



Friday, 24 June 2011

RE: CCC ANNUAL PLAN 2010-11

SUBMISSION FROM SPOKES CANTERBURY

Thank you for the opportunity to make this submission. Spokes Canterbury is a cycling advocacy group with approximately 1,500 members that is affiliated with the national Cycling Advocates Network (CAN). Spokes is dedicated to including cycling as an everyday form of transport in the greater Christchurch area.

We would like the opportunity to appear at any hearing that is held to consider submissions on this draft annual Plan. Should there be an officer's report or similar document(s) we would appreciate a copy(s).

Our submission is

Cycling conditions were poor over much of Christchurch prior to the earthquakes, and have deteriorated since. This is due to a history of inadequate funding for cycle infrastructure, the effect of the earthquakes on roads, paths and other cycling infrastructure, and post-quake activity including road closures, removal of cycle lanes, construction works, and impacts from parking, lack of enforcement, and traffic.

Despite the effects of the earthquakes large numbers of people are still cycling, or would like to cycle. Health and fitness considerations and a desire to adopt a more sustainable mode of transport are important drivers for taking up cycling. However, there has been an additional impetus post-quake from congested roads, high fuel prices, and a desire by people to "do their bit" to address congestion and aid the recovery. While figures are not available for current cycling numbers, anecdotal evidence and a recent ECAN survey¹ indicate that these have held up well when compared with public transport use, which has fallen by up to 40%.

There has been a clear desire expressed through the Share an Idea and Central City Plan processes for enhancing cycling in Christchurch. There is strong public support for:

- A rebuilt central city cycling that is cycling friendly;
- Provision of separated cycle ways, cycle boulevards and paths;
- A fully integrated city wide cycle network, and
- Traffic management and street layouts that create a safer and more pleasant cycling and walking environment.

¹ Metro System Audit May 2011

These aspirations were also strongly supported through the outcomes of all the CCC Central City Plan Transport Workshops held in late May and early June.

Post-quake cycling levels and the outcomes of the Share an Idea process indicate that the proposed reduction to the active transport target in Appendix 5(a) of the plan is inappropriate.

The target is based on a figure which was already overly pessimistic about cycling's potential in terms of total trips, and that did not reflect the targets in the Regional Land Transport Strategy. The 2006 Census Journey to Work mode share for cycling was over 6% of work trips, which exceeded those undertaken using public transport (approximately 5%). This gap may have widened post-quake given the fall in public transport use, and the potential for some of these users to have switched to cycling. Given the post-quake disruption and uncertainty around public transport services and shifts in employment and retailing, cycling is often the only transport alternative to cars for many people. Despite this, public transport continues to attract a disproportionate share of Annual Plan funding when compared with cycling.

Action to give effect to the Share an Idea process aspirations for cycling improvements should not be delayed until the central city is rebuilt.

In fact it cannot wait if the clear preference arising from that process for an integrated network serving the central city and suburbs is to be implemented. Infrastructure improvements such as separated cycleways on major routes (including along the four avenues and to the University) could be commenced almost immediately. In most instances they could also be incorporated during the rebuild of earthquake damaged roads. Separated cycleways can be built relatively inexpensively, and often do not require complex design and engineering - an example of a simple, low cost design for a separated cycleway from Melbourne is attached. In addition, a number of proposed cycling improvement projects have been mooted over the years (such as railway cycle paths, utilisation of the Avon and Heathcote river corridors and the estuary edge, and the proposed City to Sumner route) that are entirely consistent with public aspirations expressed through the Share an Idea process. Planning, design and implementation of these cycleway projects prior to, and during the central city rebuild would mean that improved cycling links would be in place once the central city has re-opened.

The recommendation in the draft annual plan that the Cycleways Improvement Programme budget (272) be cut by 87% from \$574,000 to \$75,000 is entirely inconsistent with need to repair and improve cycling facilities in Christchurch. It also flies in the face of public aspirations for improved cycling infrastructure that have been clearly expressed through the Share an Idea process. Rather than being cut, cycling expenditure needs to be substantially increased so that the City is able to begin implementing the necessary cycling facilities to meet these aspirations. For Council to reduce funding to the recommended level would be a clear signal that it intends to ignore the overwhelming and clearly expressed public preference for a significant level of improvement to cycling infrastructure.

No provision appears to have been made under the capital or operational programmes for Travel Demand Management (TDM) to address traffic congestion.

Significant changes have occurred in both residency and work location as a result of the earthquakes and these are reflected in changed transport patterns and levels of traffic congestions. It is therefore surprising that there has been virtually no emphasis post-quake on TDM, and in particular on implementation of travel plans around major employment centres. To address traffic congestion, greater emphasis should be

placed on reducing the number of single occupancy vehicles on the roads, and encouraging commuters to use alternative modes such as public transport, cycling, or ride-sharing. Additional funding should be incorporated in the Annual Plan to provide for a meaningful level of TDM and travel planning to address traffic congestion problems in Christchurch. A TDM strategy for the central city could also assist in returning businesses to the CBD, and must be a vital part of the rebuild planning and implementation.

Decisions sought

1. Retain the LTP 2011/12 budget figure of \$574,000 in the Cycleways Improvement Programme.
2. Include a new budget line item for the design and implementation of separated cycle ways and other facilities that aid and encourage cycling, with an appropriate level of funding.
3. Include a new budget line item to provide for a meaningful level of TDM and travel planning to address travel congestion in Christchurch.
4. Increase the target for active transport as a percentage of total trips in Appendix 5(a) in the annual plan to 3%.

If you require further information or there are matters requiring clarification, please contact our Policy and Strategy Convenor Dirk De Lu in the first instance. His contact details are:

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Keith Turner

Chairperson, Spokes Canterbury

Attachment: Examples of inexpensive separated cycle lane approaches from Melbourne

