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Living Streets Canterbury

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To whom it may concern

RE: DRAFT CANTERBURY REGIONAL LAND TRANSPORT STRATEGY

SUBMISSION BY LIVING STREETS CANTERBURY

We would like to be heard in support of this submission at the public hearings.

Living Streets Canterbury is a branch of Living Streets Aotearoa – a group that advocates for pedestrians in their myriad forms (wheelchairs, skateboards, scooters, walkers and runners, plus those with vision, hearing or other impairments). Our vision is **more people walking more often** because of the excellent health, environmental and social benefits, and to ensure that active transport is considered and catered for in transport planning and traffic management.

Overall, Living Streets Canterbury strongly supports the direction of the draft RLTS – and wants to see a continuing focus on providing meaningful transport choice for Cantabrians, particularly in the medium and long term. We believe that the Government Policy Statement is tremendously short sighted and that as a region we must find ways to support the development of a well integrated transport system that gives people real opportunities to limit their use of private motor vehicles and to lead healthy lifestyles.

A disappointment in this plan is the focus on business as usual in the first three years. Although this strategy must align with the GPS, we feel the RLTS must take advantage of the unusual conditions set up by the recent earthquakes in Christchurch. We feel that active transport is a vital aspect of the recovery process, and clearly, many other Christchurch people feel the same way. Through both *Share an Idea* and a range of community forums, Christchurch people asked for a city that caters for more and safer walking and cycling. The focus on this was surprisingly strong. 2778 comments from *Share an Idea* expressed *strong support for pedestrians* while 6327 talked about a *city for people*. 2214 asked for affordable public transport that is well integrated with walking and cycling. 3833

wanted good cycling facilities, and in particular separated cycle paths. Another 2269 suggested that it would be good to *reduce car numbers* in the Central City. These sentiments were also reflected in the CERA community workshops, where people were allowed to freely express their preferences.

We would like to see, therefore, that the new RLTS strongly supports this aspect of the recovery of Christchurch and we think that an argument should be made to Central government around this.

We were surprised to see that funding (p.36) throughout the 30 years of the RLTS remains very low for walking, c ycling and travel behaviour change initiatives, despite the fact that increased use of walking and cycling are expected to contribute significantly to many of the outcomes in this Strategy (pp. 8&9). While some cycling can be catered for as part of roading budgets, the clear call by people in the above process for *separated* cycle paths does indicate that it is not *enough* to expect that cycling can be catered for in roading budgets. Likewise, travel behaviour is often largely habitual which implies that many would benefit from the support offered in behaviour change initiatives[1].

More specifically, the table on p.3 of the draft Strategy identifies the relationship between strategy objectives and outcomes. We request that the table be modified to show stronger connections between various objectives and outcomes, as shown in the table below (P = primary; S = secondary; M = minor). For example:

- A resilient, environmentally sustainable and integrated transport system WILL result in a reduction in fatal and serious injuries and will improve personal safety and reduced security risks. At last year's walking conference, Hank Weiss from Otago University, an expert in accident prevention and in reducing injuries in accidents noted that reducing motor vehicle use and increasing walking and cycling significantly reduces the rate and seriousness of road accidents.

- Making the transport system safer for all users WILL increase the proportion of the population travelling by active means. Feeling unsafe is a major reason that people give for not using active transport. It is also very likely to increase the time spent travelling by active means. Certainly, experience working in schools indicates that if parents feel it is safe for children to travel to school using active transport, children are able to travel more often and further by these means.

- Increasing safety in the system WILL enhance connectedness and increase travel choices for households as the above example indicates.

- Greater levels of both safety and a more resilient, environmentally sustainable integrated transport system DO improve mobility for the transport disadvantaged. The blind, for example require well designed and safe pedestrian facilities to be able to move around with confidence. Likewise, good cycle, pedestrian and public transport facilities make it possible for those without a car to get where they need to go.

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[1] http://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/research/sustainablesoc/social/communicationandchange.asp

- Public health outcomes will be improved by increased connectedness, greater travel choice for households and increasing mobility for the transport disadvantaged. These all impact on both mental and physical health – the travel disadvantaged become more independent and less marginalised, whilst with greater connectedness and greater travel choice more people can opt to move about actively and therefore increase their physical activity.

- Having an increased proportion of the population travelling by active means will positively affect economic development, particularly as the price of oil increases. Less spent on transport means more available to invest in new business or in buying items on the local market. More spent on fuel means a worsening balance of payments for New Zealand.

- Accessibility is related to many of the outcomes – or at least many of the outcomes will have effects on accessibility. Improving accessibility implies greater transport choice for households, for example and therefore a greater proportion of the population travelling by active means and this in turn will affect the energy efficiency per trip.

	Resilient, environmentally sustainable & integrated	Safe for all users	Public health	Economic development	Accessibility
Reduced greenhouse gas emissions from use of the domestic transport system.					
Improved resilience of the transport network to infrastructure damage or emergencies.					
Improved resilience of the transport system to external changes.					
Improved land use and transport integration.					
Reduction in fatal and serious injuries for all modes.	P				
Improved personal safety and reduced security risks to all transport users.	P				
Improved health from increase in time spent travelling by active means.					
Increased proportion of the population travelling by active means.		P		S	S
Reduced community exposure to vehicle pollutants, noise and vibration.					
Improved journey time reliability on the strategic transport network.					
Increased energy efficiency per trip.					S
Regional and inter-regional journey time reliability on key freight routes is maintained.					
Freight hubs are protected and maintained.					
Connectedness is enhanced.		P	P		
Increased travel choices for households to access urban and suburban centres.		P	P		P
Improved mobility for the transport disadvantaged.	P	P	P		

Cost benefit analyses of spending in pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, as well as accompanying social campaigns, have shown that the benefits far outweigh the costs, unlike projects such as the Roads of National Significance. Not only is investment in pedestrian and cycling a smart investment for the transport sector, it also frees up the road network for those with no other choice but to drive. Road safety is improved, air quality is improved, personal and public health is improved.

On page29, the strategy defines the short term as the first three years, medium term as 4 to 12 years and long term as 13 to 30 years. We support this timeframe.

We are concerned, however, that "business as usual" is proposed for the next three years in Greater Christchurch. Because of the devastation in greater Christchurch, we should be rapidly investing in walking and cycling infrastructure now, not waiting for the medium term. Accordingly, we request significant investment in walking and cycling (including infrastructure and travel demand management). If necessary, funding should come from reducing expenditure on roads (especially state highways and the so-called Roads of National Significance). A 5% reduction in road expenditure would be all that's needed to make a real difference for walking and cycling, with intersection improvements for pedestrians and a city-wide network of separated cycle facilities.

The draft strategy states (p 33):

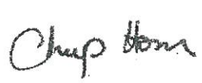
> *"In Greater Christchurch the focus of this strategy is on improving transport options and promoting a multi-modal approach to meeting transport needs. Walking, cycling and public transport all require greater funding and planning support over the period of the strategy if this is to be achieved. In the short term planned road capacity improvements on the state highway network will be completed, catering for much of the projected growth in traffic congestion over the period of the strategy."*

We support the first two sentences but disagree with the third sentence which promotes the view that the planned road works will cater for much of the projected growth in traffic congestion over the period of the strategy. We can never build our way out of congestion, and until we rebuild a strong central city, our public transport system will struggle to compete with easy driving and parking options, which are cross-subsidised by non-motorists. Post-earthquake, we have even more imperative to build a sustainable lane use and transport system built around walking and cycling (with strong local communities where people don't need to travel huge distances), supported by good public transport services.

The business case for light rail for greater Christchurch still needs to be proven. For a fraction of the cost, a similar number of people could be encouraged to undertake their trips by walking and cycling, with added benefits of improved community health and reduced congestion, as noted in the table on page 3.

Most walking is done in Greater Christchurch (simply because most people in Canterbury live in Greater Christchurch) and accordingly we do not request changes to the rural and small urban areas programmes (pages 29 and 31 respectively). Greater Christchurch is where most of the investment is proposed and where the need and desire for sustainable transport options is most pressing.

Your sincerely,



Dr Chrys Horn

Co convenor, Living Streets Canterbury