



6 May 2004

Christchurch City Council
PO Box 237
Christchurch

Re: Draft Long Term Council Community Plan 2004

Spokes Canterbury, the local cycling advocacy group, is pleased to offer this submission regarding the Council's community plan. We would be happy to provide any further information if required.

We would like to present our submission in person.

General Comments

Spokes generally welcomes the direction that Christchurch City is taking for the next few years. In terms of sustainable transport it feels like Christchurch is at the crossroads and could opt for either a traditional roading-dominated future with token acknowledgement of other modes, or a more equitable approach that truly embraces the potential of all modes. We trust that the Council will see the sense in choosing the latter course of action.

While we congratulate the council on its ongoing commitment to cycling promotion and provision in the city, we feel that significant uptake in cycling will only be achieved when parallel programmes such as **travel plans** and **traffic management/calming** are also extensively rolled out across the city.

We will comment on the draft Metropolitan Christchurch Transport Statement in a separate submission.

Specific Comments - Community Outcomes

While we generally have no problems with the proposed community outcomes for Christchurch in broad terms, we suspect that our interpretation of what they mean and how they can be achieved differs from some other parties. For example:

- (1) Under "A Sustainable Natural Environment" (vol.1 p.24), we would expect to have mention of **the challenge faced by our growing motor vehicle population**, which threatens our natural environment through air and runoff emissions, and the land demand for roading-related infrastructure.
- (2) Under "A Prosperous City" (v1 p.25), we **don't feel that ongoing development in roading infrastructure is necessary for a vital economy**, if appropriate use of other modes can be encouraged instead, thus freeing up the existing network for essential commercial traffic. Similarly, a **CBD that promotes people over traffic** can produce a vibrant central city that is economically successful because of the desire for people to be there.

We suggest that the community outcomes be reviewed to more explicitly document some of these issues.

Specific Comments - Council Activities

As with the Community Outcomes, we note some different interpretations of the performance indicators provided. There are also some notable omissions that should be rectified:

- (1) The section on Parks and Open Spaces (v2 pp.80-85) fails to acknowledge the vital role that these areas play for sustainable transport modes like walking and cycling. One of the listed sub-areas is “Landscaping the Transportation Network” (i.e. street network); yet it completely neglects the fact that **parks and other open spaces are themselves an important part of the transportation network** for a mode like cycling.
- (2) Meanwhile, when considering the Streets and Transport section (v2 pp.115-129), the emphasis appears to be on efficiency of traffic movement. This fails to recognise the fact that over **75% of Christchurch’s streets (by length) are local and collector roads**, where the emphasis is on accessibility, not traffic movement. It would seem logical therefore to have a performance indicator to the effect that “*x% of residents on non-arterial roads are satisfied with the nature of traffic and level of safety along their streets*”. This produces quite a different focus on what is needed to achieve this – see our discussion under item (2) of the Capital Expenditure Programme. Similar performance measures might assess the proportion of the local network with traffic management/calming treatments in place. Efficiency performance measures should also **consider the effects of delays on pedestrians and cyclists**; for example, lack of safe crossing facilities or adequate priority can significantly delay these modes.
- (3) We are intrigued by the proposed maintenance performance indicators for road cleaning (v2 p.120); our experience is that **existing maintenance regimes do not come even close to these standards**. As cyclists who are regularly travelling in areas of the road most prone to detritus, we certainly look forward to such an outcome as stated.
- (4) On the same page, we also take issue with the Service proposal that “*Sufficient roads are provided to contain congestion to acceptable levels*”. This implies that only roading capacity increases can control congestion; such supply-side thinking fails to **consider the alternative of reducing the traffic demand instead** (through pricing, encouragement of alternatives, etc). Indeed, there is no mention anywhere of specific tools such as introducing more cycleways, travel plans, and bus lanes.
- (5) It is difficult to identify from the Plan the current expenditure on cycling promotions. However, we request that increased funding for the next five years be allocated towards **marketing cycling** (to at least \$250,000 pa), if necessary by reducing the cycleways and general roading capital expenditure budgets.
- (6) In the Asset Information section (v2 pp.122-127), there is no mention of how many **cycle parks** the council has (yet the number of items such as signs and street furniture is known precisely), nor what plans are proposed for them in the future. This is a worrying oversight that should be corrected.

Specific Comments – Capital Expenditure Programme

Spokes offers the following specific observations about the proposed project expenditures in the next 5 years:

- (1) For future reference, it would be very useful if it could be indicated **which “general” roading projects (i.e. street renewals, kerb & channel, etc) are likely to include specific cycle facilities**. While the information could be inferred from comparison with the city cycle network plan and roading hierarchy, it would help us assess the overall provision for cycling and also the relative priorities.
- (2) It is also difficult to identify which street renewal (or other) projects will produce “Living Streets”-style solutions. We are concerned at the piecemeal implementation of such “people-friendly” streets across Christchurch; when an **area-wide treatment** is often far more effective at getting take-up of walking and cycling. For comparison we suggest that the Council consider Wellington City Council’s “Safer Roads” programme¹, which proposes treating **all** residential areas around Wellington within seven years. A similar programme could be initiated within Christchurch over the next decade, focusing on treatments such as traffic calming features, area gateways, pedestrian/cycle crossing facilities, and 30 or 40 km/h speed limits. The likely cost to treat a whole neighbourhood in this manner would probably be the equivalent of completely reconstructing just a couple of streets in the area, yet the result would have a considerably greater coverage.
- (3) **We support all projects in the cycleways budget and specifically those in the 2004/05 year.** If any of these are unable to be completed, funding levels should be retained and projects brought forward from later years. We are particularly concerned to **maintain the programme on arterial roads**, where most cycling occurs and where cyclists feel the most stress, although we would also welcome investment in suitable alternative cycle corridors.
- (4) We would like to see the **Little River cycleway linkages** brought forward, to begin investigation and possibly construction in 2004/05. Development progress on the Little River trail is now reaching the point of actual construction, so Christchurch should ensure that connections to the city are in place at the same time.
- (5) We urge prompt progress on developing a solution along **Riccarton Road** for cycling and public transport; shared bus/cycle lanes may well be appropriate. As an important arterial route with considerable off-street parking, we encourage you to look beyond the inevitable complaints about loss of parking to provide a solution that is best for the whole city.
- (6) It is pleasing to see approximately \$50k pa allocated from 2005/06 towards **off-road cycle path resurfacing**. However, we request that similar funding be allocated in the coming financial year. We hope that funding also allows for suitable improvements in width and quality where necessary; for example, on many of the pathways in Hagley Park.
- (7) We would like to see some investment in **destination signage along major cycle routes** (at least \$20k pa over the next few years). In Hagley Park for example, it is not always clear to the unfamiliar traveller where each path goes. Likewise, for cycle tourists approaching the city, signage should indicate the safest and most direct way(s) to key city locations. For major future cycle route projects (e.g. Little River cycleway linkages, Railway Cycleway north), provision of destination signage should automatically form part of these projects.

¹ See www.wcc.govt.nz/news/projects/saferroads/

- (8) We encourage a greater investment in new **40 km/h school speed zones**; the current plan would appear to suggest that the (relatively minimal) existing programme will peter out in 2006/07. We would like to see an extensive rollout of these speed zones across the city, and also accompanying street works to further persuade motorists to slow down in these areas. An alternative or complementary activity would be extensive speed limit reductions on all local and collector roads, with supporting traffic calming where necessary.
- (9) We are disappointed that no work is currently identified to find an acceptable solution for **cyclists crossing the Waimakariri River**; your District Council neighbour bordering to the north has also shown similar reticence until at least 2011. As the only means for cyclists to connect to Christchurch from the north, this must be resolved sooner rather than later. We request an investigation during 2004/05 to identify physical a solution for construction during 2005/06.
- (10) We encourage an ongoing commitment to promptly funding projects that implement the goals of the **Council's Pedestrian Strategy, Central City Strategy, and Parking Strategy**, as well as the **Regional Council's Public Transport 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. An indication of this is the fact that the Programme still refers to generic projects such as "Central City Transport Projects" and "Public Transport Initiatives", rather than specific projects and locations. We strongly urge more commitment to mapping out a plan of action for these strategies.

Please consider modifying the programme to incorporate the issues raised above.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Hayman and Glen Koorey

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Spokes Canterbury (the former Canterbury Cyclists' Association) is a local cycling advocacy group dedicated to including cycling as an everyday form of transport within local and regional planning. The group is affiliated with the national Cycling Advocates Network (CAN) and includes a number of CAN's executive members.

Spokes provides significant cycling expertise through its many longstanding advocates, transportation professionals and (most importantly) regular cyclists. The group is represented on Christchurch City Council's cycling steering committee and Environment Canterbury's Regional Land Transport Committee and provides regular feedback on various council transportation and planning proposals.



6 May 2004

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Re: Draft Metropolitan Christchurch Transport Statement (MCTS)

Spokes Canterbury, the local cycling advocacy group, is pleased to offer this submission regarding the Council's MCTS. We would be happy to provide any further information if required. We also plan to make a submission in person regarding the draft LTCCP, and would be willing to discuss these MCTS issues further there.

We also strongly endorse the submissions of the **Sustainable Cities Trust** and **Living Streets Aotearoa**.

General Comments

Spokes generally welcomes the draft MCTS as a step in the right direction. The increase in proposed funding for walking, cycling, public transport, and demand management is a tangible statement of the commitment that the Council plans to make in these areas. While Spokes obviously has a particular interest in cycling, we tend to find that concerted investment in all "alternative" modes of travel (and demand management) greatly benefits the cycling environment overall.

Our concern is whether this will be enough, given that a "business as usual" approach seems to be proposed for roading expenditure (where no change in previously planned spending is envisaged). It is arguably difficult for the alternative modes to compete, even with additional funding, when at the same time facilities for motorists are continuing to be improved. The fact that over 65% of funding will still be allocated to "roading" (albeit acknowledging that some of this also benefits other modes) would appear **to do little to redress the past inequities and significantly change the status quo**.

The forecasts for motor vehicle growth (such as on page 11) are not challenged on how we can slow them down, and indeed turn them around. Instead they seem to be used to justify further investment in roading. The MCTS envisions in 20 years time (Goal 7, page 15) that *"By reducing the need to travel there is less need for expenditure on transport infrastructure and services, allowing more money to be available for productive investment elsewhere"*. Yet virtually the **same** roading investment is still forecast over the next 20 years, with or without this strategy.

An innovative approach is required. We would suggest that **some major roading projects be delayed by a few years** to allow new alternative initiatives, implemented first, to compete fairly with the existing roading network. Some of the deferred road funding could also be used to speed up the rollout of other initiatives, whilst still allowing an overall saving to ratepayers. We could envisage that the success of the alternatives may reduce the need to provide the roading options, deferring them even further and allowing further alternative investment to be provided instead. Ultimately this "virtuous cycle" is far more productive (and cost-effective) than the traditional one where road building feeds further traffic growth and vice versa.

We feel that it would be useful to explicitly define in the MCTS a **hierarchy of transport users**. For comparison, the Local Transport Plan for York (UK)¹ provides the following order:

1. Pedestrians
2. People with mobility problems
3. Cyclists
4. Public transport users
5. Powered two-wheelers
6. Commercial/business users (including deliveries, HCVs)
7. Car-borne shoppers
8. Car-borne commuters

This then translates into appropriate themes and priorities for projects. For example, York's planned 5-year expenditure on traditional "roading" construction and maintenance was only about 40% of their total budget.

Specific Comments – Planned Programme

Spokes offers the following specific observations about the proposed MCTS and planned expenditures:

- We support the intention to involve the surrounding Councils as part of the MCTS planning process; clearly developments in their areas significantly affect traffic demand in Christchurch. We urge stronger consideration of the role that **rail and busways** can play in providing long-distance transport needs to these districts (particularly in conjunction with cycling to provide door-to-door links).
- The MCTS is notably lacking in discussion of the role that **traffic management / calming** can play in promoting safer streets and encouraging more walking and cycling. With over 75% of Christchurch's streets (by length) being local and collector roads (where the emphasis should be on accessibility, not traffic movement), this is a not-insignificant factor. Residents along such non-arterial roads should be satisfied with the nature of traffic (volumes, speeds) and level of safety (walking/cycling, security, children) along their streets. We suggest that the Roding element of the MCTS programme be separated into "Arterial movement" and "Local accessibility and safety", to clearly distinguish the relative emphasis on each. The latter would identify the level of investment in treatments such as "Living Streets", school speed zones, neighbourhood area plans, safe routes to schools and low-speed zones. For an example of similar area-wide treatments, we suggest that the Council consider Wellington City Council's "Safer Roads" programme² as an appropriate model.
- It seems to be symptomatic of the traditional road-based thinking that, while a number of specific roading projects are costed and programmed (there is even a map showing major roading projects), other expenditure categories list just generic items like "New Assets (inc Cycleways)" and "Bus Priority Measures". We hope that this apparent willingness to do detailed work on roading projects ahead of other projects does not manifest itself in terms of which projects get developed and constructed first. We suggest that the final MCTS provide a more detailed implementation plan for **all** transportation categories.

¹ City of York Council 2001. *Policies into Action: Local Transport Plan 2001/02-2005/06 - Executive Summary*. York, UK.

² See www.wcc.govt.nz/news/projects/saferroads/

- Following on from this discussion about specific projects, we note that it's not unusual for a specific roading project to cost in the order of many millions of dollars. We wonder therefore whether we can't propose similar multi-million dollar **"package projects" for walking & cycling**. Such projects would enable (say) a lot of cycling initiatives to be constructed all at once, rather than stretched out over a long timeframe. This would enable continuous complete cycle routes to be developed in one stage, which usually provides more benefits than via incremental stages. Similarly, it would allow for area-based treatments, to make an entire neighbourhood friendlier for walking and cycling.
- We are concerned that Travel Planning is not seen as requiring significant expenditure until considerably further along the 20-year timeline. While some demand management initiatives such as congestion pricing might not need to be considered until later, travel behaviour programmes (such as business and school travel plans) are a vital tool that should be strongly implemented right from the start. Overseas evidence would suggest that, in comparison to other transportation activities, they have the potential to provide the greatest level of benefits relative to their cost. Therefore we recommend **increasing the initial allocation to the Travel Planning category**.
- Although significant funding is directed towards **"Central City Amenity"**, it is totally unclear what this is meant to encompass. We would like to think that it would include more investment in on-street parking management, shuttle bus services, traffic calming, street closures, and motor vehicle access restrictions. Such measures would enhance the viability of the central city for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport and counter the unproductive "parking outside my shop" mentality. More detailed discussion of these aspects is required in the MCTS.

Please consider modifying the MCTS to incorporate the issues raised above.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Hayman and Glen Koorey

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