



**SUBMISSION: Draft Recovery Strategy for Greater Christchurch *Mahere*
Haumanutanga o Waitaha – October 2011**



Nature of interest

Spokes Canterbury is a Christchurch-based cycling advocacy group with approximately 1,500 members in greater Christchurch, affiliated with the national Cycling Advocates' Network (CAN). Our vision is "more people cycling, more often", with a focus on commuter cycling rather than competitive recreational cycling. Our advocacy derives from both the environmental sustainability of cycling as a way to get around Christchurch, and the importance of providing all citizens (young, old, active, sedentary, women, men) with a range of transport choices that respects their rights, personal circumstances, and aspirations.

Should there be an officer's report on our Submission or similar document(s) we would appreciate a copy(s). If you require further information or there are matters requiring clarification, please contact the convenor of this Submission (David Hawke). His contact details are:

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OVERVIEW

Spokes thanks all those who worked so hard to bring this Draft Strategy to fruition.

Jan Gehl in his 2010 book *Cities for people* states: “Core issues are respect for people, dignity, zest for life....it all comes down to people....To a far greater extent than we know it today, city planning must start with people in future” (p229). While Spokes is a cycling advocacy group, our emphasis is on transport choice. Even in many so-called “cycle friendly” cities such as the often-quoted Copenhagen (Denmark) or Portland (Oregon), car use is a significant component of the transport infrastructure. Our position is that active transport options, including cycling, are an important contributor to city life and must be catered for through greatly increased funding and well connected inviting cycling and walking networks that offer a legitimate alternative to auto dependence.

Our approach to the draft Strategy is based on the premise that recreating pre-earthquake Christchurch is neither possible nor desirable. The quakes have delivered many lessons. Built infrastructure is vulnerable and expensive to replace. Entire urban areas and the investments made in their infrastructure are now being abandoned.

Creating resilient infrastructure is expensive, so less capital intensive approaches offer real value for money. Disaster scholarship clearly demonstrates that “the negative effects of disaster are concentrated in the most vulnerable populations – the poor, elderly, single mothers, minority groups, and the infirm” (Review by D.P. Aldrich *Perspectives on Politics* (2011) 9: 61-68). Failing to learn dooms us to repeat our mistakes and to fail our communities. As presented in Section 3.2 of the draft Strategy, existing policies and strategies provide some guidance, but must be tempered and redirected by what has been learned. (Spokes offers suggestions for overcoming some of the omissions – see Response 5 below.)

The structure of our Submission:

- **Responses to Questions** posted in bold print within the draft Strategy, on **page 3**
- **Our Responses Chapter-by-Chapter**, starting on **page 4**.

RESPONSES TO “Questions to think about”:

P12: We’ve highlighted the most important lessons....but are there others?

- See Response 1.

P19: Together, do these goals describe the recovered greater Christchurch that you want? Why? Are there other key goals we should seek to achieve? Why?

- See Responses 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

P25: Given demands on resources, do you support the priorities identified above? Why?

- See Responses 17, 18, 19.

P27: There is no perfect number of Recovery Plans, so if you think we need other Plans tell us what and why.

- See Response 26.

P43: What will ensure decision-makers deliver the recovery we want, as soon as we need it, at a cost we can afford?

- See Response 29.

P45: What else needs to be assessed when monitoring the Recovery Strategy?

- See Response 30.

P45: Are there other circumstances in which a review of the Recovery Strategy may be required?

- See Response 31.

RESPONSES (chapter-by-chapter):

Chapter 1 – How the earthquakes changed our lives

Section 1.1 – When the worst happens

Response

1. This Section fails to recognise the disruption to public transport. This disruption (which remains ongoing) led to:
 - a. Loss of through-routes. For example, Route 7 formerly ran through the Lichfield St Bus Exchange to CPIT, providing an important link for students from south-west Christchurch
 - b. Curtailment of both frequency and operational hours for many routes
 - c. A decline in patronage of c.55%

Section 1.4 – The issues and challenges ahead

Responses

2. Under “Leadership and integration” (p13), this Section needs a further bullet point ‘*Transparency around decision making, so people can trust the decision makers*’:
 - a. The rationale behind this is that under the Share an Idea scheme run by Christchurch City Council, many thousands of people contributed ideas. However, in the final Draft CBD Plan, there were so-called “key stakeholders” who seem to have re-oriented the views from the Share an Idea scheme. There was no transparency around these “key stakeholders”:
 - i. Their identity
 - ii. What precisely they said
 - iii. The components of the Draft Plan that were altered in response to their views
 - b. Second bullet point under “Social” (p13) envisages “Ensuring...[that]...all work in a more...collaborative and coordinated way” To implement this CERA **needs to bring groups together** to work out common approaches:

- i. The past practice of staff meeting with disparate groups separately and then attempting to synthesise a response does not allow differences to be worked through by the stakeholders themselves and places far too much power into the hands of too few;
 - ii. Working out common approaches requires access and transparency;
 - iii. At the end of the day, the various stakeholders across greater Christchurch must be able to **trust the process**.
 - c. Transparency within the greater Christchurch local government needs urgent attention, as Environment Canterbury is presently run by appointed commissioners and the Christchurch City Council has ongoing issues around secrecy and back-room deals.
 - d. The Minister for Earthquake Recovery will need to be very judicious and transparent in his reasons for any and all changes made to the publicly consulted plans.
 - e. Require timely posting of all information including agendas, notes, reports, budgets, schedules, brief biographies of decision makers and key participants
3. Under “Built”, first bullet point (p13), add the phrase “to ensure that the rebuild results in a city better for all stakeholders”:
- a. This will only be achieved when all groups realise their interdependency and all have genuine involvement and say in the rebuilding process.

Chapter 2 – Strategy for recovery

Section 2.1 – A new approach

Response

- 4. Spokes considers that Strategy aim (3) *maximise opportunities for the restoration, renewal, revitalisation and enhancement of greater Christchurch* is really important:

- a. Making sure that the rebuild takes the opportunity to enhance (not just replace) Christchurch is crucial to the city's future.
- b. In particular, experience in overseas cities subject to natural disaster has shown that (unless great care is taken) the most vulnerable and worst-off become even more vulnerable and worse off.
- c. Prior to the September earthquake, greater Christchurch had major societal issues:
 - i. Increasing dependence on private cars for even local trips, as well as getting from increasingly far-flung suburbs to work and leisure opportunities
 - ii. Increasing unaffordability of petrol and replacement cars, especially for those less well-off
 - iii. Increasing costs to local authorities of providing the necessary roading infrastructure to support the growing use of private cars
 - iv. Decreasing community resilience as people became less and less involved with their immediate community (as demonstrated by the decline of small neighbourhood shopping centres and decreasing membership of community organisations such as Scouts or Rotary)
 - v. A declining CBD, as demonstrated by (e.g.) a perception of night-time public safety and crime issues, and the growing numbers of run-down and vacant shops. (In particular, it is women who feel less safe in the Central City, with 13% males but 28% females feeling "very unsafe" after dark (Council "Quality of Life" survey, available from http://www.bigcities.govt.nz/pdfs/2010/Quality_of_Life_2010_Christchurch.pdf).
- d. As a general comment: Motorised transport's dependence on roading infrastructure leaves it vulnerable to natural disaster. Once disaster strikes the diminished roading capacity is required for emergency response. The public still requires options, and cycling and walking become the most reliable transport modes. Providing high quality interconnected cycle infrastructure meets the public's transport need while freeing up impacted roading infrastructure for emergency

responders and rebuilding work.

- e. As noted previously in our Submission, a wider set of Council policies and strategies provide a helpful framework for establishing the rebuild.

Chapter 3 – Vision and goals for the recovery

Section 3.2 – Vision

Response

5. This smaller print in this Section (p18) states that “Vision statements have already been developed....The vision statements included within existing strategies are still well founded.” Spokes finds that the list of existing strategies is incomplete, and needs to include existing strategies to do with multi-modal transport options, gender and equity. Based on Christchurch City Council documents, at a minimum the additional strategies and policies should include:
 - a. Hilary Commission’s “Winning Women’s Charter”
 - b. Christchurch City Council Children’s Policy
 - c. Christchurch City Council Ageing Together Policy
 - d. Christchurch City Council Cycling Strategy
 - e. Christchurch City Council Pedestrian Strategy
 - f. Christchurch City Council Open Space Strategy

Section 3.3 – Goals

Spokes proposes a series of amendments and additions to the Goals listed in this Section.

Response

6. Bullet point 6 “attracting students to study and learn” (p18) recognises the important contribution of educational institutions to the economic and cultural development of Christchurch.
 - a. It is the experience of Spokes members and their families that students need to be able to get to their chosen institution, and that many do not

have cars:

- i. The breakdown of public transport post-earthquake has cost Christchurch educational institutions students
- ii. Whenever there is an emergency event in Christchurch, an early casualty is the bus service (as evidenced by the cancelation of buses after each of the three earthquakes and the two snowstorms this year)
- iii. Students need reliable transport that is more cost-effective than cars or even of public transport
- iv. The bullet point therefore needs the additional phrase '*making sure that students are able to access their institutions with a range of suitable transport options*'.

Section 3.3.2 – strengthen community resilience

Response

7. Bullet point 6 “supporting people, in particular those facing hardship and uncertainty” (p19) needs to have the phrase added '*economical and resilient transport choices*'.
 - a. Adding this phrase would help compliance with Christchurch City Council Children’s Policy and the Christchurch City Council Ageing Together Policy

Section 3.3.3 – develop resilient, sustainable and integrated...assets...and networks

Responses

8. Spokes heartily agrees with Bullet point 5 “developing an environmentally sustainable, integrated transport system...” (p19), **which includes both active transport (AT) and public transport**
9. Bullet point 1 “using ‘green’ and ecologically sustainable” (p19) needs to have the phrase added *and transport choice including AT*:

- a. Adding this phrase would help compliance with Christchurch City Council Cycling, Pedestrian, and Open Space Strategies
10. Bullet point 6 “ensuring new housing areas are well planned, serviced, and well informed by environmental constraints...” (p19) is not happening. For example:
- a. CCC Plan Change 60 (“Halswell West”) is likely to be approved, with no way for either young people or elderly to access Halswell community facilities from the new subdivision
 - b. CCC’s acceptance of Nobel Village’s removal of cycle lanes, narrowing of road widths and increased density
 - c. New areas for subdivision on the NE side of Kaiapoi to be pushed through under the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Act (*The Press* p1, Friday 7 October 2011) will occur over the previous noise-related objections of CIAL
 - d. ECan’s RLTS only weakly suggests that AT be a part of new developments ‘where feasible’

Section 3.3.4 – restore the natural environment to support biodiversity, economic prosperity and reconnect people to the rivers wetlands and Port Hills

Response

11. Spokes heartily agrees with Bullet point 5 “enhancing air quality by providing alternative energy-efficient...means of transport and travel” (p19):
- a. Increased use of public transport and active transport (cycling and walking) must play a major part in improving Christchurch’s energy efficiency
 - b. “Reconnection” of people to their natural environment will help meet central government goals (for example the Ministry of Health’s “Healthy eating – healthy action” programme), and consequently contribute to important economies for the health system
 - c. Contributions of vehicle traffic to the poor air quality in Christchurch are presently localised to areas with high traffic density (such as Riccarton Road), but these will become more important as home-heating derived air

pollution becomes increasingly controlled, and the city population increases

Chapter 4 – Phasing and pace of recovery

Immediate (September 2010 and 2011) – repair, patch and plan

Responses

12. Bullet point 5 (p21) should have the phrase added *including how these will link with their adjacent communities.* (See also comment 10 above.)
 - a. The pre-earthquake subdivision approval process considered only the layout of the subdivision itself
 - b. Linkages with the adjacent community facilities were then addressed by the separate LTCCP process, in accordance with Council strategies, policies and priorities
 - c. Given the authority of CERA to expedite the approval process, there is a need for inclusion of means by which residents in the proposed subdivision will access community facilities. Such means will need to include footpaths and cycle access integrated both within and between developments and that meet the needs of all age groups. **CERA is in a unique position to deliver intergrated, high quality urban planning, design and active transport solutions for Canterbury.**

13. An extra bullet point is needed that refers to the need to quickly restore a functional public transport system. Wording could be along the lines of: *A temporary bus exchange is implemented, with plans for a more permanent facility initiated*
 - a. As noted in comment (1) above, the public transport system was heavily compromised by both the loss of the central Bus Exchange, and the damage to streets arising from underground infrastructure damage
 - b. A growing number of residents, including some Spokes members and their families, used (pre-earthquake) mixed mode cycling and bus transport to access their workplaces. The impaired bus system has

heavily impacted these people.

Chapter 5 – Providing a foundation for growth and enhancement.....

Responses

14. Spokes agrees that the entirety of existing local authority plans and strategies form a solid basis for planning the rebuild.

15. A key change from pre-earthquake times is that extensive brownfields sites are now available for redevelopment.
 - a. Some of these will be redeveloped for commercial use, but some will be suitable for residential use and mixed use.
 - b. In principle, redevelopment of brownfields sites is entirely consistent with the existing Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy (UDS).
 - c. Brownfields developments through the Sydenham and Addington areas would facilitate substantial infrastructure development savings, and encourage the use of sustainable transport options.
 - d. In practice, the planning process post-earthquake has failed to take note of these opportunities to increase urban density (a key objective of the UDS) and notwithstanding the statement (middle column, p22) “...intensification of parts of the existing urban area..[has] been planned for some time”:
 - i. At the hearings for Plan Change 60 (“Halswell West”), the opportunities for brownfields development were brought to the attention of the Panel in some detail by a Spokes member.
 - ii. The Panel agreed in principle, but without enthusiasm. Spokes considers that **explicit reference needs to be made in this section about the need to explore brownfields and urban infilling opportunities** rather than simply extending the existing urban limit. (See also Comment (12) above.)

Figure 3: The relationship between the Recovery Strategy and existing strategies and plans

Response

16. Figure 3 (p23) needs the following additions, to reflect the importance of transport options in the redeveloped city:
- a. Under “Non-statutory” (column 6), add:
 - i. *Connecting New Zealand* (New Zealand Transport Agency)
 - ii. *Healthy Eating Healthy Action* strategy (Ministry of Health)
 - iii. *Greater Christchurch Travel Demand Management Strategy*
 - iv. Quantifying the Benefit of Increasing Physical Activity
<http://www.cph.co.nz/Files/QuantEconBenefitPhysicalActive.pdf>
 - v. Integrated Planning Recovery Guide
<http://www.cph.co.nz/Files/IntegratedRecoveryGuideV2-Jun11.pdf>

Chapter 6 – Priorities and opportunities for early wins

Prioritise the safety and wellbeing of people by:

Response

17. An additional bullet point is needed to emphasise to planners the need for all people, regardless of their age or economic status, to be able to get around. Suggested text: *enabling all people to access employment and recreation regardless of their age or socioeconomic status by offering equal access to and attractiveness of all transport mode choices; vehicle, cycle, public and pedestrian.*

Prioritise the permanent repair and rebuilding....including lifeline utilities, public transport services and strategic facilities such as the Port:

Response

18. Following the earthquake, cycle infrastructure was painted over on several busy roads.

- a. This action made both walking and cycling less viable whenever a person's route included the painted-over sections, because a cyclist was forced either into the traffic or (illegally) onto the footpath.
- b. The phrase *active transport infrastructure* therefore needs to be added to the list of Priorities.
- c. Repainting the painted-over sections of cycle lane would be an easy "early win", and a signal to Christchurch cyclists that the rebuild is taking seriously their interests (and safety).

Accelerate....planning and consenting...:

Response

19. There has already been a tendency to accelerate consenting by rushing the process. To guard against this, Spokes recommends addition of the phrase *that meet environmental sustainability and social equity policies and strategies*.

Identify and facilitate 'early wins' projects...Examples could include:

Response

20. An easy 'early win' project could be the *instatement of early green traffic lights for cyclists* (perhaps starting on intersections on the four avenues and within the CBD). Justification for this project includes:
- a. This project is well-defined, especially in relation to some of the examples listed;
 - b. This project has easily measurable outcomes to test its effect (for example: (i) the number of cyclists using the affected intersections; (ii) the gender balance of cyclists using the affected intersections; (iii) the number of injury accidents at the affected intersections)
 - c. This project would help demonstrate a commitment to responses from the City Council share an Idea scheme, which showed overwhelming preference for a cycle-friendly, pedestrian-centred green city;
 - d. This project would be entirely consistent with a multitude of Council and national policies, strategies and plans.

Chapter 7 – Setting the agenda for recovery activities

The Strategy is to: Support individuals and communities:

Response

21. The Strategy refers to “building resilience”. A key aspect of enhancing resilience is for planners to emphasise people as opposed to the built environment; the built environment should be constructed to best serve people, and not the other way around. These issues are widely debated in the social sciences literature. Two pertinent articles are:

- Aldrich DP (2011) Between market and state: directions in social science research on disaster. *Perspectives on Politics* 9: 61-68.
- O’Brien K et al. (2009) Rethinking social contracts: building resilience in a changing climate. *Ecology and Society* 14 (2) [article 12]. (This article has a University of Canterbury social scientist as a co-author.)

These ideas are central to Spokes members’ experiences; getting around by bicycle (or walking, or public transport) is a much more social experience than using the car, thus enhancing rather than destabilising social networks.

The Strategy is to: Develop and implement policies for “the worst affected suburbs”...:

Response

22. Add the word *equitable* (line 1, middle column, p26) to read: *Develop and implement equitable [inserted word] policies for “the worst affected suburbs”...*

The Strategy is to: Develop a land, building and infrastructure recovery plan....:

Responses

23. Add the phrase *which will be consistent with key equity and environmental sustainability policies and strategies* to read: *This Plan, which will be consistent with key equity and environmental sustainability policies and strategies [inserted phrase] identifies where, when and how....* (line 5, paragraph 3, middle column,

p26).

24. Add the phrase (*including transport*) after “infrastructure” (line 2, final column, p26).

The Strategy is to: Finalise a Central City Recovery Plan....:

Response

25. Spokes strongly supports the phrase *in accordance with community aspirations*, especially given the pressure that certain economic interests are placing on all levels of government.

7.2 The Recovery Plans and programmes

Responses

26. An Additional Recovery Plan covering transport is needed (the *Transport Recovery Plan*), because:
- a. Significant coordination is needed between delivery agencies (Ecan, Christchurch City Council, Selwyn District Council, Waimakariri District Council, NZTA) to make sure that transport infrastructure is seamless across jurisdictions.
 - i. Ecan presently attempts this with public transport, but otherwise each local authority (and NZTA) need to be jointly involved;
 - ii. Christchurch City Council has just approved (21 October 2011 meeting, reported in The Press, 22 October 2011, pA4) major spending on light rail, in the absence of any region-wide planning as to how the various forms of transport can make an integrated whole.
 - b. A large amount of money is involved, especially when roading and the light rail proposal are included
 - c. There needs to be public confidence in the process. As noted previously, the Share an idea process showed overwhelming preference for a cycle-friendly, pedestrian-centred green city with affordable public transport but numerous other interest groups, including central government, have been

pulling in opposite directions.

- d. The *Education Renewal Recovery Plan* (p29) envisages increasing the economic contribution made by the education sector, but implicitly depends on students being able to access institutions. Spokes members who work in a variety of tertiary education providers in Christchurch, tell us that feedback from students is that affordable, timely transport is critical to their participation in education.

27. Under “Local neighbourhood plans and initiatives” (p30), the “Who” needs to explicitly include Community Boards and neighbourhood groups:

- a. The number of councillors in city and district councils is necessarily limited, and Community Boards play a crucial role in transmitting community concerns and issues to their respective councils.

Chapter 9 – Principles, collaboration and engagement

9.1 Principles to guide and lead recovery

9.2 Collaboration

9.3 Engagement

Responses

28. Spokes heartily endorses the principles listed in these Sections (pp41-43).

29. Delivering a recovery that meets the needs of the stakeholders across Greater Christchurch will primarily require transparency on the part of all local and central government agencies charged with the recovery process.
 - a. The importance of transparency has been previously argued in our Submission (Response 2 above);
 - b. Transparency implies recognition that all stakeholder groups have the right to have their viewpoint heard and seriously considered;
 - c. Transparency implies that no stakeholder group has the “inside running” or undue influence on the outcomes of the recovery process;
 - d. Transparency and accountability go hand-in-hand.

Chapter 10 – Monitoring, reporting and review

10.1 Monitoring

Response

30. Spokes argues strongly for evidence-based monitoring of the recovery process.
- a. A recent (April 2011) paper by the Prime Minister’s Science Advisor (Professor Peter Gluckman) notes that too many decisions in New Zealand are not based on quantitative evidence and are not monitored for their effectiveness; wastage of resources is the inevitable consequence. A news report summarising the paper, and a link to the paper itself, can be found at <http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/PO1104/S00150/advancing-nz-through-better-evidence-in-policy-formation.htm>
 - b. Monitoring could be carried out using focus groups in combination with longitudinal surveys. For a credible response, care must be taken to include all stakeholder groups; the Human Rights Commission would be a good place to start for potential stakeholders.
 - c. The monitoring process must be performed as an independent exercise in social science, not as a political management tool.
 - d. Measureable targets are required. Travel times by mode, peak hour mode usage, mode gender usage, infrastructure delivery schedules, etc.

10.2 Reporting and review

Response

31. Additional circumstances requiring a review of the Recovery Strategy include:
- a. Existing Strategies and Policies are being systematically ignored
 - b. The recovery process is not transparent and the public’s ability to influence is constrained

Appendix 2 – Recovery Plans, programmes and activities

2C. Social Recovery Plans, programmes and activities.

v. Building Community Resilience Programme

Responses

32. This Programme lacks a measurable outcome; *Increased levels of community preparedness....*is not measurable in a meaningful way.
33. This Programme is overly top-down in its emphasis:
- a. Community resilience is about people in a community interacting more strongly with each other on a daily basis.
 - b. Although training programmes might be helpful, disaster literature (e.g., Response 21) emphasises a people-centric approach.
 - c. Spokes wonders if the Sports, Recreation, Arts and Culture Programmes (Appendix 2c vi; p55) might not be more effective at achieving the stated Outcome.

2D. Built Recovery Plans, programmes and activities.

3.i. Land, building and Infrastructure Recovery Plan

Responses

34. Outcomes (1) bullet point 3: change emphasis to accessibility rather than “easy move[ment]”:
- a. Spokes finds an ongoing emphasis on car dependence in this Outcome. The strategy’s focus must be broadened if its goals are to be achieved.
 - b. Planners need to remember the age-related Strategies and Policies already in place;
 - i. How will this Outcome meet the needs of a 10-year old who wants to get to the library or the swimming pool 2 km away?
 - ii. How will this Outcome meet the needs of an 80-year old no longer able to drive?

35. Outcomes (2): the emphasis in this Outcome is on repair and replacement, with enhancement being only aspirational.
- a. It is widely recognised that greater Christchurch is (to quote a recent business sector commentator) in a “sweet spot of opportunity” for renewal and revitalisation. This Outcome, as presently worded, will merely recreate the old. The opportunities to better prepare for the future purchased at the cost of lives and destruction will be lost.
 - b. Spokes recommends removal of the phrase “wherever possible” from this Outcome.