

4. CYCLE STRATEGY - DRAFT UPDATED 2004 VERSION

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The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the updated draft Cycling Strategy proceeding to consultation. The current strategy is now four years old and was programmed to be updated.

BACKGROUND

At the February 2004 meeting of the Sustainable Transport and Utilities Committee the proposed process to update the current cycling strategy was introduced and was adopted by the Committee. Following this process the draft update of the cycle strategy is now separately circulated.

In the three to four years since the last strategy update, in addition to the usual 'cycle scene' incremental changes expected, a number of exceptional changes have taken place. The 2002 New Zealand Transport Strategy has given explicit support for sustainable transport and cascading from this, initiatives at national, regional and local level have been developing with extra impetus. This recent extra support towards sustainable transport generally has paralleled cycling gaining more funding, more recognition through strategies, legal recognition through changes in the road user rules and development of national design and planning guidelines.

The need for a periodical update was recognised by the Council when it adopted the last updated strategy in 2000. It also then adopted a recommendation that such a future update be undertaken. It is particularly timely that the current strategy is updated now to take account of 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.

UPDATE PROCESS

The preparatory stage used to complete the draft updated Cycle Strategy separately circulated has involved a sample of stakeholders being interviewed to gain their views on the strengths and weaknesses of the existing strategy and seeking suggestions for an updated version. This sampling included interviews with members from all six 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 has been prepared with the aim of having the final document adopted by the Council and available to the public well before the Local Government Elections in October 2004. The following milestone dates are consistent with this time frame for completion.

TIMEFRAME

Key Dates 2004	Milestones
9 March 2004	Sustainable Transport and Utilities Committee - any adjustments and draft strategy recommended for sign-off for release to consultation.
25 March 2004	Council sign-off of draft strategy for consultation.
25 March - 7 May 2004	Draft strategy is released for consultation - (6 weeks).
7 May - 22 June 2004	Gathering feedback, analysis and development of draft strategy in conjunction with the Cycle Steering Committee Working Party.
22 June 2004	Cycle Steering Committee recommendation for sign-off of final draft strategy.
24 June 2004	Sustainable Transport and Utilities Seminar on proposed final draft strategy.

Key Dates 2004**Milestones**

13 July 2004	Sustainable Transport and Utilities Committee recommendation for adoption to the Council of the revised strategy.
29 July 2004	Council adoption of the revised strategy.
23 ^d August 2004	Strategy printed and available to the public. Promotion and distribution activated.

DRAFT UPDATED STRATEGY

The updated strategy is consistent with the direction that the Council is currently progressing within the existing cycling strategy but takes new impetus from such documents as the Metropolitan Christchurch Transport Statement Stage One and other associated 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 of best effect. This will include focussing on both existing cyclists and potential future cyclists with a further focus on initiatives directed to school aged children cycling. It will also involve better maintenance of existing cycle facilities as well as increasing development of cycle routes. There is also more focus proposed for promotional and educational transport programmes and activities.

The draft updated strategy looks to take the advancements of the last strategy, that saw the decline in cycle numbers stabilising, towards an increase in the future.

Vision

- 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."*

The new proposed vision recognises the 1996 (current) vision that was 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 we need to ensure that everyone is on board - cyclists and non-cyclists alike so we now look to a vision where "Everyone Likes Cycling in Christchurch".

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.

Targets

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

General

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

The general direction of the strategy isn't 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.

Current and Updated 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 cyclists are seen to be enjoying themselves, they become powerful advocates for cycling.

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 and take advantage of the prevailing positive advancements in cycling in New Zealand towards achieving its vision for cycling for Christchurch.

The updated draft cycling strategy will be released for consultation and all feedback will be considered by staff and the Cycle Steering Subcommittee, with a new cycle strategy planned to be presented to the Committee for its consideration in July 2004 following the June 2004 strategy seminar.

Recommendation: That the draft updated Cycle Strategy be approved for consultation.