Why a Cycling Strategy on its own will NOT Increase Cycling

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Why This Presentation?

- Theme of Conference!
  "Cycling Strategies… and how to implement them"
- Not belittling the need for Cycling Strategies
- Strategies are necessary to get more cycling

BUT

- Strategies are not sufficient to do this alone
  - Their content and implementation must be right
  - Other Council Policies must be in place too
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Cycling Strategies History in NZ

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Trends To Date in Strategies

- An exponential growth in strategy numbers
  - Motivated by Transfund funding requirements?
- Most major urban centres are done / planning
- Few small urban or rural districts with strategies
  - Often have more people cycling than major centres
  - Cycle tourism/recreation potential?
  - Councils band together to develop joint strategies?
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Types of Cycling Strategy

(1) "Cycleway" strategies
- Prime focus is specification of a network of cycle routes for planning and implementation

(2) "Four E's" strategies
- Encompass how all of the tools of engineering, education, enforcement, and encouragement can be used to increase cycling
  - First is a subset of the second
    - Often a (mis)perception that "Providing for Cyclists" = "Providing Cycle Facilities"
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Non-Cycleway Strategy Tools

- **Plenty** of other cycling-specific actions
  - Cycle training of both school children and adults
  - Provision of information about cycle routes  
    - e.g. Cycle maps, Route signage
  - Allowing bikes to travel on public transport  
    - Also more "Park'n'Ride" facilities
  - Road safety promotion campaigns  
    - e.g. Sharing the road, Cycle light use
  - Police enforcing poor motorist-vs-cyclist behaviour
  - Audits/maintenance of existing cycle facilities/routes
  - High-quality cycle parking at key destinations

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Non-Cycleway Tools cont'd

- Ongoing cycle count programmes & opinion surveys
- Lighting / security improvements to routes/parking
- Widespread staff training in cycle planning/design
- Marketing of cycling as acceptable everyday activity
- Cycling promotion activities e.g. Bike to Work Day, City fun rides
- Allowing cycle use in pedestrian areas
- Employment of a council cycling officer
- Setting up of a "cycling advisory group"
  - Monitor strategy progress and debate policy
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Strategy Funding & Implementation

- Must have means and funding to implement it
  - More important than having a good strategy
    - Some recent strategies had their recommended actions and works programmes deferred or considerably scaled down

- Even worse are those strategies that never:
  - Actually cost out what is required
  - Propose an implementation programme
    - Afraid of scaring off the punters?

  Do it once and do it right!
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Can a Cycling Strategy succeed?

Case Study - Christchurch (NZ's "cycling city")

- Since at least 1996:
  - Clear cycle network and implementation programme
  - 1-3 dedicated cycle planning staff at various times
  - ~$750,000+ pa of dedicated cycle facility funding
    - And more developed as part of general roading works
  - ~$200,000 pa in cycle education/promotion activities
- BUT Cycle no.s relatively static in past ~5 years
  - Well short of the targets set

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Hierarchy of Cycling Treatments

(1) Reduce Traffic Volumes
   - Local area traffic management (LATM) schemes
   - Off-road shortcuts

(2) Reduce Traffic Speeds
   - 30km/h speed zones, Traffic calming measures
   - Narrowing/Deflection of wide streets & roundabouts

(3) Intersection Treatment & Traffic Management
   - Remove small "pinch points"
     e.g. No waiting space at intersections, Narrow bridges, One-way restrictions

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Hierarchy of Cycling Treatments cont'd

(4) Reallocation of Carriageway / Corridor Space
   ▪ Target under-used/over-sized traffic & parking lanes
   ▪ Could borrow footpath space from pedestrians

(5) Specific Cycle Facilities
   ▪ If above approaches are not able to produce a viable solution, then cycle lanes/paths may be required
   ▪ Hierarchy addresses why people don't cycle
     ▪ Traditional "cycle facility" solutions are last choice
     ▪ Other treatments not often covered in Strategies

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Building a Cycling Network

- Common complaint:
  - "We've spent $xxx on developing cycle facilities around the city, and have little to show for it in terms of increased cyclist numbers"

- Need to consider cycling networks as a whole
  - esp. complete routes from one place to another
  - Many cyclists will require 100% "cycle-friendly" route
    - Quiet streets
    - Off-road paths
    - Roads with cycle facilities
    - No difficult intersections

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Christchurch City Roading Network
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Chch City Cycling Network (future)
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Chch City Cycling Network (now)
Implications for Cycling Networks

- Growth in cyclist numbers due to cycle network
  - Most likely an "exponential" relationship
    i.e. more growth towards the end
  - Many would-be cyclists need **totally** "friendly" routes
  - Often most difficult (and yet crucial) elements of cycle routes are left until last
    - Financial or political pressures
    - "Easy" bits are not limiting cyclist numbers

*Patience is a Virtue!*
Cycling Strategies do not exist in isolation!
  - Success is greatly influenced by what is done in other council policies / actions
    - Makes it an integral part of all of council's activities
    - Helps to emphasise cycling strategy is not just an "add-on"

Councils need to seriously review and implement other "cycle-friendly" policies
  - Usually "sustainable transport-friendly" in general
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Land Use & Development Planning

- People's travel mode choices are largely dictated by where they **can choose** to go
  - Mixed-use zoning
  - Capped car parking requirements
  - Medium-high density developments
  - Minimum cycle parking for new developments
  - Constrained urban areas (city limits)
  - Provision inside and linking to new subdivisions
  - Provision in new/upgraded commercial developments

*Councils should review their District Plans*

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Speed Limits

- Very important to cyclists
  - Benefits of 30 km/h (20 mph) zones proven
    - UK study found ave. accident frequency fell by about 60%
  - Use in Residential, Shopping or Business areas
  - Should assess high-speed (>50 km/h) routes
    - Part-time speed limits near schools?

**Councils should review all existing speed limits and develop policies for low-speed zones**
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General Road Construct'n/Maint'ce

- Most future work will still be "general" roading
  - "Upgrades" mustn't make things worse for cyclists
    - Cycle design training for all roading staff
    - Vetting of projects by cycling officer
  - Incorporate cycle provision at same time (cheaper)
    e.g. cycle-friendly road marking after reseals
- Maintenance activities must consider cyclists
  - Removal of debris shifted to shoulders
  - Sweeping / vegetation-clearing along off-road paths
  - Temporary traffic management provides for cyclists

Councils should review all roading projects and maintain'ce contracts for alignment with cycling

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Parks & Reserves Planning

- Cyclists should be able to take advantage of non-road corridors where available
  - Good (shared) path design
  - Minimal restrictions on cyclist access
  - Identify property purchases for "missing links"
  - Identify attractive cycling corridors e.g. riverfront, coastline, greenbelt

Councils should ensure all reserve development projects are reviewed for alignment with cycling
Travel Behaviour Programmes

- Behaviour **more important** to travel mode change than availability of adequate facilities
  - For many trips, existing cycle network **is** adequate
    - How to get people to take that "first step"?
  - May just require information and support e.g. TravelSmart programmes (Australia)
    - Even changing a couple of trips/week makes a difference
  - Very cost-effective, despite the expense
    - Cheaper than another motorway…

_Councils should implement travel behaviour programmes in their areas_

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Employer/Institution Travel Plans

- Major destinations attract a lot of trips
  - Easier and more cost-effective to target them?
    - Adequate secure, covered cycle parking provision
    - Changing/shower/locker facilities
    - Local support networks (Bicycle User Groups or "BUGs")
    - Car parking charges and/or parking space restrictions
    - "Work-pool" cycles, and cycling mileage allowances
    - Company car "cash-out" arrangements

- Schools have excellent potential for travel plans
  - Can also incorporate issues into curriculum

_Councils should assist local employers, schools, & institutions to develop their own travel plans_

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Pub. Health/Recreation Programmes

- Health and sport/recreation agencies recognise intrinsic personal and social benefits of cycling
  - Vital that their resources are aligned with other local initiatives to get the best "bang for bucks"
    - Doctors encouraged to recommend "green prescriptions"
    - Recreational rides and route development
    - Cycle riding/maintenance courses for novices

*Councils should liaise with relevant health and sport/recreation agencies to identify synergies*
Traffic Calming (LATM)

- Very under-used in NZ
  - Various techniques available to slow down, restrict, or completely remove motor traffic in certain areas
    e.g. Narrowings, Traffic islands, Platforms, One-way streets/entrances, Road closures
  - Treatments available to allow cyclists to avoid these
    e.g. Cycle bypasses, Contra-flow lanes, Short off-road links
  - Should apply on area-wide (neighbourhood) basis
  - A way to encourage cyclists back into central city

*Councils should develop policies for implementing traffic mngmt' schemes with adequate funding*
Limited Roading / Capacity

- An increase in the proportion of people cycling requires a *reduction* by other modes (esp. car)
  - Difficult to do with continued development of the roading network at the same time
  - Removal of traffic lanes/capacity *can* reduce traffic

*Councils should consider in detail all alternatives to providing additional roads and capacity first*
Parking Management

- Parking conflicts common with cycling projects
  - Need a common set of guidelines to address this
    - Avoids same issues being rehashed by each new project
  - Can develop kerb-space priorities for each situation
    e.g. Arterial route vs Commercial district
  - Parking charges/restrictions can affect travel mode choice

*Councils should develop and apply Parking Strategies*
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Road / Congestion Pricing

- Driver charging and toll regimes now becoming more likely in highly congested areas
  - Can provide some "smoothing" of flows to minimise peak over-congestion of some routes / time-periods
  - Can better reflect the true costs of motoring
    - May make people consider switching to cheaper alternatives like cycling

*Councils should consider options available in their area for tolling and road charging schemes*
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Final Thoughts

- Lots of other examples out there
- Councils should "Lead by Example"!
  - Review their internal transport policies
  - Seek "buy-in" from senior management / councillors
- Not all of these options are easy to implement
  - Political/Public acceptance, Funding availability
  - No less desirable or necessary
  - Challenge is to educate all parties on benefits

And we might GET MORE PEOPLE CYCLING

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Thank You!