

CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL

Draft LTCCP 2009-19

- Received via Web

Submissions close on 16 April 2009

I wish to talk to the main points in my written submission at the hearings to be held between Monday 11 May 2009 and Monday 18 May 2009.

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| Your Submission: | <p>NB: I would appreciate being able to send the word file of this document as an attachment to preserve formatting and ease of viewing. Please advise as to how I can do this. Thank you.</p> <p>CCC LTCCP 2009-2019 Submission Dirk De Lu</p> <p>Council Transportation and Active Travel Policies The Council is to be complimented for laying a sound foundation for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • transportation planning • urban development • community and road safety • community and individual health • pollution mitigation • supporting our children in taking up active travel options <p>Actions to be undertaken and targets to be achieved are clearly stated. Thank you for providing such well considered and developed policies.</p> <p>The 2004 Cycling Strategy opens with the statement that "Cycling is a priority for the Christchurch City Council." It views cycling as an integral part of a sustainable transport system. The strategy recognises that cycling benefits the community by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • keeping transportation spending local, • reducing the demand for road construction and maintenance, • reducing road congestion, • improving road safety, • improving air quality and benefiting individual & community health. |
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The Strategy recognised that the Council can achieve its objectives through adequate funding. The public transport example clearly indicates what can be achieved when significant investment is made in a preferred transport mode. Based upon current census information more people commute by cycle than use public transport. With a similar level of investment, cycling might also experience rapid growth. Achieving growth in commuter cycling (where the community stands to gain the greatest economic and environmental benefits) may be restricted until the cycle network comes closer to completion.

Both of these predictions have been born out. Public transit funding increases have led to more users. The lack of adequate funding for cyclists has led to declines. The Strategy cites the Metropolitan Transport Statement 2003 proposal to increase cycle spending to \$2.7 million annually from 2007 to 2024.

The stated policy of the Strategy is to ensure the continued development of a cycle network and to provide cycle routes. Contiguous cycle ways (ones without gaps) are stressed as absolutely necessary to achieve both safety and user confidence.

The Strategy set some targets such as:
• 8.5% of commuters to be on cycles by 2006 and 10% by 2011.
• school age cycle commuters to be 20% by 2008.

The 2006 census data found over 6% commute by cycle in Christchurch. 40% of school children cycled to school in 1995, only 18% did in 2001. These figures have not improved. This decline is both shocking and a confirmation that we have failed both current and future generations.

This Council's 2004 Road Safety Strategy sought to increase road safety in part to encourage cycling. In addition to committing itself to be in support of the CCC Cycling Strategy it listed specific objectives relating to cyclists including:

- road user education
- making cycling safer
- promoting cycling

Once again the Council adopted good planning strategies and committed to reaching measurable objectives.

The Metropolitan Christchurch Transportation Statement of 2004 had a 20 year outlook. On page 1 it set some goals (underscore added):
• Social/Cultural goals - based on concepts of equity and safety. There is a social/cultural responsibility to provide safe and affordable access to transport for all sectors of the community "to places of employment, recreation, shopping and education facilities.
Economic goals - include the concepts of efficiency and effectiveness. To develop a transport system that maximises existing infrastructure and optimises resources.
Environmental goals - include the protection of the environment, ensuring the transport system minimises any adverse effects on the environment.

This Council has committed to support active travel for reasons of health, equity, economy and future progress. Active travel is recognised as the most cost effective strategy available to meet targets, especially for reducing peak travel time congestion. The Council is to be complimented for its efforts and forward thinking. The proposed LTCCP is in conflict with current active travel strategies.

Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP)
The Community Outcomes listed in this LTCCP are not supported by its proposed transport funding.

• Safety is not enhanced for road users when active transport is neglected.

â?¢ The environment is not protected by further road building.
â?¢ Community health is not furthered when people do not have regular exercise and are exposed to hazardous roads and pollution.
â?¢ Democratic, inclusive and responsible decision making is not achieved when the basic needs of cyclists are sacrificed in favour of other road users.

Our heritage is not protected, current needs are poorly met and future challenges are left to the next generation.

Conflicts with Other Transportation Plans

Quoting this LTCCP, â?¢The most significant ongoing strategic conversation that the Council has been undertaking over the last three years has been the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy (UDS)â?¢.

The Urban Development Strategy and Action Plan sets goals, the first two are:

â?¢ A reduction in the current number of motor vehicle trips made
â?¢ Increase the proportion of trips made using sustainable travel options

Quoting the current draft Travel Demand Management Survey (TDMS), â?¢It is no longer cost-effective to keep building new roads to provide for increasing demand for car-based travel. The most efficient way to use the existing transport network is through sustainable travel.â?¢

The TDMS acknowledges that sustainable travel is simply good management of ratepayersâ?¢ funds. Active travel is the major component of sustainable travel. Yet this LTCCP commits the bulk of all transport funding to roading projects in support of motorised travel.

From page 2 of the current LTCCP, â?¢[this LTCCP] forms a basis for accountability of the Council to its community.â?¢ However, this LTCCP undermines policy and promises already made.

LTCCP Funding â?¢ Active Travel

The â?¢Active Travelâ?¢ funding provided is only broadly described and dubious. â?¢Activities and Servicesâ?¢ funding finds a curiously labelled â?¢Active Travelâ?¢ heading on volume 1 page 90. Over 98% of this funding is for maintenance of footpaths, berms, open spaces and malls. With an average annual value of \$19 million, that is a lot of â?¢maintenanceâ?¢, very little of which will actually improve active transport. It is even more curious, as LTCCP capital expenditures overall generally exceed 50% of all funding. Yet in this plan, maintenance consumes 74% of all â?¢Active Travelâ?¢ funding. Then again, â?¢renewing and replacing assetsâ?¢, is actually a capital expense.

More so-called â?¢Active Travelâ?¢ funding is found on page 255 of Vol. 1, where it is revealed that the vast bulk of active travel capital expenditures, approximately \$48 million, will go to footpath resurfacing. The Christchurch Southern Motorway (CSM) gets \$10.4 million for its active travel elements. An undefined â?¢cycleways improvement programmeâ?¢ comes in at \$5.8 million. School children are clear losers with \$781,000 to enable them to figure a safe way through unsafe streets. This is especially illogical, as it is estimated that parents driving them to school may be as much as 30% of peak hour traffic.

Councilâ?¢s support for CSM included offering to bear the expense of the cycle and pedestrian elements of this project. This LTCCP now allocates the bulk of active travel capital funding for the next 10 years to supporting this project, a project which benefits motorists. Cyclists were not consulted and are distraught that their real needs, the projects which might actually save their lives, are neglected.

That cyclists might benefit, someday, from these improvements is not the point. The funds are urgently needed for previously identified and higher priority efforts such as building out the cycling network. Central government should rightly bear the full expenses of the CSM .

Given the liberal application of the "Active Travel" label to projects which are, at best, only minimally supportive of active travel, it becomes difficult to break out actual spending on behalf of active travel. What is clear is that out of a transportation capital budget of \$663 million, less than \$6 million, or less than 1%, may actually contribute to meeting the long stated goal of completing the cycle network over the next ten years.

In 2006 this city boasted of 131 kilometres of cycle lanes and paths. The current figure is 101. This LTCCP will do little to improve matters. Promises have been broken, and we all lose.

LTCCP Funding " Public Transit

Public transit infrastructure is funded with \$162 million. Per page 84 of the plan, public transport currently meets 2.8% of travel demand. Given that cyclists are approximately 6% of commuters, and peak travel congestion is a key target, one has to question the wisdom of allocating them less than 4% of the capital spending granted to bussing infrastructure.

The bus priority lanes do include some cycle lanes. But these projects actually contravene the cycle strategy's recognition that cycle lanes must be contiguous. This is an important point, as cycle lanes that appear only to vanish place cyclists and other road users in danger, as all struggle to navigate an ever-changing road layout. The reality and perception of safety will certainly suffer.

Unacceptable Figures

This LTCCP claims to support active travel while allocating little to the long-promised development of the aforementioned "cycle network". Furthermore, this LTCCP shuns all prior cyclist figures being in excess of 6% at peak times, and replaces it with a more general, and less relevant, target of 2.4% of all trips to be by cycle. This ignores the fact that active transport is a cost effective way to cut peak travel time congestion. It replaces commuter trip targets with a new, lower and less applicable goal and requires it need not be increased for 10 years.

Cyclists and pedestrians are over-represented in one measure. Per the central government, cyclists and pedestrians equal 35% of deaths on urban roads in New Zealand.

Integrity and Value for Money

Why should Council's promises to the active transport community be honoured? Because they were made, and because they are integral to meeting the Council's own stated transportation targets.

This LTCCP does not apply a cost-benefit analysis to transportation funding. It does not deliver "value for money". This is bad financial management that undermines well vetted and adopted policies.

Infrastructure development, education and ongoing promotion are crucial if Christchurch citizens are to make the transition from a vehicle-dependent society to one where citizens can safely choose the transport mode that best meets their needs.

This LTCCP scuttles plans, denies choice and commits Christchurch to a future stuck in the past. It is a future that is not sustainable, not workable, and which will burden future generations with the bill for "intergenerational" projects that are unlikely to meet any generation's real needs. Christchurch will not be "a world-class boutique city, where people enjoy a sustainable lifestyle, a healthy environment."

For too long promises have been made and not kept. The consequences are:

• failure to achieve stated transport goals

â?¢ failure to achieve stated goals in cycle/pedestrian planning
â?¢ degraded community health and environment
â?¢ cyclist and pedestrian injury and death
â?¢ declining school age cyclist numbers
â?¢ communities divided by ever widening roads choked by cars with ever more frustrated drivers

Local and central governments promised to meet community transportation needs in large part by encouraging cycling and walking. This LTCCP states â?The New Zealand Transport Strategy stresses the need to integrate transport and land-use planning, make the best use of existing networks, and increase the availability and use of public transport, cycling and walking.â? However, it fails to deliver on these promises.

Recent Events

The new central government has announced that transportation funding will be altered to favour motorised options. Local Government NZ responded in their submission that a significant shift of money to highway construction "is not justified and may have perverse outcomes". Chris Darby, the North Shore representative to the Auckland Regional Transport Committee, commented "The path to becoming a world-class city won't be found trumpeting outdated 1950s-style highway development".

The slowing economy is pushing ever more commuters out of their cars and onto the streets: streets that are woefully ill-prepared to serve them. This opportunity to support a much needed and socially beneficial change has been squandered.

The Future

The economy will improve. When it does, oil prices will return to their previous highs. Many Cantabrians will look for alternatives to their cars. It is only fair to anticipate this and give them choices.

What do we choose to leave to our children and grandchildren? It is not our right to insist on this limited vision, which has already brought us ecological decay, resource depletion and poorer health, for another decade.

We can turn our backs on our responsibility to future generations, or we can front up and embrace the challenges. The problem lies not in knowing what to do. The problem lies in not doing it.

Recommendation

For this Council to achieve its stated transport targets, to honour its promises to the citizens and to adequately prepare for the future, the Streets and Transport section of this LTCCP must be re-written to conform with established policy. It cannot be accepted and â?adjustedâ? later. The cycle network must be advanced with contiguous cycle lanes and cycling projects prioritised and scheduled with sufficient funding committed in this LTCCP. Council staff have already prepared project lists to continue the cycle network, lists which were cut from earlier versions of this plan.

I would like to look forward to active transport groups, along with other road user groups, working productively with this council and council staff to develop well supported and forward-looking LTCCPs.

Conclusion

It is clear that if you build roads, there will be more cars to fill them. Travel times will slow to a crawl. Peopleâ?s health and the environment will suffer. Ratepayersâ? funds will have been poorly administered.

I offer an observation from the land of roading projects, the USA, from testimony to Congress on 10 March 2009 (DOT refers to U.S. Department of Transportation)

"Congestion has worsened over the past 10 years, despite large increases

in transportation spending at all levels of government and improvements to the physical condition of highways and transit facilities. Furthermore, according to DOT, highway spending by all levels of government has increased 100 percent in real dollar terms since 1980, but the hours of delay during peak travel periods have increased by almost 200 percent during the same period. These mobility issues have increased at a relatively constant rate over the last two decades..."

-- Katherine Siggerud, Managing Director, Physical Infrastructure Issues, U.S. Government Accountability Office

We know what does not work. This Council is blessed with good transportation planning documents. It is past time to actually implement them. Active travel has remained under-funded in spite of official recognition of the important contribution it must make if congestion is to be alleviated. This is your opportunity to set things right. Cars, congestion, pollution; or liveable streets that enhance our community?

This LTCCP needs to apply the cost-benefit analysis already done. Reducing congestion can be effectively remedied by allowing citizens to safely choose to walk or cycle, or money can be tossed at the unachievable folly of road building, and we can all sit stuck in traffic.