



SUBMISSION

Transit New Zealand

Travel Demand Management Policy and Guidelines

1. Introduction

The Cycling Advocates' Network (CAN)¹ is pleased to present this submission on Transit's Travel Demand Management Policy and Guidelines. The national executive of the group has prepared this submission, with feedback from CAN members. We have based our submission on examination of the relevant documents, hard copies of which were posted to CAN. Some of our local member groups may also be making separate submissions specific to their Transit region. If you require clarification of any of the points raised by us, please feel free to contact us as detailed at the end of our submission.

2. Summary of comments from CAN

We are pleased to see increased importance and initiative being given to walking and cycling, We are also pleased to see that funding criteria will be adopted to allow cycling facilities in road projects, especially for the pinch points. It is important that the regional staff understand the cycling specific policy. We recommend that Transit's regional cycling champions are strengthened and be in a position to influence projects so that walking and cycling facilities are not compromised, at any cost.

We support Transit's ideas to support and encourage cycling like bike parking and shower facilities at work, cycle buddy scheme, cycle training scheme, Bicycle User Groups, pool bikes for business travel, etc.

We are happy with the time lines given in the implementation plan and would like to see action on the ground.

We would also like to highlight that in the highway scenarios, people may not be able to cycle too long distances, or certain roads may not be cycle-able, in spite of Transit's best efforts to provide the necessary infrastructure. Again, cycling integrated with public transport is the answer. This will allow people, especially cycle-tourists to cycle part of the journey and continue their journey with public transport.

Off the topic, we would also like to highlight that the time given to complete this submission was quite short and the submission document was not published on your website. We are a voluntary organisation with members spread across the country. Under these circumstances, it was not easy for all the members to provide their suggestions and feedback. Publishing the document on your website and more time provided, this submission would have been better consulted within our organisation.

¹ More information about CAN is at the end of our submission.

CAN will be pleased to provide more input on this guideline and policy development. We will also be able to provide technical input to come with best engineering practices. Our contact details are:

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3. Submission

TDM introduction

We acknowledge that Travel Demand Management is a relatively new concept to this country. We also agree that climate change is a big issue viz-a-viz transportation and that we cannot build our way into future through roads. We definitely need smarter sustainable transportation options.

Travel Demand Management

We agree with Transit's objective to modify travel decisions and improve efficiency of movement of people and freight around the country without making big investments in road projects. We believe additional roads only induce more traffic and any additional capacity created for future is used up even before a project is completed. Influencing travel decisions is the only way to ensure, the existing capacity of roads are used in the most efficient manner.

We are pleased to see Transit acknowledging the need to encourage multi-modal travel that includes walking and cycling. Walking and cycling are sustainable and cost effective modes of transport. These modes also give health benefits that cannot be achieved in other modes.

Both walking and cycling have multiple benefits and is one investment with multiple outcomes (transport, health and environmental) compared to other modes that do not have such a high benefit-cost ratio.

As acknowledged by you, we would like to highlight that the objectives of the New Zealand Transport Strategy are strongly supportive of cycling, and that the promotion of walking and cycling forms a key part of the National Land Transport Programme. The NZTS and new transport legislation aim to reduce dependence on motor vehicles, and to make alternatives a central part of the transport system.

We also agree with Transit, the need for better integration between land use and transportation. CAN believes that already a large percentage of urban land area has been devoted to roads. Any addition of roads will only induce increased traffic, leading to further congestion and increased green house gas emissions. Restrictions on road building to existing network of roads and improving efficiency of movement through TDM is the answer to future travel needs.

According to Todd, "reducing the amount of land needed for transportation facilities reduces total impervious surface, allowing more land to be available for other productive uses such as housing, farms, parks and wildlands" (Todd, Evaluating Transportation Land Use Impacts, May 2007). Hence, we agree with Transit on the need for better integration between land use and transportation.

Need for Travel Demand Management

We agree with Transit that more car use leads to less physical activity and increased sedentary lifestyle, having negative impacts on health. Walking and cycling counter those impacts and create not just healthy communities but also lead to cleaner air that makes communities healthier. We also agree that new highway infrastructure is no longer an economically, socially or environmentally sustainable answer to address growth and the need for alternative approach.

A typical commuter driving a car is likely to spend an average of 1 hr travelling each way to work and back home and another hour to improve fitness. Cycling to work will involve the same or slightly less time to travel, but also combine fitness exercise, so there is no need to spend additional time for physical fitness. At the same time follows a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

We are also supportive of the New Zealand Transport Strategy and Land Transport Management Act. As mentioned earlier, the NZTS is supportive of walking and cycling.

We are happy with Transit's vision of "New Zealand that is less car dependent" that caters to all modes of transport. We would like to make sure that walking and cycling are included in this vision.

As mentioned by Transit, there has to be cost effective transportation projects and agree packaged solution as cited by you as an example is true. CAN has been advocating an public transport integrated with walking and cycling to be an effective solution. We would like to see a boost in multi modal modes of transport with public transport integrated with walking and cycling. Secure cycle storage in park and ride facilities is a must. This along with bikes on buses and trains will provide increased choice of travel. Designing busways and bus priority lanes can accommodate cycles as well.

We would also like to see priority lanes for green modes of transport that includes cycling and urge Transit to include cycles in No Car Lanes.

We don't think priority lanes will not be cost effective. The returns have to be seen in terms of reduced cost of congestion, pollution and improved health in the long run. The returns may be spread over several sectors like health and environment, but should still be considered. Transit must provide adequate information to members of the public about the long terms benefits compared to not implementing the scheme.

Walking and Cycling

CAN is pleased to see a section (5.3) devoted to walking and cycling and Transit's assertion about the role of walking and cycling in widening travel choices to contribute towards TDM objectives.

We are pleased to see that all the benefits of walking and cycling have been listed in the policy guideline. We would like to add that walking and cycling also reduce toxic waste creations, for example, oil spillage or generation of tyre shreds that often end in rivers and polluting the waters.

As set out in its document, we will be happy to work with Transit to improve conditions for walking and cycling. We are also able to provide engineering assistance to achieve best practice, high quality urban design and value for money.

We will be pleased to see wider shoulders on highways and cycles lanes to assist cyclists' safety. Here we would like to highlight that in a lot of state highways, quality of existing shoulder is near to nothing. Sometimes they are even missing, having been replaced by passing lanes for motorists. This situation often forces cyclist into the main carriageway, putting them in danger of accidents. As mentioned by you, highway pinch points also create unsafe cycling conditions and agree with the options provided to make cycling safer.

We would also like to see advanced stop boxes and toucan crossings implemented and ask Transit to address cyclists' safety concerns at roundabouts and traffic islands, especially when the roundabout has two lanes. We would also like to see improved signage of cycling facilities.

We would like Transit to make sure that all road constructions projects take care of the requirements of cyclists and pedestrians at the time of construction, since retro fitting of facilities are not always successful.

At the moment there is a problem of "good intentions" not filtering down to regional Transit Engineers and operational staff. It is extremely difficult for regional cycling advocates to get road shoulders re-instated, widened or smoothed. It is also difficult to convince regional staff that where there are pinch points Transit needs to be willing to listen to alternative suggestions by Cycling Advocates.

Travel Planning

We agree that mode share targets should be realistic and achievable. However, we would like to highlight that sometimes, it will be necessary to force a modal shift to achieve the overall objective of sustainable transport. For example, although there will be resistance, Transit should be ready to declare certain roads to be excluded from car use to allow for faster and efficient flow of public transport, walking and cycling. Another option could be to reduce the number of car parks in the targeted areas, so it is not possible to bring a car and park, followed by improved access to integrated public transport facilities. These practices have been adopted in various European cities with large success rates. There is no reason why New Zealand cannot adopt those standards.

We support Transit's minimum requirements for a travel plan to encourage walking and cycling.

Tolling and Road pricing

We would like Transit to adopt a pricing policy that will reduce dependence on cars. A gradual reduction in car parks and increasing their prices is one way of reducing the number of cars coming to a location. Tolling and road pricing are also effective mechanisms to curb unnecessary car usage and encourage high volume occupancy car journeys or switch over to public transport, walking and cycling options.

Implementation plan

It is good to see walking and cycling in the implementation plan and that various projects will be completed ahead of other projects. This will go a long way in encouraging use of cycles and getting people off their cars.

Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

We would like Transit to closely monitor progress of uptake in cycling, since this will provide crucial data to indicate if more effort is required to encourage people to cycle. Initial reports are likely to suggest that there is resistance to cycles as a mode of transport. However, Transit needs to keep revising policies and programs to change public perception towards cycling.

4. References

Todd Litman, Evaluating Transportation Land Use Impacts, Victoria Transport Policy Institute, Canada, 23 May 2007 - <http://www.vtpi.org/landuse.pdf>

The Cycling Advocates' Network of NZ (CAN) Inc is this country's national network of cycling advocate groups. It is a voice for all cyclists – recreational, commuter and touring. We work

with central government and local authorities, on behalf of cyclists, for a better cycling environment. We have affiliated groups and individual members throughout the country, and links with overseas cycling organisations. In addition, many national, regional and local government authorities, transportation consultancies, and cycle industry businesses are supporting organisations. CAN is a member of BikeNZ.