

18. PAPANUI TO RICCARTON RAILWAY CYCLEWAY

RR 9400

Officer responsible City Streets Manager	Author Alix Newman: Cycle Planning Officer
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The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of the status of the Railway Cycleway Project and seek approval to open the cycleway with a ceremony.

PROJECT STATUS

Construction of the first two stages of the Railway Cycleway Project, from St James Park in Papanui to Wairakei Road started in the week of 22 February. The project has a contract period of 12 weeks, meaning it should be completed by mid-May.

The construction tenders came in well under-budget, however the unexpected costs imposed by Tranz Rail to connect the crossing signals to the railway signals, means the first two stages will come in approximately on budget.

A further consultation leaflet was mailed to all household occupiers and owners within 30m of the proposed pathway. They were asked to respond with a consent/do not consent comment. A clear majority of owners/occupiers supported the project for each of the two stages (in both cases approximately 55% yes, 10% no, 35% no response).

PATHWAY OPENING

Given the publicity associated with this project over the years, the length of time it has been in the planning process, and the amount of research and consultation that has gone on with this project, it is proposed that the opening of the first two stages be marked by a ceremony – perhaps the equivalent of a cutting of a ribbon.

Due to the construction timetable, it will not be possible to open the pathway during a school holiday, unless this is delayed until sometime between 26 June and 11 July. By this stage the pathway will have already had considerable use. Other dates to possibly consider are Queens Birthday Weekend or any time from 17 May on.

The Committee is asked to consider an appropriate opening date.

ASSOCIATED PROJECTS

The City Streets Unit is currently working on designs for cycle lanes on Strowan Road and Rossall Street (clause 20 refers). These cycle lanes will connect the Railway Cycleway at Wairakei Road to Hagley Park. The combination of Railway Cycleway and Strowan-Rossall cycle lanes will generate 1.2km of off-road path and 1.8km of on-road lanes. It would seem appropriate to work toward completing the Strowan-Rossall Project at the same time as the Railway Cycleway.

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- Recommendation:**
1. That the Committee recommend an appropriate date or dates for the opening of the Railway Cycleway.
 2. That the Committee determine whether the Strowan-Rossall cycle lane project should be completed at the same time and included as part of the opening event.

- Chairman's Recommendation:**
1. That the opening function for the cycleway be held at a time during the school term.
 2. That the opening be by children invited from the relevant schools.
 3. That the Committee determine whether the Strowan/Rossall cycle lane project should be completed at the same time and be included as part of the opening event.