



Cycle Aware Wellington

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GWRC Draft Annual Plan 2014/15 – Cycle Aware Wellington submission

We would like to present our submission verbally. Please contact eleanor.meecham@gmail.com

Cycle Aware Wellington is a voluntary, not-for-profit organisation aimed at improving conditions for existing cyclists and encouraging more people to bike more often. We advocate for cyclists who use their bikes for recreation and transport. Since 1994, we have worked constructively with local and central government, NZTA, businesses, and the community on a wide variety of cycle projects. We represent around 600 members and supporters.

Key points of our submission:

- We encourage you to plan for significantly increased bicycle use when developing the public transport spine, and ensure these two modes are properly integrated.
- We've identified a few key ways you could better integrating cycling with buses and trains.
- We strongly support the construction of the Paekākāriki-Raumati South walkway/cycleway.
- We strongly support all other initiatives to encourage and support more people to make sustainable and active transport choices.
- We think it's time to update the Regional Cycling Plan, and we want to see cycling become more of a focus when the land transport strategy, plans, and programme are integrated.

Plan for significantly increased bicycle use when developing the public transport spine

It's essential to plan for significantly increased bicycle use in the coming decades. WCC cordon counts and 2013 Census figures clearly show that cycling is swiftly gaining popularity as a transport choice in Wellington, reflecting global trends. More people riding bikes for some trips means less congestion, which benefits all Wellingtonians.

It makes economic and practical sense to plan and build for safe cycling while developing the public transport spine. Specifically, we want to see:

- separated cycle lanes along the *entire* transport spine

- bikes allowed on public transport vehicles
- bike parking at main stations and the termini.

Safe, separated cycling routes are essential along the length of the transport spine

We see that separated cycle lanes are currently proposed along only some of the transport spine, presumably because of lack of space on some roads. We want to see a separated cycle network along the *entire* spine (either on the same roads as, or parallel to, the public transport route). We strongly advocate for cycle lanes to replace on-street parking on the following segments of the spine:

- along the Golden Mile
- Riddiford Street (south of the hospital)
- Kilbirnie Crescent

Providing an *incomplete* cycle network along the transport spine will cause problems. Safe cycle lanes attract more people to cycling, but some of these are people who will only cycle if they don't have to mix with traffic. An incomplete network will either put these cyclists off, or force them to cycle in conditions they don't feel confident in, which can cause accidents.

We are concerned about the lack of cycle options along the Golden Mile

To make cycling through the CBD a viable and attractive option for the general public, a safe, direct cycle route is essential.

The Golden Mile is narrow, and we note that no cycle lanes are proposed from Courtenay Place to the railway station. To connect both ends of the transport spine, and because the Golden Mile contains key destinations, it is important that cyclists are provided for on this section. Making the Golden Mile a bicycle thoroughway will allow for safe and easy access to restaurants, bars, and shops, helping to boost businesses.

On the other hand, *not* giving cyclists direct, safe, and comfortable passage along the Golden Mile may tempt some to illegally use the rapid transit lanes.

We propose:

Entire Golden Mile: remove parking to provide room for cycle lanes and make this a more pedestrian- and shopper-friendly stretch of the city. Short-stay angle-parking bays could be created on some side streets to make up for the parks that are removed.

Cambridge Terrace to Taranaki St: replace vehicle lanes with a 'shared space' where pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles share a space that blends in with the footpaths. This space would include street furniture and trees (similar to lower Cuba Street, but without the car parks). The rapid transit route would exist on one side, with a dedicated cycle lane alongside it. Making this a very low-speed environment would create a much safer and more pleasant night spot, and would encourage car traffic to travel on the roads around Courtenay Place, rather than through it.

Taranaki Street to Lambton Quay: add separated cycle lanes where they are most practical, depending on the eventual public transport route. These cycle lanes could either follow the

transport spine exactly, or use alternative but equally direct routes. For example, buses will no longer use Dixon Street, so this could become a convenient cycle route.

Bikes should be allowed on rapid buses, and sheltered bike parking provided at major stations and at the termini of the spine

To increase both the number of people cycling and the number of people taking public transport, we expect to see integration of these two modes.

Carrying bikes on buses and rail extends the reach of the transport spine. It means that passengers can make journeys that would otherwise be too difficult because of long distances between their starting point / destination and their closest transport stop. It also allows people to make trips by bike with the option of taking public transport as a back-up (eg, because the trip home is uphill, or the weather has turned bad, or bike-lights have run out of batteries).

We would like to see bike storage space provided on buses, as well as sheltered bike parking at BRT termini. We note that BRT vehicles are more likely to easily accommodate bicycles than current buses.

Please keep us involved as the plans are developed

We hope the introduction of rapid public transport will completely transform Wellington's streets, making the city less congested and more livable. We believe that providing for safe cycling at the same time will make this transformation even more profound. We are very happy to work with you on cycling solutions as you design the public transport spine.

Better integrate cycling with buses and trains

Bring forward the trial and installation of bike racks on buses

We would like to see the installation of bike racks on buses brought forward to begin much sooner than the 2017/18 timeframe identified in GWRC's Long Term Plan 2012–22. While the new BRT buses will be bigger and have more space for bikes, we also want to see the older buses fitted with bike racks. This will allow more people to use their bikes for transport sooner, with the option of using buses as a back-up.

Remove limits for bikes on off-peak trains

We would also like to see an increase in the number of bikes allowed on Matangi train carriages during the off-peak, or even a complete removal of any limit. We would be happy to work with you to address any resulting safety concerns.

Install bike lockers at Porirua train station

Help to integrate cycling and train travel on the Kapiti line by installing safe bike lockers at Porirua train station, as has been done at Wellington station.

Make bus/bike workshops compulsory for bus drivers in the region

Many of the Go Wellington drivers have been on a bus/bike workshop, but Mana/Newlands hasn't got involved. These workshops have proved to be extremely valuable in making both bus drivers and cyclists understand how to better share the road. When tendering out the bus services next time,

GWRC could require all bus drivers to attend a workshop before starting their job.

Build the Paekākāriki-Raumati South walkway/cycleway

We support the idea of a cycleway through Queen Elizabeth Park, to link up the current cycle routes along the Kapiti Coast. The unpaved paths that currently exist through the park are adequate for some riders, but local communities would benefit greatly from a smooth, paved cycleway that caters to all abilities.

This project would:

- open up more recreational opportunities in the park
- give local residents more travel choices
- make the Kapiti Coast more resilient in the event of a natural disaster that blocks State Highway 1.

Encourage and support more people to use sustainable and active transport

We strongly support all other initiatives in the Draft Annual Plan 2014/15 to encourage and support more people to make sustainable and active transport choices. This includes continuing cycle-education programmes such as Pedal Ready.

More people cycling, walking, and taking public transport will contribute to all of GWRC's objectives: a strong economy, a connected and resilient community, a healthy environment, and good quality of life.

Update the Regional Cycling Plan

The Regional Cycling Plan 2008 is now six years old. Considering the marked and continued increase in cycling in the Wellington region (the number of people cycling to work is up 49 percent since the 2006 Census) it seems time to review and update the plan.

Ensure cycling is a focus when integrating the land transport strategy, plans, and programme

We think GWRC's commitment to cycling as a valid and increasingly popular means of transport should be evident after integrating the Regional Land Transport Strategy, associated plans, and the Regional Land Transport Programme. We think the resulting plan should detail:

- your overall aims for promoting cycling in the coming years
- how much you plan to spend on cycling per year
- all current and upcoming campaigns and projects to promote, support, and provide for safe cycling
- your plans to better integrate public transport modes with cycling
- gaps in the regional cycle network, and a list of priorities for closing these gaps

- specific performance targets to measure increased use of, and safety of, cycling for transport and recreation.

Nā mātou noa, nā Cycle Aware Wellington

28 April 2014