

28 May 2015

Freepost WCC  
Cycling Framework,  
Transport Team,  
Wellington City Council  
P.O. Box 2199  
Wellington 6140  
cyclingframework@wcc.govt.nz

**Re: Draft Cycling Framework 2015**

This submission is from the Architectural Centre, an incorporated society dating from 1946, which represents both professionals and non-professionals interested in the promotion of good design.

The Architectural Centre supports the need for a cycling framework, and we agree with the introductory comments in the Draft Cycling Framework 2015 pointing to the benefits of, and the need to provide better facilities and infrastructure (both soft and hard) for cycling, but we consider the current draft to be deficient, because it does not represent the stated transport hierarchy which places cycling as a higher priority than public transport and car traffic.

We have the following statement to make:

1. Look to the Netherlands (i.e. CROW:Information and technology centre for transport and infrastructure) rather than America for models of good cycling infrastructure practice.
2. Separated cycle lanes are a context specific response, in low traffic and suburban areas they are often not needed and reduce flexibility and route options for cyclists. In this regard we support the stated intention to provide a range of responses to different situations.
3. Soft infrastructure is needed too (e.g. practices for using shared streets)
4. The Centre considers that the cycle network plan/framework needs to identify and map:
  - (a) high accident areas for cyclists
  - (b) space restrictions and pinch points
  - (c) route destinations (e.g. to the CBD)
  - (d) demographic targetting (e.g. school children)
  - (e) terrain and weather issues (e.g. predominant wind, strong cross winds)
  - (f) existing cycling infrastructureand then use these to:
  - (g) prioritise design (e.g. establishing conventions that work in the difficult bits)
  - (h) prioritise implementation (i.e. the routes and parts of routes which will provide the most benefit (e.g. address crash rates, use by more people (e.g. the inner city)), and
  - (i) inform route selection.
5. We consider that cross-town links are in desperate need of implementation. The waterfront is not an adequate cycle route (due to its indirectness from many parts of town and its high use as a pedestrian commuter route, and high pedestrian use during weekend events, which mean that cycling is not plausible).



the architectural centre inc.  
PO Box 24178 Wellington

6. We support the premise that the cycle network "will be based on how many people can be reached in each area" (p. 3) and see that working outward from the CBD as important to support this (i.e. relate the implementation of cycleway to the existing bus fare zones).

7. We support agreement on the framework principles and network plan prior to building cycleways, and consider that the information (e.g. the network map, insufficient primary information underpinning the framework) provided in this consultation to be insufficient, requiring further work and at least one more round of consultation. The Architectural Centre strongly supports cycleways and increasing cycle awareness and soft and hard infrastructure in Wellington, but we do not want it done badly.

### **Types of cycleways**

8. The distinction between *Quiet routes* and *Shared vehicle/bike zones* is not clear (other than context) if bikes in both instances "must take the traffic lane" (pp. 8, 9; also pp. 14-15); though the section drawing of the Shared vehicle/bike zones suggests that pedestrians and bikes will share the same space - so this drawing (or the writing) needs amending. Given simple systems are often more legible, conflating these two categories may be appropriate.

9. We encourage the council to commit to the removal of car parks on arterial routes with *Protected bike lanes* (p. 10). We would also like to see council solutions at intersections for protected bike lanes, and how cyclists make right turns. Plans and diagrams are needed to be provided for consultation on these designs, which need to ensure the flexibility of cycling is not foregone.

10. We would also like to raise the issue of ensuring that bike routes are well lit, and designed to support natural surveillance and other CPTED strategies, especially for *Alternative bike paths* and their design and planning.

11. The addition of dual-direction (flow and counter-flow) cycle lanes would strengthen the range of cycleway types and have the added benefits of safety and space efficiency.

11. While we support a range of responses, there needs to be an explicit mapping of proposed routes and intervention type for public consultation, so we can understand where specific types of infrastructure are proposed to be.

### **Roading hierarchy**

12. We strongly encourage the council to reconsider its current roading hierarchy to introduce a new cycle-prioritised road-type. These would be a network of streets where cyclists have priority over cars, and would need an associated road design and signage systems to convey this. We consider that this would enable better reflection of the stated (but not practised) traffic hierarchy of pedestrians, cyclists, PT and, lastly, car traffic.

### **Cycling Demand Analysis**

13. The WCC's Cycling Demand Analysis finding that "more" people would consider cycling "distances less than 10km" (p. 12), indicates a 10km catchment area. We question whether 10km is an accurate finding, and suggest that issues such as terrain, dominant wind direction, and weather are also critical factors. We also note the phrase "distances less than 10km" is inherently deceptive because it is equally true for a group who would consider travelling distances less than 1km, as it is for a group who would consider travelling 5-10km, not to mention the vagueness of "more." All this is to say that the statement is meaningless and unhelpful in this context. Travelling from Island Bay to the CBD is apparently 6km. It is hard to believe that a

significant number of Wellingtonians would travel almost twice this distance frequently (e.g. commuting) when they have the option of their cars to do this. It would also be difficult to find routes of this length which are of a gradient (other than along the waterfront), and in a wind direction, appealing to this novice and entry level cyclist. We strongly question the validity and reliability of this analysis. We recommend focussing initially in inner city and linking high density population areas (e.g. Newtown) to the CBD, especially on the area covered by public transport fare zones 1 and 2.

### **Target cyclists**

14. We can appreciate the WCC's intention to focus on entry-level cyclists (p. 12). While we believe this is important, we consider that the council needs to consider all types of cyclists (e.g. commuter, novice, recreational, tourist, and work-time CBD cycling etc.) to ensure the full range of cycling needs are catered for. To commence this initiative so narrowly focussed will likely mean that the framework and network are not robust long term. We also consider that the council ought to consider targets of annual cycling hours travelled rather than cyclist numbers (p. 13) in their KPIs. Some infrastructure might not support novice riders, but might increase overall bike use.

### **Cycle network design principles**

15. The key design principle appears to be one of separation and removal of cyclists from key (and convenience) transport corridors. It does not appear to be "innovative" or "adaptable" (p. 13). We consider that the council needs to take seriously as a design principle their stated transport hierarchy which places cyclists above PT and car traffic. We believe that there needs to be a significant cultural shift in terms of transport prioritisation. This is not to say that we believe there ought to be no car travel, but rather that a reconsideration of the role of the car in the transport network needs to be considered. We wonder if the transport hierarchy also needs to be rethought, for example that for commuter transport the hierarchy is pedestrian, cycling, PT, motorbikes, and taxis, and for regional transport, and non-peak travel, the hierarchy acknowledges the usefulness of the car (along with the train) for long-distance travel, and for off-peak multi-trip journeys.

### **Space allocation principles**

16. We are exceptionally pleased to see a commitment to "no significant negative impact on pedestrians" after seeing the ease with which it was proposed to reduce footpaths widths in the proposed design for the Island Bay cycleway. We support the provision of bike parking facilities at major bus stops. We cannot see how a successful cycling infrastructure can be implemented and there be "no more than minor adverse effects on private vehicles" (p. 13). Isn't the point to achieve a mode shift to active modes? We are confident that while the council continues to retain private cars at the top of the transport hierarchy in practice (if not in rhetoric) roles to achieve sustainable transport options will remain unsuccessful. We consider it essential for private car commuter traffic to be explicitly and deliberately targeted by providing viable and convenience alternative transport options, and by providing disincentives for car driving (e.g. taxing car parks, removing car parking, not providing car parking information, prohibiting car parking in new CBD developments, restricting road space), while increasing the viability of PT (route convenience, reduced prices, increased frequency, better bus shelters, fare transfers etc.).

17. While increasing the effectiveness of CBD streets for walking, cycling and PT is admirable, it will unlikely affect the journey from home to work significantly.

18. We are not convinced that replacing roundabouts is a fundamentally good idea. The NZTA have developed cycle-safe roundabout design for large, multi-lane roundabouts (the C-roundabout), and small roundabout (one-lane) is perfectly

designed for cycling. Roundabouts enable good traffic flow, and traffic lights are hardly a cyclist's friend, given that they usually do not trigger, and required cyclists to stop, often for lengthy and needless amounts of time. Reconfiguring traffic signals to recognise approaching cyclists would be a good improvement in council roading operations.

### **Cycleway network plan**

19. The cycleway network appears to be largely unconsidered. It retains the problems of the status quo. East-west permeability is not addressed in the CBD, forcing the continued inadequate, and indirect route of the waterfront (or is it Wakefield St? - it is impossible to know from the imprecision of this graphic). There appears to be reliance on Karo Drive, which is not a cycle-way (these need to be continuous) but an inadequate footpath, interrupted at every intersection. We consider this lack of cycling permeability in the CBD to be a key issue that needs to be explicitly addressed in the network plan.

20. The map appears simply to be primarily coloured lines on roads, with no consideration of what it is like to cycle through the city. The graphic is also difficult to read. There is no indication of what types of infrastructure are proposed for which location. More detail is needed. A mapping of current laneways would appear to be an important first move in analysing potential routes in the CBD (as well as the points we raise in [4] above), and it appears that this is yet to be done. A key point is that graphic schematics for depicting roadways designed for the speed of a car are not appropriate for depicting routes for the speed of the bicycle, which require greater detail. The framework and network plan appears to be driven by conventional traffic thinking about road types and existing roads - not what is needed for cyclists. We ask that the CBD component of the network map is reconsidered as needing the level of information of a pedestrian route hierarchy (with primary, secondary and tertiary routes).

21. In closing we would ask, in addition to the above, that an explicit connection is made in this documentation with the recent work done in the NZTA Safer Journeys for people who cycle project. We consider that the idea of transport equity be given greater integrity in this proposal, which would require a substantive rethink of the role of the private car in our city.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the Draft Cycling Framework 2015. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully



Christine McCarthy  
President, Architectural Centre  
arch@architecture.org.nz

Architectural Centre  
100, The Arcade  
Christchurch, New Zealand