

# Living Streets Aotearoa



## Our Community Plan Submission 2006

### Introduction

Living Streets Aotearoa, the local walking advocacy group, is pleased to offer this submission on the future plans for Christchurch for the next 10 years. We would be happy to provide any further information or clarification if required, and request the opportunity of presenting our submission at a hearing.

Our submission will take the form of a series of bullet points about the plan.

General comments:

- The vision isn't visionary. Why do we want to be a boutique city? Why do we want a first world lifestyle? Those things don't necessarily create a good place to live in and infers a city for a select few.
- This vision will lead us on an unsustainable path that most other cities are following. We need to be a stand out city embracing its people to create a city of the future. A city where the economy is in harmony with people and the environment. We should be the Curitiba of the Pacific.
- Creating a first world lifestyle signals over expenditure on "wow factor" projects at the expense of simple things like improving the walking environment for all citizens.
- We view this plan as quite disjointed. What are the threads that connect it together? How have this group of random capital projects been selected?
- Much of the plan seeks funding for already existing asset management plans. Are these plans the best way forward? Do they lock us into old ways of thinking that in some cases require over engineered solutions?
- We should be seeking a city that develops sustainably, instead it appears we are continuing down the same old path of economic growth at the expense of sustainable development.

- The plan isn't planning for the impacts of peak oil and fuel prices on transport patterns.
- The plan is very hard to make specific comments on because there is so little detail to comment on. Transport projects are lumped together as big packages that are not detailed out.

#### Specific Comments Walking:

- Our area of interest is utilitarian walking. That means walking to work, school, shopping etc. We want walking to be a regular part of citizens' daily lives and not something you only do on the weekends in a park or walking track. We support any of your initiatives that enable walking to be a better experience.
- We would like to see more money spent to improve the walking experience. Community walking audits could be introduced at strategic sites around the city and money should be allocated to improve problems identified.
- We support urban development that creates urban villages where people can access services on foot. Removal of local swimming pools, halls and libraries does not accord with our view of communities. Please review the decision to close services down and make large district centres.
- We question the need to spend the 1.05 million on school zone flashing lights. Is an expensive technological solution the best way to solve the problem? We certainly support safer walking infrastructure around schools but it might be better to re-direct the money to the appropriate process for identifying the issues such as safe routes to school or school travel plans and further traffic management works.
- We would like more expenditure re-directed to the walking environment in general. Many small low cost initiatives could be undertaken that would have a significant benefit on the walking environment.
- We would like to see the general public more engaged with walking. Our community street audit project highlighted that local people really enjoyed sharing their ideas to improve the walkability of an area. This process is a great way for council to get to know their local communities whilst at the same time gathering vital feedback to improve walking networks. A community street audit involves gathering a group of people, young, old, vision impaired, wheelchair bound etc and walking around an area seeking their feedback as to what works or doesn't work for them. It is a valuable insight into why some people do/don't walk.

- Safer crossing points are of prime concern. As the community ages we need to be aware just how important safe crossing points are. We need to ensure that crossing points are made to the highest standard so that all users can navigate them easily. Uncontrolled crossing points are harder for the elderly and disabled to negotiate. Zebra crossings remain a preferred option for many.
- We would like to see expenditure accelerated for the roll out of more neighbourhood friendly 30km street layouts.
- We would like the following unfunded projects added to the plan:
  - Funding for urban regeneration
  - New footpaths
  - Neighbourhood improvement works
  - Art in public places

#### Specific Comments on other Projects:

- We support some of the projects you have detailed:
  - The new bus exchange
  - Strategic land purchases
  - Transport projects that improve walking, cycling and public transport options
  - Funding for community organisations
  - Upkeep of parks and reserves
  - Development of the Avon River Corridor
  - Bus priority lanes
- We don't support total expenditure of \$187.3 million on street and transport improvements. We suspect that a significant proportion of this money is for improved new roads. The Blenheim Road deviation is not needed. Money from this project alone would be enough to substantially improve the walking networks in Christchurch. Decent kerb cuts, wider pavements, more seating, walking maps and signs, safer crossing points are just a few things to mention that could be improved.
- We don't support expenditure on new leisure centres. We have enough new centres. Lets upgrade the old ones and leave local communities in tact with walkable networks to the local pool.
- We support price increases to off street car parking.
- We are fully supportive of higher developer contributions to pay for the majority of infrastructure in new developments. Incentives should be provided for developers to develop eco sensitive schemes, especially in already developed areas where the main aim is to create urban village development.

Specific Comments Policy:

- We don't support the removal of Red Bus from the strategic asset list. Public transport is vital to the city and public assets that generate money for the city should be kept. Private businesses generally end up costing ratepayers more and profits do not go back into community initiatives.

The branch members of Living Streets Canterbury have prepared this submission. We are a regional branch of Living Streets Aotearora. Wendy Everingham has coordinated the submission. 1-4 Harmans Rd Lyttelton.