

# CHAIN LINKS

May 1998

The newsletter of CAN, the Cycling Advocates Network (NZ)

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## **1 Transfund Project Evaluation Review - Progress Report**

In previous issues, Chain Links has mentioned the review being undertaken by Transfund of their project evaluation procedures - the methods by which Transfund decides whether a transport project is worthy of state funding.

An industry-wide forum (which included Kerry Wood from CAN) was held in November 1997. An industry working group met in late January to discuss several of the major issues highlighted for review by the forum. Those of real importance for cyclists included: *Evaluation of Cycleways* - it was agreed that funding for cycleways be based on pre-agreed criteria (including the number of cyclists, number of vehicles, degree of conflict etc.). This procedure would be different to the economic evaluation of other capital works and is to be worked on further.

As it stands, the procedure seems to focus narrowly on (presumably) separate cycleways, rather than including special on-road facilities or general roading improvements that improve safety, access and convenience for cyclists. It also appears not to allow for the potential of a project to increase cycling, with all the benefits that come from that (health, environmental etc.).

CAW will be submitting on this issue. We'd encourage groups and individuals to also write to Transfund and ask for the criteria for evaluation of cycleways to be

broadened. Address: Transfund NZ, PO Box 2331, Wellington, fax: 04-499 0733, e-mail:

[reception@transfund.govt.nz](mailto:reception@transfund.govt.nz)

*Analytical Framework* - four options for evaluation frameworks were considered, three using variations of benefit-cost analysis and one based on multi-criteria analysis. Transfund's preliminary recommendation is that "the benefit-cost ratio combined with a description of intangible and/or strategic effects be used as the primary indicator of project viability" (Transfund News, March 98). The concept of reporting a range of benefit-cost ratios rather than a single figure was also discussed.

*Induced Traffic* - The group agreed that induced traffic (the change in the amount of traffic brought about by improvements made to the roading network) should, where appropriate, be taken into account in project evaluations. Further work is taking place on the use of variable trip matrix modelling techniques.

*Leveraged Funding* - There was general support for the concept of allowing local authorities and private sector interest to contribute supplementary funds to specific roading projects. If leveraged funding is to be allowed, it will have to be undertaken within Transfund's mandate ("to allocate resources to achieve a safe and efficient roading system") to ensure that it doesn't result in investment in poorly performing projects.

## 2 Cycle Commuting Down - NZ Census

The census question on travel to work does not necessarily give a true picture - all it takes is for census day to be miserably wet and windy for a fair number of cyclists to use the bus or their cars to get to work.

However, it can give us an idea of what is happening with cycle commuting over the country. The news isn't great: between the 1991 and 1996 censuses, cycle commuting fell by an average of 17 percent. Figures for some population centres follow. Negative changes of less than 10% have been omitted.

Percentage change in cycle commuters, 1991-96

Christchurch	- 10	Districts	- 26
Dunedin	+ 11	Lower Hutt	- 13
Manukau	- 24	N Shore	- 20
Napier	- 24	Nelson	- 16
Porirua	- 15	Upper Hutt	- 23
Wellington	+ 28		
New Zealand	- 17		

The only two bright spots are Dunedin and Wellington. It's impossible to say for sure why cycle commuting has gone up in those two places, but a big increase in mountain bike ownership over that five year period may have enabled more cyclists to conquer the hilly terrain in both cities.

The scale of the challenge facing us is clear.

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### Resources for Groups

Are you wanting to get your advocacy group on a more sound footing? Do you see the need for a group in your area but don't know how to get started?

CAN is planning a package of material for groups, including a 'generic' constitution, advice on how to kick off, information on incorporation, funding, organisation etc.

If you have things to contribute to it, please contact CAN as per details below. We'll let you know when it's available.

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### CAN Poster Distributed

CAN's public profile will take a big leap forward with the release of a poster. In the same distinctive style as our membership brochure, and with strong black images on a bright yellow background, the poster should be eye-catching.

The graphic design work was done by Carol Oddy and layout by Paul Kennett. We owe them many thanks for their great work and all the hours they've put in. The Bicycle Industry Association of NZ have offered to distribute brochures and posters for us. We've therefore had 13,000 brochures printed in Dunedin and freighted up to Auckland for mailing out to the 200 BIANZ-affiliated cycle shops around NZ. Each shop will also receive a poster and a covering letter introducing CAN to their staff and asking for their support. We're grateful to Francy Parfitt and BIANZ for their generous offer of help.

If your local bike shops don't have a CAN poster or leaflets on display, find out if they've received them. Around 40% of cycle retailers are not BIANZ members, so there will be plenty of shops who haven't.

If you could take responsibility for keeping shops stocked up with leaflets it would be very helpful. The phone numbers of those who have already indicated

- 3 they are prepared to be local contact people have been put on the covering letter - you may receive calls from the shops.  
Please let us know if you need posters and leaflets by ringing us on 04-385 2557 or e-mailing us at [can@actrix.gen.nz](mailto:can@actrix.gen.nz)

### **Massive Support for UK Traffic Reduction Bill**

By January of this year, nearly two-thirds of UK MPs had indicated their support for a target of a 10% reduction in car and lorry traffic by 2010. This target is contained in the Road Traffic Reduction (UK Targets) Bill.

The bill requires the Secretary of State for Transport to draw up within two years a national traffic reduction plan. The plan may include, among other things, "the measures that he believes it would be desirable to take to increase and improve facilities for cycling and walking" and "the measures that he believes it would be desirable to take to reduce the need to travel".

A newsletter called "Traffic Reduction File" is being put out by Friends of the Earth, the Green Party and Plaid Cymru in the UK. Issue 10 contains an excellent summary of arguments in favour of traffic reduction. Copy available from CAN.

Issue 11 focuses on the impact on children of motor vehicle traffic. Research by Dr Ian Roberts at the Institute for Child Health is examined. Dr Roberts concludes that death rates for child pedestrians and cyclists have fallen over the past decade, but research has shown

*"that this is because children walk and cycle much less than they used to. Between 1985 and*

*1992, the average distance walked in a year by a child aged 0-14 fell by 20%, and the average distance cycled by 26%. Reduced walking and cycling is a major contributor to declining levels of physical activity in children, which in turn is associated with increasing levels of childhood obesity. The curtailment of children's independent mobility that has resulted from traffic danger may also have adverse effects on children's mental and emotional development. As a result of the tremendous growth in road traffic, the urban environment has become an increasingly hostile environment for children."*

### **A Vision For The Future: The Cycling City, Part 1**

Alix Newman, Cycling Officer Christchurch City Council, was the invited speaker at Cycle Aware Wellington's AGM in March.

Christchurch has target for doubling the numbers of both commuter, and school cyclists, by 2001. Alix's role as Cycle Officer makes him partly responsible for achieving this and his work covers planning cycle routes and facilities, the design of cycle facilities and development of design standards, and the promotion of cycling in Christchurch.

People often view Christchurch as a "cycling city", however Alix presented a different and interesting view...

Alix has kindly supplied the text of his talk, with the suggestion that I could edit it as needed for publication. I don't think that is really needed, but if you find the the tense wrong I take full responsibility! Part 2 will appear in June. [Ed.]

**4 Introduction**

I have been asked to talk about "A Cycling City: A Vision For The Future". I have to tell you that what you are going to get in this presentation is very much a personal view of a cycling city or cycling city concept. I don't know that I have ever been to a cycling city, but I would hesitate to say that that is because there aren't any - more I think, because I just haven't been everywhere.

So I'm going to give you a personal assessment and feeling, so I would ask that if you consider some of my views to be in contradiction to your own, or perhaps even a criticism of your own, then it's not personal. Just consider it something to think about. I have to say, that when I was given this topic, I was foundering a bit. I can talk for hours on design, promotions, planning of cycle facilities, and all of the practical stuff, but slotting all of that into a bigger picture, a much bigger picture, and then projecting it forward "A vision for the future - a cycling city", that had me reaching. I have had to develop a few new thoughts and ideas for this and have subsequently learned quite a bit. Anyway, the point of saying this is that this is basically a first draft of my ideas on the subject, and far from an authoritative view of a cycling city.

**Question**

Well, I've just given you a quick introduction. What I'd like to do next is ask you folks some questions. Then I'll perhaps use some of those answers, perhaps not, to give you a personal view on a Cycling City. Then how it is possible to get there. My question to you is "What makes a cycling city". What do you see in a cycling city, what do you feel,

how do you know you are in one, what distinguishes a cycling city from one that is not?

*[With some encouragement the audience at this point produced some ideas, such as: ones with cycle lanes, good land use planning, cycle stands, etc. Ed.]*

**My View - An Attitude**

My view, is that a cycling city is one where there is an attitude throughout the city, and its population, which accepts cycling as part of the city - an element of the identity of the city. A quote from the movie "The Castle" - it's the vibe yunno. Is there a vibe for cycling?

I found a quote in the American Bicycling magazine of November/December 1995 which illustrates how you can pick the health of an American city.

In biology, an indicator species is a group of plants or animals whose health foretells the vitality of the surrounding environment. If a type of shellfish starts to wither, for example, scientists know the whole bay is in trouble. Bicycles are an indicator species for a city.

Picture being dropped into the bowels of any large north American city. You're assaulted by honking horns, exhaust fumes, sirens, graffiti, icy glass towers, brooding boarded store fronts. But if cyclists ply the streets, you instinctively feel better - less threatened, less harried, less overwhelmed. The presence of bikes tells you that this is a settlement with human scale, pace and values, a place that hasn't entirely surrendered its land, its sky and its soul.

Bikes can't save cities. But a healthy city has healthy biking. A city's commitment to healthy biking means

- 5 a commitment to sustainability, and all of the modern-speak things that go along with that - healthy land use, wise spending, reduced congestion etc.

*My message is that the healthy city, with healthy cycling, is a cycling city, where cycling is fundamentally accepted in the psyche of the city. And I'll explain a little more about the attitude or psyche thing, and how that differs from many locations currently in New Zealand.*

#### **Attitude Indicators**

##### *1. Engineering*



First, movement by cycle has its own characteristics. Bikes are not small cars as much road engineering would have you believe. Factors of momentum, vulnerability and surface roughness are a lot more crucial to cyclists than cars. A cycling city is one where this is understood and features which cater for this are built into every road work, every new road design and all other land use developments as a matter of course. Engineering for bikes is not simply a matter of "adding on" as is done in many NZ cities, and will continue to be done for many years yet I suspect. A cycling city has cycle engineering by inclusion, not addition.

But a point of clarification, there does not need to be cycle facilities everywhere. In fact, I can envision a scenario where the roads are wide enough or quiet enough and driver behaviour disciplined enough so that facilities are not overly essential - but there is still a fundamental engineering occurring which considers bikes as road users.

##### *2. Image*

My second attitude indicator of a cycling city is that cycling is part of the city image. I reckon that a true cycling city is one where both the people inside it, and outside it, know it as a city for cycling in. People will come to it because of cycling. Not everyone of course, just some people.

I use Christchurch as an example of city image - it is known as the garden city. Everybody in NZ knows that, or should know that. Developers and the council know it, and it is relied upon as a draw card for businesses and residents. The recent round of road reforms was fought, by the city council, on their impact on this image. Wellington, as another example, is known (or was) as the windy city. You have a tourist reputation which partially uses that, you have businesses which come here based on that - viz the windmill on top of the hill, and you even have, or had, a radio station using that theme.

My point is that the ideal vision of a cycling city is one where cycling is so entrenched, and healthy, that it is part of the understood image of the city.

##### *3. Viable Transport*

My third indicator of a cycling city is that cycling is actually a viable transport choice because of both transport possibilities, and individual capacities. By transport possibilities, I mean that it is as convenient to get from point A to point B by cycling as any other transport mode - not necessarily as fast, or as dry, or out of the wind, but you can travel by bike to where you want to go, as directly as by car or public transport, with equal or lesser risk of accident or collision, and the amount of mental processing necessary to make the decision to travel by bike is about the same as you would use to travel by car.

6 This of course speaks volumes about how easy bike travel may be, or conversely how difficult car travel may be, but the ease of decision making processes to use the bike is the sort of concept I'm trying to get across.

And the other part of cycling being a viable transport mode is where the individual actually has the capacity to make the choice to travel by cycle. Are they fit enough, do they own a bike, do they know how to ride it well, and do they have a mind set to consider cycling to work, to the shops, to recreation, or even out on a date perhaps. In a cycling city, most people would or should have the capacity to travel by bike.

#### 4. Mode Integration

My fourth indicator of a cycling city is one where there is relatively seamless transport mode integration. By this I mean that the ability to mode swap is as smooth for bikes as it is now, typically, for cars. It is currently possible, in most cities, to walk to a bus stop - that, in its crudest form, is a mode integration or mode swap facility. In other places it is possible to drive to and park at railway stations, and then use the train etc. When it is possible to ride and park to everywhere that you can drive and park, and perhaps even possible to drive to a parking area, unload or unlock your bike, and cycle on, then cycling is becoming involved as a legitimate transport mode, and becoming integrated with other modes.

#### 5. Market Share

And my final indicator of a cycling city is one where those businesses involved in the cycle industry are competing for market share, rather than struggling to generate a market, full stop. In other words, if you look at the amount of effort which goes in to

advertising for types of cars, car accessories, types of fuels, and find a similar amount of effort is applied to cycling associated activities such as selling new bikes, knobby tyres, etc. then you are on your way to a cycling city.

The common theme I am trying to indicate for all of these is that my vision for a cycling city is one where cycling is accepted as part of the operating psyche of the city - almost to the extent that if it happens for cars, it happens for cycling, but with a little bit extra, and where cycling is part of the defining image for the city. The elements mentioned relate to a cycling attitude and it is this which I consider to be the defining indicator of a cycling city.

You may disagree, you may have different indicators. So be it - I don't know if this list is exhaustive or fantastic. We'll only know when we are there I suppose.

#### How To Get There...

Will follow in June! [Ed.]




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#### New Articles at LTSA

Material in the library of the Land Transport Safety Authority in Wellington is available for borrowing. We'll try to bring you regular updates of new material of interest to cyclists.

*\*Auckland introduces a new concept in public transport, Bus & Coach Association circular (March 1998) pp. 17-18*

Discusses START, a new bus priority scheme in Auckland that offers peak-time lanes for the exclusive use of buses and cyclists.

7 \* *Bicycle crashes and injuries in Western Australia, Hendrie, Kirov & Gibbs, Nedlands, WA; University of Western Australia. Road Accident Prevention Research Unit, 1998.*

Examines current research into bicycle safety and analyses police and hospital data relating to bicycle crashes in Western Australia for the period 1987 to 1996.

\* *The decline of bicycle commuting, Parker, Alan, Australian Cyclist v. 22 no. 1 (April-May 1998), pp. 54-56*

Discusses data from the Australian 1996 population census on journeys to work and suggests reasons for the decline of bicycle commuting and why women's level of workforce participation is not reflected in the proportion of men and women who cycle to work.

\* *Roundabouts on main roads: a non-motorised users perspective, Parker, Alan, Road & Transport Research, v.7 no.1 (March 1998) pp. 65-69*

Discusses the cyclist's view of different roundabout designs, single and multi-lane, and with and without bike lanes, in the UK, Sweden, the Netherlands and Australia.

### Send In Your Articles/News/Letters!

Please submit news items, articles of what is happening in your part of the country, "Letters to the Editor", etc.

Currently publication is intended to be monthly provided **you** send in enough material! The next issue deadline will be 29<sup>th</sup> May.

You can post items to: Chain Links, c/o 17 Snowdon Avenue, Palmerston North; or email [N.Perry@massey.ac.nz](mailto:N.Perry@massey.ac.nz) - electronic submission of items is encouraged.



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