

23. INNES ROAD/RUTLAND STREET PROPOSED TRAFFIC SIGNALS

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Corporate Plan Output: Road Safety Capital Works 2001 - 2003	

The purpose of this report is to obtain Board approval to seek the community views on a proposal to install traffic signals at the Innes Road/Rutland Street intersection. The report provides background to the project and discusses options that could improve safety and reduce delay at the intersection. The preferred option involves installation of traffic signals at the intersection. In conjunction with this work it is proposed to replace the existing kerb and dished channel on the north side of Innes Road between Rutland Street and Cranford Street. The report recommends that the community view be sought regarding the proposed traffic signal installation and kerb and channel replacement.

BACKGROUND

This intersection forms a capacity constraint on a significant route north of the city. Innes Road is a minor arterial east/west route between Burwood/Mairehau and Fendalton/Ilam. It currently carries around 16,000 vehicles per day. Rutland Street is classified as a collector route and provides access between Papanui and the city centre. The traffic volume on Rutland Street south is around 10,000 vehicles per day with north Rutland Street carrying around 4,000 vehicles per day. The total through traffic volume is very high for a priority (STOP) controlled intersection. Traffic on Rutland Street crossing or turning at the intersection currently experiences considerable delays especially during peak periods.

Cycle and pedestrian activity in the area is moderate with the majority of cyclists being those associated with Intermediate and Secondary Schools to the west. Innes Road and Rutland Street are bus routes associated with the No. 18 St Albans service.

Safety issues are an important consideration at this intersection. 18 crashes have been reported to the police at the intersection in the last 5 years. These involved one fatal, one serious, seven minor and nine non-injury crashes. The most regular problem (11) involves vehicles crossing at right angles and (5) right turning vehicles. The crash rate is 95% higher than comparable priority intersection layouts within New Zealand.

The Community Board received a petition supporting the installation of the roundabout at the intersection in 1998. There has been considerable concern expressed by residents and the Board over many years regarding vehicles short cutting through the East Papanui LATM area. Implementation of traffic calming in this area has successfully addressed these concerns.

The intersection is included in the Northern Rooding Option Scoping Study (NROSS). However, due to the high accident rate at the intersection the proposal is required to be circulated as soon as possible. It was decided to begin consultation on the intersection improvements after submissions on NROSS closed.

DISCUSSION

A number of options for addressing safety and capacity problems at the intersection have been considered in recent years. The installation of a raised central median island in Innes Road to prohibit right turns and straight-ahead movements from Rutland Street has some community support. Installation of such an island would be contrary to the agreed planning policy detailed in the City Plan.

The installation of a roundabout has community support but would create significant capacity problems on Innes Road. Priority would be given to Rutland Street traffic during peak periods. This would significantly increase the volume on this road and increase short cutting throughout the East Papanui LATM area.

Funding for the installation of traffic signals as shown on the attached plan is included in the Council budget. \$50,000 is included in the 2001/02 budget and \$150,000 in the 2002/03 budget to undertake this work. The total estimated cost of the work is \$200,000 plus \$60,000 for the kerb replacement work in Innes Road. The proposed improvements have a benefit/cost ratio of 8.7.

The residents in North Papanui have strongly held views as to the merits (or otherwise) of installing traffic signals at the intersection. Advantages of installing traffic signals would be:

1. Reduced delays by providing three approach lanes on Innes Road.
2. Improved safety by improved priority control especially for right turning vehicles.
3. Cycle lane provided on all approaches with better defined vehicle paths.
4. Pedestrian facilities on all approaches.

Disadvantages of installing traffic signals would be:

1. Increase in the volume of traffic on the Rutland Street route.
2. Potentially more vehicles short cutting on local roads in the East Papanui LATM area.
3. Could be seen as prejudging the outcome of the Northern Rooding Option Study.

Replacement of the existing kerb and dish channel on the north side of Innes Road between Rutland Street and Cranford Street is programmed in conjunction with the intersection improvements. To further increase pedestrian crossability in this area, installation of a flush median and a pedestrian refuge island adjacent to the walkway through to Knowles Street is proposed.

CONCLUSION

Delays and associated safety problems at the Innes Road/Rutland Street intersection have been of considerable concern to the community and Council for a number of years. A number of options for addressing these issues have been investigated, all have associated challenges.

The installation of traffic signals is proposed to address the safety and capacity concerns at the intersection. Increased vehicles movements in the East Papanui area can be expected as a result of the improved access provided by the signals. The amount of short cutting traffic on unclassified local roads in the East Papanui area will need to be monitored. Should this traffic cause concern it can be managed by undertaking traffic calming treatments identified in the East Papanui LATM. Before proceeding with any intersection improvements it is suggested that the community view be sought regarding the suggested traffic signals.

Recommendation: That the community view be sought on the proposal to install traffic signals at the Innes Road/Rutland Street intersection and the associated kerb and dish channel replacement work on the north side of Innes Road between Rutland Street and Cranford Street.

Chairperson's

Recommendation:

1. That the officer's recommendation be adopted.
2. That a report on the outcome of the consultation come back to the Board before any further decision is made.