

## 5. CYCLE STRATEGY: DRAFT UPDATED 2004 VERSION

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The purpose of this report is to introduce a draft updated Council cycle strategy to the Committee and invite feedback on it. The draft updated strategy has been distributed to members. This updated version of the strategy was reported to the Council, which released it for a consultation period ending on 7 May 2004. The Council's cycle strategy is now four years old and was programmed to be updated at this time.

### BACKGROUND

In 1996 the Council adopted its first cycling strategy - one of the first councils in New Zealand to do so – and was updated by the Council at the start of 2000. It has proved to be an effective document with the outcomes reported to the Council each year.

Members will recall they were informed last year of the proposed process to update the strategy.

The new 2002 New Zealand Transport Strategy gives clear support for sustainable transport, and as a result, initiatives at national, regional and local levels have been developing with extra impetus. This recent support towards sustainable transport has paralleled cycling gaining:

- (i) more funding;
- (ii) recognition through strategies;
- (iii) legal recognition through changes in the road user rules; and
- (iv) development of national design and planning guidelines.

The need for a periodic update of the strategy was recognised by the Council when it adopted the last (updated) strategy in 2000. It is particularly timely that the current strategy be updated now to take into account the current changes in the cycling environment throughout New Zealand.

A full revision of the cycle strategy, which will involve a comprehensive consultation process, is expected to be undertaken in 2008.

### PROCESS UPDATE

Initially, a sample of stakeholders was interviewed to gain views on the strengths and weaknesses of the existing strategy and to gain suggestions for an updated version. This sampling included interviews with cycle advocates, representatives from transport/interest organisations, members from community boards and the Sustainable Transport and Utilities Committee. The information was presented to a working party of the Cycle Steering Committee to gain further direction and several more meetings were held to fine tune versions of the draft strategy.

A project calendar has been developed for both the preparation of the strategy document and its promotion. This calendar has been prepared with the aim of having the final document adopted by Council and available to the public well before the local government elections in October 2004.

### DRAFT (UPDATED) STRATEGY

The updated strategy is consistent with the direction of the Council's existing cycling strategy, but takes new impetus from such documents as the Metropolitan Christchurch Transport Statement Stage One and other national and regional transport related strategies. The updated strategy recognises the current key issues and trends affecting cycling and looks to deliver targeted resources to the areas which achieve best results. This will include focussing on both existing cyclists and potential cyclists with an increased focus on initiatives directed at school aged cyclists.

The updated strategy looks to take the advancements of the last strategy (that effectively halted the earlier decline in cycle numbers), towards stabilising, advancing and increasing cycle use in the future.

## Vision

The new proposed vision recognises the current vision for “*Christchurch to be the most cycle-friendly city*”. With eight years of improvements in cycling we have largely stabilised the earlier decline in cycling in the city but recognise that there is still a long way to go to reach the objectives set. To do this the strategy needs to ensure that everyone is on board - cyclists and non cyclists alike so we now look to a new vision where “*Everyone Likes Cycling in Christchurch*”.

**Current Strategy Vision:** “*To Be the Most Cycle-Friendly City*”

**Proposed New Vision:** “*Everyone Likes Cycling in Christchurch*”

The new vision is interpreted as: “*Where the benefits of cycling as a safe, enjoyable and popular form of transport and recreation are valued by the community, and where recognition of these benefits leads to growth in cycling.*”

## Objectives

We are looking to retain the two objectives of the current strategy but also recognise it is not just a case of raising numbers of cyclists and reducing cycle accident numbers. Cycling needs to be an enjoyable activity to gain popularity and help Christchurch to be considered a friendly cycle city.

### Current Strategy Objectives:

- **To increase cycling in Christchurch**

Encouraging people to cycle for transport and/or recreation can increase cycling. This may include more people taking up cycling, existing cyclists cycling more often or the total distance cycled increasing. People may cycle more if they perceive cycling to be enjoyable and safe.

- **To improve safety for cyclists in Christchurch**

Safety can be improved by reducing common causes of collisions and injury, such as by improving the way other road users interact with cyclists, improving cyclists' behaviour and increasing the quality of road and other facilities in the city.

### Proposed Additional Objective:

- **To increase the enjoyment of cycling in Christchurch**

Cycling can be an enjoyable activity for everyone when it is within a cycle-friendly environment. When people are enjoying cycling they are likely to cycle more and encourage others to do likewise.

## Targets

The targets have been adjusted to reflect more closely the experiences learnt in monitoring cycling's progress over the last eight years in Christchurch.

## DISCUSSION

The updated strategy will have a layout and format aligned to other recent Council strategies – these will be included in the draft for the consultation round and will include images that support the promotional aspects of the strategy. The content is also aligned to the direction that other recent Council strategy documents have used and includes policy along with an implementation plan.

The general direction of the strategy is not proposing major changes; in effect it is a refinement to ensure Christchurch takes full advantage of the positive changes that are happening in the wider New Zealand and regional cycling contexts.

## CONCLUSION

The updated cycle strategy, whilst recognising the recent national and local advancements in the cycling environment and making improvements, essentially maintains the framework that the current cycle strategy has provided. Within this framework it will allow Christchurch to expand and better focus its resources to take advantage of the prevailing advancements in cycling in New Zealand and achieve its vision for cycling for Christchurch.

The draft of the updated strategy is currently released for consultation and all feedback will be considered by staff and the Cycle Steering Committee. A new cycle strategy will then be presented to the Sustainable Transport and Utilities Committee. The aim is for the Council to adopt the updated Strategy at its meeting in July 2004.

### Staff

- Recommendation:**
1. That the draft updated cycle strategy be considered by the Committee.
  2. That the Committee formulate comments on the updated cycle strategy to be considered by the Board.
  3. That the Board's comments on the draft be forwarded to the City Transport Unit by 7 May 2004.