



**Cycle Aware
Wellington**

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Submission to Greater Wellington Regional Council DRAFT Western Corridor Plan 2012

Cycle Aware Wellington represents 600 members and supporters.

Cycle Aware Wellington appreciates the opportunity to comment on the draft Western Corridor plan.

Our key points:

- Corridor plans, including this one, must have a much stronger focus on active and public transport modes.
- Investment in active transport modes can be built in with very little cost impact and considerable benefit.
- The lack of a continuous, safe cycling route through the Western Corridor is a glaring omission and this plan must include provision to create a continuous, safe cycling route through the corridor.
- The language regarding pedestrians and cyclists in the plan should be stronger and more positive.

Our Submission

Our submission on the draft Western Corridor plan refers to sections of the plan. For each comment we give the title of the section and the page we are referring to.

Strategic Context (page 2)

“Corridor plans organise a multi-modal response...”. We are worried that this and other corridor plans tend to largely focus on cars and trucks as well as high-cost highway projects. These plans should have a much stronger focus on active and public transport modes rather than on private cars and the RoNS.

Significant transport network issues (page 5)

The plan states “About 7,000 journey-to-work trips per day are made to the Wellington CBD from the Western Corridor during the AM peak. These AM peak journey-to-work trips are projected to increase 9% by 2031 due to population and employment growth. This increase may impact congestion and journey time reliability without mitigating investment.”

and

“... worst peak congestion occurs are through the Ngauranga Gorge...”

Investment in active modes could be built into the RoNS framework with very little cost impact. If active transport modes such as public transport and/or cycling/walking were perceived as safe and attractive alternatives, more people would use them. This would bring huge improvements to peak journey time reliability on the road corridor. At the moment, alternative transport modes are either not safe or are not perceived as safe.

Commuting trips through the Ngauranga Gorge are typically under about 20 km (Wellington CBD or Petone/Hutt to/from Porirua or Wellington's Northern suburbs). These trips are too far to walk but are easily cycle-able if the infrastructure exists. Improvement to cycling infrastructure between Wellington, the Hutt Valley and Porirua should be an important part of the Western Corridor plan.

The plan acknowledges that *“Community severance is currently an issue along SH1, particularly where the road passes through town centres. High volumes of through traffic make crossing the state highway difficult for local traffic, cyclists and pedestrians and leads to safety issues. The significant percentages of local journey-to-work trips necessitate high quality local connections between residential areas and town centres.”* However, this local connectivity is only addressed, for pedestrians and cyclists, with investigation work of undetermined cost. We would like to see more detail here.

Walking and cycling (page 7)

The trip numbers quoted here are from 2006 but we suggest they are likely to be considerably higher. Mode share of cycling is increasing across the country. WCC's cordon count data shows an average of 1,733 cyclists entered the CBD over the two hour peak in 2012, up from about 800 in 2006.

The plan states “While various sections of the cycling network have undergone piecemeal investment, there is currently no continuous, safe cycling route through the Western Corridor.” This is a glaring omission and this plan should include provision to create a continuous, safe cycling route through the corridor.

The plan lists some significant safety black spots such as Ngauranga Gorge, around the Porirua CBD, Grays Road, Paekakariki and on both edges of Waikanae's urban area. We would like to see each with an entry under investigate/improve.

CAW's black spot map indicates places that CAW members see as problems for cycling in the region: <http://tinyurl.com/cpz35ke>

For example, these are some of the cycling hot spots that need to be addressed.

The path up Ngauranga Gorge crosses motorway exits with no safety highlighting or other measures.

The cyclist crossings are not marked and are before the 50 km/h zones begin e.g. <http://tinyurl.com/bw8urot>



Commuting cyclists descending Ngauranga Gorge and heading towards Wellington have to cross one or more lanes of high-speed traffic (all the traffic transferring from Ngauranga Gorge to SH2 north) with no provision. This is at Ngauranga Gorge Road.
<http://tinyurl.com/bqtsu32>



Bike path stops suddenly at junction Centennial Highway and Glover St, where traffic crosses to get into Glover St.

Cyclists have to rejoin the main road (with traffic that has just left the motorway at 80+ km/h) and watch for cars turning left or right into Glover St at the same time.

<http://tinyurl.com/d2fu4mb>



SH1 / SH58 junction requires cyclists to cross fast-moving traffic as lanes merge with no shoulder or path. <http://tinyurl.com/bowvn62>



Pedestrians and cyclists have been identified as vulnerable users. The risk (both perceived and real) to these users is a barrier to the shift-to-active transport that is needed. Compared to the Wellington CBD, there are more separated path options in the corridor, such as the Ara Harakeke shared path, but where cyclists and walkers must use the road corridor, there are higher traffic speeds and many dangerous junctions.

Key objectives for this corridor (page 12)

We support the objective of improving the mode share of walking, cycling and public transport, however, a stronger commitment to infrastructure for walking and cycling will be needed to make this happen. For example: “Wherever possible...improve safety for all road users including pedestrians and cyclists” Statements like this should be much stronger, i.e., Improvements WILL be designed to improve safety for all road users rather than “Wherever possible”.

Plan of action: Roads of National Significance package (page 13)

Walking and cycling commuter links are also part of the RoNS package and include east-west connections across the upgraded SH1 and north-south commuter links. These are scheduled to be included in the next three RLTP periods. This is too slow, walking and cycling commuter links are obviously gaps in the Western Corridor that need immediate attention.

Johnsonville Triangle improvements (page 14)

“.... in order to accommodate increased private vehicle, freight, public transport as well as walking and cycling trips.”

Cycling and walking need to be integrated into these improvements. As written they appear to be an afterthought.

SH58 safety improvements package (page 17)

The language regarding pedestrians and cyclists leaves the option for them to be ignored. For example “Wherever possible...improve safety for all road users including pedestrians and cyclists” Make this a stronger statement, ie Improvements WILL be designed to improve safety for all road users rather than “Wherever possible”.

In the table “Improvements should include features that also improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists wherever possible” change to “Improvements **MUST** include features that also improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists.”

Strategic walking and cycling projects (page 20)

Cycling provision along/across RoNS apart from Tawa/Porirua is investigation only. This corridor plan runs to 2018. This should be plenty of time for investigation **and** improvement.