



**Submission on
Draft Canterbury Regional
Land Transport Strategy
2012 - 2042
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From
Sustainable Otautahi Christchurch Inc.
P O Box 2216
Christchurch 8140

Contact: Tom Taylor (Chair)
Phone: 322 4614
Email: mimas@xtra.co.nz

Sustainable Otautahi Christchurch (SOC) acknowledges the great deal of work that has gone into the proposed Draft RLTS and commends ECAN for this.

We do not wish to be heard but appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Strategy.

We agree with much of what is in the document, in particular the adoption of Option 4 as the guiding principle i.e. greater emphasis on energy resilience through promoting sustainable design principles, energy efficiency and local solutions to transport issues.

As you will be aware from previous submissions SOC stands for Strong Sustainability, of which Peak Oil is a central concern. Transport in the future without the quantities of cheap liquid fuels that we've become accustomed to means that without major changes in policy, we risk closing off options for future-proofing our city and region. We are pleased to see that the Draft acknowledges this and includes actions to address the impacts of high fuel prices and issues around reliability of supplies.

Option 4 is the most appropriate option for addressing the key issues and challenges that have been identified i.e.

1. Improving the public transport system.
2. Making better use of rail.
3. Enhancing active transport and the use of more sustainable forms of transport, particularly cycling.
4. Reducing private vehicle dependence.
5. Supporting the efficient movement of freight.
6. Managing traffic congestion and growth.
7. Improving the integration of transport and land use development.
8. Planning for the implications of climate change and peak oil.
9. Funding and affordability.

We would, however, prefer to see the implementation of the Strategy pursued as a matter of greater urgency, with, for instance, amended district plans being brought into effect early in the medium term (years 4 -12) rather than later.

Land Use

The Strategy entails, in effect, a further 12 years of "business as usual" (BAU) before major changes in land use planning take effect. BAU, with its tendency to build isolated sub-divisions and layouts that are difficult for public transport to access, would lock in high private car use for the period of the Strategy and beyond. Hence, alterations in land use planning that will support the Strategy should be brought forward.

New subdivisions should also provide for cycling and walking, particularly to ensure access by active means to shops and other facilities.

Cycling/Walking

Similarly, greater provision for cycling should be brought forward. Christchurch City would gain the greatest benefits from more cycling at low cost compared with alternatives. Improvements should include a safe network of cycle paths, both on- and off-road, which allow convenient cycling access to the central City and also the local, suburban hubs i.e. where people need to get to. Proposed road improvements, such as 4-laning Lincoln Road under the South West Area Plan/CRETS, have been based on catering for greatly increased private car use with a major focus (literally and figuratively) being the Central City (CBD). Since the Draft Central City Plan posits less car use in the area within the four avenues these plans need to be re-assessed. In particular they could offer opportunities for enhancing cycling and we would like to see these opportunities specifically identified in the Strategy.

We would also like to see more emphasis on pedestrian safety throughout the Strategy, including pedestrian priority at busy junctions with high pedestrian use ("Barnes dances") and audible alarms and consistent use of tactile paving at crossing points to increase safety for blind and visually impaired people.

Passenger Rail

The evidence at present indicates that light rail within Christchurch City is unlikely to be practical, primarily due to the high cost and lack of flexibility.

Heavy rail, however, warrants consideration for passenger/commuter use within Canterbury. Settlements along the Southern and Northern rail corridors, such as Rolleston and Rangiora, are likely to experience increased population growth over and above that predicted before the earthquakes. Physical links (actual railway tracks) presently exist for other potential commuter services, namely Lyttelton and Ferrymead. In view of this we would like the Strategy to include consideration of the viability of passenger rail services (including free park and ride facilities, provision for cycles and access for disabled people to encourage use) between these settlements and the city.

The present location of the train station is inconvenient for access to the Central City and hence the benefits (and drawbacks) of relocating it at or close to the old station on Moorhouse Avenue should be part of the study. Ancillary services such as shuttles to the Central City and integration with the rest of the public transport system are essential to making passenger rail effective.

