



SPOKES
DUNEDIN

Spokes Dunedin submission on Dunedin City Council Draft 2009-2019 Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP)

Submitting Organisation: Spokes Dunedin Incorporated Society

Submitter: Phaedra Upton Spokes Dunedin Committee member on behalf of Spokes Dunedin

Postal Address:

42 Hocken St

Kenmure

Dunedin

Phone: 03 453 6864

Email: phaedra.upton@gmail.com

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Introduction

Spokes Dunedin aims to help improve the cycling environment in Dunedin to make cycling safe and enjoyable, so it becomes a mode of real choice. We believe the current environment is not conducive to shifting journeys to cycling from cars (especially single occupant car journeys). By shifting people to cycling, walking, or using public transport this makes the journey of those that need to be on the road, including essential freight (unable to travel by other modes such as rail) and cars for longer journeys not serviced by the bus network more efficient.

Spokes Dunedin is part of a network of local user groups that constitute the Cycling Advocates Network (CAN). See www.can.org.nz for more information about CAN.

Within this submission Spokes Dunedin has commented only where we have knowledge on specific projects, and included others which we believe should be covered in the LTCCP. Within the submissions points are included the issue(s) for Council's consideration and what are the benefits for Council if they addresses these issues. The specific action(s) requested of Council are also included in the submission.

We wish to speak to our submission.

Preferred Time: Tuesday 5th May 2009 – Evening session

We request a copy of the DCC Officer's report as soon as this is available to assist in our preparation for our oral submission.

Specific Comments on LTCCP

1) We support the Shared off-road Path from Port Chalmers to Dunedin City

We support the initiative to provide an alternative route for cyclists and pedestrians to State Highway 88. 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.

We want DCC to ensure that the planned State Highway 88 improvements, also funded by NZTA as indicated in the Otago Regional Council's Regional Land Transport Programme, is 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. We understand that NZTA is responsible for funding and maintaining State Highways but the DCC has a responsibility to work with NZTA to ensure that rate payers who cycle and walk on this highway network, and those that live in the area are adequately catered for.

2) We support the Caversham Tunnel proposal

We strongly support this initiative as having a large commuting and tourism potential for both cycling and walking. We support a Feasibility Study to be undertaken in 2009/2010 as stated in the Community Plan Summary; Transportation Planning. We understood this feasibility was planned for last year and are disappointed that this has not yet progressed.

As a commuting option the trail would:

- eliminate the Lookout Point and Saddle Hill climb barriers;
- enable the cyclists to be able to move away from major traffic flows;
- create a family-friendly and safe "Southern Corridor" (i.e. a commuter, recreational, and tourist corridor between Mosgiel, Green Island, and Dunedin);
- provide an instant, local, accessible tourist attraction of Dunedin's heritage; and
- support the general increase of awareness and participation in outdoor activities and the "green economy".

The Caversham Tunnel is part of Dunedin's history that needs to be preserved and used, and an incredible resource that should be utilised to the full for commuting as well as recreation.

3) We want a commitment by DCC that all roading improvements will take account of cyclist's needs

Specific Projects

- i. We support the city's Peninsula Roads upgrade project and commend the city council for providing new footpath and cycling facilities along the length of the road.
- ii. Halt to proposed seal extension on Leith Valley Road. 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. No detail is given in the LTCCP, but it is presumably included in the Seal Extension Programme line on page 171, volume 2. 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.
- iii. Presently the area between the University of Otago and the CBD is not particularly friendly for cyclists. 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.
 - iv. Spokes Dunedin supports the proposed North Dunedin Neighbourhood Accessibility Plan (NAP) for around the University area. We further request there is funding available in the LTCCP to enable the community expectations from this study to be met including any identified infrastructure and Community Programmes. The investigation phase of the NAP will be done in 09/10--10/12 years, and implementation funding should be available in that three year period too.
 - v. Spokes Dunedin also requests that Council continues to support the NAP project in South Dunedin (DCC, January 2004, "Safer Routes" trial project). The Council needs to undertake an audit to look at progress on implementation of the South Dunedin NAP in order to determine what the priorities are for further implementation including any new issues that may have arisen (as NAP began in January 2004). Funding must be available in DCC LTCCP to implement fully the South Dunedin NAP in the 09/10-10/12 three year period.

4) We support The Dunedin Cycling Strategy (April 2004, DCC) review and request a budget to ensure its timely implementation

We understand this Strategy is to be reviewed; Spokes Dunedin requests that there is sufficient budget within the LTCCP to ensure that this occurs. We want to be an integral part of this review process, with early input from our group, as a user group representing a wide spectrum of cycling interests focusing on the city and commuting. It may be appropriate to update the current strategy in terms of changes to Government Departments and focus on getting a robust ambitious Action Plan. We want the clear direction, focus, and prioritisation that a review brings. Given that Strategy reviews are 75% funded by the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA), it requires a relatively small local share commitment for a huge efficiency gain in terms of clear direction and best use of Council resources.

We request this is begun in the current financial year, and completed in the early part of the 09/10 financial year.

5) We request The Dunedin City Council Route Safety Audit of Cycleways (October 2001, MWH) is reviewed and where gaps are identified these are remedied immediately

This report was a "safety audit of cycling infrastructure" in "three areas of Dunedin for the Dunedin City Council (DCC) in September 2001. The areas were the Portsmouth Drive Cycleway from Anzac Drive to the Vauxhall Yacht Club, the city's "cycle-friendly area" in South Dunedin and the southern access to the city. The audit consisted of a number of components, including a detailed inspection of the three specified areas, a review of network policies and practices (with an emphasis on cyclists' needs) and some thinking about planning issues for a cycling network."

Some of our members were integral in undertaking this report.

While some of these issues have been addressed, mostly the low cost items such as vegetation etc, we request this report is audited and DCC in consultation with our group determines what is left to do, and these projects are then prioritised in order of the most effect in terms of safety and cycle usage (both existing and potential usage, the later to consider possible “suppressed demand” that we believe will manifest into cyclists with the suggested appropriate improvements).

Given the steer the National Government has given on “Road Safety” being one of their priorities (recent consultation paper on GPS review) this fits well with that direction.

We note DCC has budgeted under Safety Improvements (page 50), between \$237,000 (08/09) to \$209,000 per annum. We don't believe this is sufficient for what safety issues there are for cycling in Dunedin City. The Capital Expenditure Programme by Outcome for 2009/2010, has under “Cycling Network Implementation”, \$209,000 budgeted. This amount is woefully inadequate to make real gains for cycling in Dunedin.

The New Zealand National Land Transport Strategy (2008) has a goal of 30% of all urban trips by walking and cycling by 2040. The Government Policy Statement (GPS) on Land Transport Funding (August 2008) sets a target of a 1% increase annually until 2015 of trips in urban areas by active modes. The rationale: of 1% is due to declining numbers of walking and cycling in some places, and needing to first arrest the decline, then accelerate the shift post 2015.

The Otago Regional Land Transport Strategy (RLTS) which determines the prioritisation given to funding different transport needs encourages a modal shift towards walking, cycling, and public transport with targets for 15% walking and 6% for cycling and public transport respectively by 2014. The DCC Transportation Strategy, while stating:

“The goal is to increase the proportion of people who walk or cycle to and from work (or study), and increase the proportion of non-work commuter trips made by walking and cycling (relative to all other modes). Council will consider the provision of separate facilities for alternative modes when arterial routes are being upgraded or constructed, including off-road cycle paths, footpaths and bridle paths, where appropriate.”

does not give measurable targets. We suggest that ambitious targets are vital to a real change.

The 2006 Census, gives 1.5% of people cycling to work in Dunedin, which is down from the 2001 Census figures of 2.3% and the 1996 figures of 2.7%. To get a real modal shift towards cycling there needs to be a concerted effort by DCC to undertake and fund cycling improvements adequately.

6) We want DCC support for an Otago Regional Active Transport Forum

We support the formation of an 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 LTCCP 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>

7) We request DCC support for developing an Otago Regional Cycling Network

We request that DCC work with the Otago Regional Council and other Councils 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 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. “

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

Regards

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