



**SPOKES**  
**DUNEDIN**

## **Spokes Dunedin submission on the draft Otago Regional Land Transport Programme 2009-2012 (RLTP)**

Submitting Organisation: Spokes Dunedin Incorporated Society

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### **Our Organisation**

Spokes Dunedin advocates for improvement of the cycling environment in Dunedin and environs to make cycling safe and enjoyable, so it becomes a mode of real choice. We welcome this opportunity to comment on the draft programme. We believe the current environment is not conducive to change in personal transport mode from cars to bicycles (especially single occupant car journeys). Indeed, nationwide there is a continuing decline in personal journeys by bike<sup>1</sup>. Increasing movement by cycling increases, by congestion reduction, the efficiency of essential freight (unable to travel by other modes such as rail) and cars for longer journeys not serviced by the bus network. Cycling has acknowledged health benefits evaluated at \$1.45 per kilometre<sup>2</sup> and, by virtue of its zero carbon emissions, can play a significant role in climate change mitigation. We note that urban areas are not the only places where cycling can play a role; state highways and other major local roads pass through many small communities within cycling distance of each other and should be safely and pleasantly useable by all transport modes, including cycles, particularly when there is no alternative route.

### **We wish to speak to our submission.**

Please send us a copy of the Officer's report as soon as this is available to assist in the preparation of our oral submission.

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1 Ministry of Transport (2008), Raising the Profile of Walking and Cycling in New Zealand, p12

2 New Zealand Transport Agency (2008), Economic evaluation manual Volume 2

## Our Submission

We note that the details of implementation of road engineering structures can significantly contribute to, or detract from, the level of service for cyclists. It is vital that ALL road engineering design and implementation consider the needs of cyclists in all aspects in addition to specific, dedicated cycling facilities. Small, minimal cost changes can significantly improve the cycling environment if awareness of the needs of cyclists takes place at all stages of the design and construction process. Conversely, details like narrow or rough road shoulders, an uncompleted cycle lane or short traffic light phases can seriously detract from perceptions of cycle safety. Many potential cyclists are discouraged from cycling by their perception of safety, not the 'official' crash statistics used by transport planners. Indeed many stretches of road are perceived by cyclists to be so dangerous or horrible that they avoid them, leading to low total accident statistics for these stretches. State Highways are prominent examples, for e.g. Moeraki to Wainakarua on SH1 and SH88.

Page/table numbers in the following refer to the Draft Otago Regional Land Transport Programme 2009 – 2012, March 2009.

### 1. Section 4.3, Accessibility to transport

Indicates that 12% of our population does not have access to cars, are ageing and more likely to reside in small townships. We approve of the recognition that their mobility should not be compromised by car traffic.

Road engineering should always cater for non-motorised transport modes to discourage car use, to prepare for Peak Oil, climate change mitigation and community health.

**We support the aims of the Otago Regional Land Transport Strategy to encourage a modal shift towards walking, cycling and public transport but feel much more needs to be done.**

The 2006 Census shows a continuing decline in numbers cycling with only 1.5% of people cycling to work in Dunedin, down from the 2001 Census figures of 2.3%, and the 1996 figures of 2.7%. The reality is that Dunedin presents an unfriendly and potentially hazardous environment for cyclists at the present time and this is reflected in the figures above which show a decline in the percentage of cycle trips. In order to get a real modal shift towards cycling there needs to be a concerted effort by ORC, in conjunction with the DCC and other local councils, to undertake and fund cycling improvements adequately. Along with the development of infrastructure, a cyclist-friendly culture needs to be developed in Dunedin and surrounding areas.

### 2. Section 4.4, Non-vehicular or shared transport

We welcome recognition of the health benefits of walking and cycling and the increasing demand for facilities.

These benefits accrue also from commuting by cycle.

We wish to see parallel commitment to both recreational and commuting cycling in all planning and emphasise the contribution that cycling can make to transport emissions, peak oil supply, and climate change mentioned in Section 4.8, page 16.

### **3. Section 5.5, Regional targets derived from the GPS**

The New Zealand Transport Strategy (2008) has a 2040 target of 30% of urban trips by walking and cycling. The Government Policy Statement on Land Transport Funding (2009/10-2018/19) sets a target to, “increase the number of walking and cycling trips by one percent per year through to 2015” (page 13 GPS). All regions are expected to contribute to achieving the National Target. We don’t believe that the Otago regional target will result in significant increase in cycling. It is equivalent to merely maintaining the status quo.

We wish for a significantly larger target. Thirty Seven percent of respondents in one study<sup>3</sup> stated “Most weeks I could replace car trips by walking or cycling on at least two days (without too much difficulty)”.

The regional and national road network, among other factors, currently restrains travellers from actually replacing car trips. An appropriate target would be at least a 50% increase in walking/cycling trips by 2016.

### **4. Table 5, Transport Planning, Priority Band 1**

We approve of the investigation of a cycling/walking connection through the old Caversham and Wingatui railway tunnels. These very valuable facilities are currently under-utilised and are significant elements in a fast, flat cycle route from Green Island, Fairfield and Mosgiel to the City.

We stress that all work on SH6, SH8 and SH93 passing opportunities should provide for adequate (i.e. 2 metre) road shoulders to accommodate cyclists.

### **5. Table 9, Renewal of state highways**

All maintenance and renewal of state highways should ensure a minimum hard shoulder width of 2.0 metres to accommodate cyclists.

### **6. Table 10, New and improved infrastructure for state highways**

We approve of the Kakaho Creek realignment. The stretch of SH1 between Hampden and Wainakarua is currently very hostile to cyclists. It is narrow, twisty and has inadequate shoulder width. Trucks pass cyclists at 90km/hour with minimal clearance. As a consequence few cyclists use this stretch of road. It is also the only north/south route available for all traffic.

We submit that this section of SH1 is a high priority for major highway improvement for all road users, including non-motorised, because no alternative route is available. It is essential that adequate provision be made for cyclists by at least providing adequate (2.0 metre) hard shoulders from Moeraki to at least Wainakarua (where a parallel local road can be used to Oamaru). The Kakaho Creek realignment, if the shoulder width is adequate, could be one step in improvement of this whole section and permit local communities to connect without reliance on cars.

We approve of the installation of traffic signals at the Crawford Street/Jervois Street intersection. The pulsing of traffic flow downstream from the lights will assist cyclists attempting to cross the lanes on Crawford Street.

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<sup>3</sup> Charles Sullivan, Carolyn O’Fallon (2006), *Increasing cycling and walking: an analysis of readiness to change*, Land Transport New Zealand Research Report 294, page 71

Waihola (southbound passing lane) – we note the inadequate shoulders currently present on the northbound lane. We again emphasise that all passing lanes should have 2.0 metre shoulders to provide a buffer zone for cyclists against fast moving traffic.

Caversham corridor improvements. Currently SH1 at Lookout Point presents a major barrier to cyclists wishing to cross from the south side (from the cycle route from Concord to Caversham) to Mornington on the north side. It is essential that the proposed grade separated crosslink at Lookout Point provide for safe access by cycles across the state highway and that changes including during construction, do not compromise cycle access or safety.

## **7. Table 11, New and improved infrastructure for local roads**

**Portobello road widening.** We support the road widening to enable sufficient width for cyclists, it is an essential component of cycle access around the harbour but do not wish to speed motorised traffic up, as this will have a negative impact on cyclists, and detract from the safety improvements gained through providing a “cycle lane”.

**Frederick Street to SH88.** Currently this section is unpleasant to cycle – many cyclists use the footpath (illegally) because of perceived danger of the road. An on or off-road cycle path joining the Portsmouth Drive cycleway with the Harbour cycleway beside SH88 is essential and could be incorporated into highway reconstruction at minimal additional cost. We request that cycling provision work is done as part of that highway reconstruction.

### **The proposed Carisbrook Stadium**

**In relation to the RLTP we are concerned to ensure that the regional budget has taken into account the possibility of the Stadium being built and what walking and cycling infrastructure is required. If the stadium does not go ahead then there are lots of other roading projects in the area of the stadium, to make cycling and walking in the area safer and more enjoyable, so we suggest a budget case is made, and that it is written so as to cover both scenarios.**

If the Stadium is built we want all roading changes to take cycling and walking into account and for the Stadium to model the best facilities for walking and cycling including:

- a) Spokes Dunedin to be involved in the planning for roading associated with the Stadium right from the start in the initial planning stages and throughout the projects implementation.
- b) The routes around, to, and from the stadium to give priority to pedestrians and cyclists. We note that Christchurch City Council is currently embarking on better safer connectivity between the AMI Stadium (to hold two Rugby World Cup Semi final matches) and the Central City. Otago Regional Council may be able to benefit from the studies of Christchurch City Council in that regard, but ORC also has the opportunity to get it right rather than “retrofit” the connection between the City and the Stadium, as Christchurch City Council is having to do.
- c) To ensure that the Stadium, being a partnership with the University of Otago, has the best possible walking and cycling connectivity between these two areas.
- d) The special risks and inherent problems with the Stadium being on a State highway in relation to the safety of people arriving at the stadium by foot and cycle to be foremost when road planning is undertaken. For example although underpasses may be one option, this is not our preferred option at this stage, as for safety reasons it is better to be more visible with good above ground crossing options. However, any underpasses that may be considered must be planned and designed to a very high standard, with excellent security, lighting, and

width.

The ORC needs to ensure the design of any facilities for walking and cycling are complimentary and do not cause conflict between these two modes. Sometimes shared walking and cycling facilities due largely to design are not well liked due to potential and actual conflict between pedestrians and cyclists.

d) Covered secure accessible bike stands at the stadium These need to be in a prominent place, advantaging people who cycle (rather than drive), hence these stands should be placed at the front, and all gate entrances, rather than “tucked away” under the stands.

## **8. Table 12, New and improved infrastructure for local roads – minor capital works**

**Leith Valley seal extension – we do not approve of this.** The complete sealing of Leith Valley Road is proposed on the grounds it will improve safety. However, it does not consider the increased danger to cyclists and walkers from the increased traffic volume and speed that will ensue. We strongly oppose this seal extension, especially for the full length of the road to the motorway junction, because rather than improve safety it will decrease it, both for the motorists whose speed and number will increase, and for cyclists and walkers. This road is very popular as a mountain biking route out of Dunedin and as an after work ride. We suggest that the extra health and mental health burden that will result if cyclists and walkers are not able to use this currently low traffic road for recreation and access north should be taken into account in this decision.

## **9. Table 13, Public transport services and operations**

**We support the ORC’s initiatives to substantially increase the bus patronage and want Dunedin buses to have the capacity to carry bikes**

We believe bike racks on buses would help to increase bus patronage but giving cyclists a public transport option to either reduce the length of their cycle commute or to be able to ride to work one way and catch the bus one way. This would reduce the numbers of cars on the road and the demand for parking.

**We support the Dunedin city to airport travel demand management study and suggest that a bus route should be considered between the city and the airport.**

We would like to request that the Otago Regional Council and DCC investigate the option of having a city bus link out to Dunedin airport. Such a service could leave from the Octagon or the University on every half hour. Christchurch, Wellington, and Auckland all offer such a service and are well used. Many people would certainly rather catch a bus than have to drive and park their car.

## **10. Table 15, walking and cycling facilities**

In general, we do, of course, welcome the provision of specific cycling facilities. But we would stress that general cycle commuting on public roads has a very important role in health improvement and climate change mitigation and that both commuting and recreational cycle access should be treated as complementary.

We have addressed many issues in our submission to the DCC LTCCP and will mention only some major items below.

**Riccarton Road bridle path.** We welcome this facility, but would point out that Riccarton Road, in particular, is used for training by road cyclists, who typically cruise at 30km/hour. Facilities must cater for many different types of non-motorised traffic. Horses and fast cyclists are a bad combination and care in design to accommodate these different classes of user will be essential.

#### **SH88 cycle and pedestrian facilities.**

##### a) off-road shared Harbour pathway from Port Chalmers to Dunedin City

This ongoing project is vital for cycle and walker access to the many communities along SH88. Cyclists have a variety of users with varying needs, and many cyclists will prefer this route due to the safety factor. We support the NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) funding 100% of this project as it provides a viable and safe alternative to State Highway 88, especially given that the current provisions on the State highway are not adequate for cyclists. The current existing Harbour pathway is very popular with cyclists and walkers, both for commuting and recreation, and completing the route to Port Chalmers will increase the usage of the current path by providing a continuous off-road pathway to the Port from the City.

There is much potential for cycle tourist access to Port Chalmers. The current highway is acknowledged as unsafe, and will worsen as heavy truck usage increases. The health benefits of cycling are undisputed (and are evaluated at \$1.45 per kilometre ridden<sup>4</sup>), and a potential 11Km safe cycle route provides an outstanding local asset.

b) On road cycling facilities. We want NZTA (supported by ORC and DCC) to ensure that the planned State Highway 88 improvements, funded by NZTA as indicated in the Otago Regional Council's Regional Land Transport Programme, are suitable for cyclists and pedestrians also. We are aware any efficiency gained for cars and vehicles in work on this highway must ensure that these improve the conditions for cyclists and walkers too, rather than increasing the speed of cars and trucks so improving times for those modes, at the expense of cyclists and the community that lives next to the State Highway. On-Track, NZTA, the ORC, and DCC need to continue to consider any potential possibilities of moving freight off this narrow road onto rail. There is an excellent rail line servicing the Port and usage of this facility needs to be actively pursued. Getting road freight off this stretch of State Highway 88 is important for all other road users but also the community, especially those immediately bordering this State Highway.

## **11. Table 16, Relationship of Police activities to the programme**

**North Dunedin Neighbourhood Accessibility Plan.** Spokes Dunedin supports the proposed North Dunedin Neighbourhood Accessibility Plan (NAP) for around the University area. Adequate facilities linking the University with the City are long overdue. With over 20,000 students attending the University this is a significant issue to address in order to improve the Dunedin City Transport environment for all road users. Presently the area between the University of Otago and the CBD is not cycle friendly. We request that any new roading improvements in this region make cyclists and pedestrians a priority. With a large proportion of North Dunedin's population being associated with the University, increasing the number of University related journeys taken by cycle or on foot would have a marked affect on congestion and parking in this area.

We request that the RLTP ensure the NAP proposed has adequate budget to implement and infrastructure and programmes suggested as part of the NAP investigation. We do not

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4 New Zealand Transport Agency (2008), Economic evaluation manual Volume 2

want the lag time, that South Dunedin had with its Safer Routes Study (2004) still being completed.

**Dunedin community focused activities Programme 2009-2012.** Spokes Dunedin supports the employment of the three Transport staff and their focus on cycling and other active, public transport, and sustainable transport options.

**Regional Active Transport Forum.** We support the formation of a Regional Active Transport Forum as currently exists in Auckland, Wellington, Nelson/Tasman, and Canterbury to better co-ordinate Active Transport in Otago and request that there is sufficient budget within the RLTP for this. Such a forum would increase the intersectoral support, networking, and information sharing so ensuring better outcomes for cycling throughout the region.

A forum also would help co-ordinate regional cycling initiatives. For example the linkage of the proposed Caversham Tunnels to the Otago Rail Trail, and a potential Strategy to look at a Regional Cycling Network to ensure the Otago Councils work together to provide an integrated network for cyclists.

An example of such a forum is the Canterbury Active Transport Forum is:

<http://www.ecan.govt.nz/Our+Environment/Transport/CanterburyActiveTransportForum.htm>

**We request the Otago Regional Council in collaboration with City and District Councils develops an Otago Regional Cycling Network Strategy**

We request the Otago Regional Council work collaboratively with others in the Otago Region to develop a strategy similar to the Canterbury Regional Council's Strategy\*, and for this to be a component of the Regional Land Transport Strategy that we understand is soon to be reviewed.

**\*Cycling in Canterbury 2005: Strategy for the Development of a Regional Network of Cycle Routes**

<http://www.ecan.govt.nz/Plans+and+Reports/transport/Draft-cycling-strategy.htm>

*“Cycling in Canterbury is a strategy to support the development of a regional network of cycle routes. The aim of the network is to link districts, regions and places of interest in a manner that will encourage cycling and promote regional development. The Strategy is a component of the Canterbury Regional Land Transport Strategy 2005 – 2015. This has now been updated to the Canterbury Regional Land Transport Strategy 2008 - 2018.”*

## **12. Section 6.8, Relationship of Police activities to the programme**

We advise that many potential cyclists report anecdotally that their reluctance to ride is due to it being seen as 'unsafe' due to poor driver behaviour. The commitment of the Police to ensuring safe roads is outstanding, but we submit that many driver behaviours seen by law enforcement as 'minor infringements' are significant deterrents to the uptake of cycling. Examples include careless door opening and u-turns, failing to give way, close passing. We submit that a greater emphasis by Police on enforcement of good driving practice around cyclists will significantly improve the attractiveness of cycling as a transport mode and we would welcome additional funding commitment to this.

Thank you for your consideration of our submission. We look forward to working collaboratively to help ensure that Dunedin is a cycle friendly city and a preferred place to live and work.

Regards

Phaedra Upton  
(Spokes Dunedin Committee member on behalf of Spokes Dunedin)