff is to get Adshel (the advertising-financed providers of your bus-stop shelters) to also produce similar cycle parking shelters in key city locations, but this has not been progressed further.

Specific Project Funding

14. Blenheim Road Deviation

We understand that the proposed Blenheim Road Deviation is to be built without cycling facilities, although these were originally planned. We are extremely disappointed in this decision. A number of current known “pinch points” for cyclists arose through similarly short-sighted decisions thirty, fifty or seventy years ago, on bridges such as the Waltham Road Overbridge, the Main North Road overbridge at Styx, the existing Blenheim Road overbridge near Deans Avenue, the Main South Road overbridge at Sockburn and the Lyttelton Road Tunnel. We now know enough about the needs of cyclists on these structures to prevent such expensive mistakes occurring again. **Cycle lanes should be provided on this (and every) new bridge.**

If we can afford in excess of \$6 million to build the bridge, surely we can afford to spend a little more to do the right thing for cyclists? It seems inconceivable that a city that aims to be the most cycle-friendly would build a structure that is more reminiscent of cycling facilities in downtown Auckland!

Please reverse the decision to remove the cycle lanes on this bridge. If necessary, defer the whole project until the money can be found. Very seldom does the Council build something this permanent with such dire implications for cyclists. Spokes would be happy to work with the Council to develop a solution that benefits all potential users (not just motorists) of this facility.

15. Hagley Avenue Cycle Facilities

We are pleased that funding is still earmarked for traffic management improvements along Hagley Avenue. However, we urge Council to start making real progress on the proposed improvements. It has now been a year since Council initially debated the issue.

The uncertain state of the Lichfield-Tuam one-way swap should not be used as an excuse to delay the project further. More than two thirds of the project is outside the scope of any changes to the one-way streets, and any physical outcomes of that process are likely to be years away. In the meantime, cyclists and pedestrians are inadequately catered for in a popular area, with 17 reported cyclist and pedestrian accidents in the last five years.

Although we see some merit in suggestions to use the adjacent Hagley Park pathway for cyclists, instead of on-road cycle lanes, considerable investment is probably required to achieve this successfully. To be a viable option, the existing path would have to be considerably wider, include links to the road at various points, and provide special cycle crossing facilities at the intersections at each end. Even with these facilities, many cyclists will still use the road, with or without a cycle lane, because it will be quicker.

This delay is also holding up key improvements to the Moorhouse/Lincoln intersection. Those changes will benefit all road users at what is a busy intersection. We encourage action on this project now.



16. Creyke Road Living Streets Project

We are very supportive of this initiative, but implore you to find the extra money to improve the surface quality of the proposed cycle lanes to a smooth surface. Coarse chip seals are uncomfortable for cyclists and less energy-efficient than smooth "hotmix" or similar surfaces.

17. Little River Cycle Way

Spokes is very pleased with the allocation of some funding to the Christchurch-Little River Cycleway. This project, supported by two neighbouring district councils, plus ECAN, DOC and other agencies and local communities, has the potential to develop a world-class cycle touring route on Christchurch's doorstep. The linkages budgeted for are worth building in their own right, as they will serve commuters between the city and Halswell, Prebbleton and Lincoln, and when the other parts of the route are completed Christchurch will boast an all-day scenic-heritage cycle ride that will be enjoyed by locals and tourists alike. We are aware of the benefits that the Otago Central Rail Trail has brought to its local community, and encourage the council to continue its support of this (Chch-L.River) worthwhile initiative

Conclusion

We thank you for the opportunity to make this submission and would appreciate the opportunity to speak to it to the Annual Plan Subcommittee.

Richard Hayman

**Spokes Chairperson
Keen Cyclist**

Spokes – Who are we?

Spokes is the collective name for a dedicated group of Christchurch cyclists, transport professionals and cycle industry representatives. The group was formed early in 1998 and is a continuation of the Canterbury Cyclists' Association that had been operational in Christchurch for at least 20 years. Spokes operates through regular monthly core group meetings and an e-mail tree connecting a larger body of Canterbury cyclists. We are also a supporting organisation of the Cycling Advocates' Network (CAN) – a national coordinating body for cycle advocacy groups. We are in constant communication with CAN regarding issues affecting cyclists both nationally and internationally.

The Chairperson of Spokes since inception is Richard Hayman