



Submission to Hamilton City Council Annual Plan 2008/2009

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Comments:

This submission relates to Transport: Access Hamilton, pages 91 to 93 in the Proposed Annual Plan.

The deferral or reduced funding of proposed projects in areas such as Peachgrove Rd, Hukanui Rd, East St, Te Aroha St and Ruakura Rd suggests that very little expenditure on sustainable transport is proposed for the coming year.

Living Streets Hamilton continues to be extremely concerned by the lack of available safe crossings on major roads within the city and would like to address these individually and suggest possible approaches to dealing with the most hazardous.

This submission addresses the three main areas of concern on Boundary Rd/ Fifth Avenue, from the Whitiara Bridge to the intersection with Tramway Rd

The Whitiara Bridge continues to be a huge concern in terms of pedestrian and cycle safety and to provide a very large barrier to active transport from East to West Hamilton. It now seems very unlikely that the originally proposed four-lane bridge with footpaths both sides is feasible, and we have been left with a hybrid three lane system which satisfies almost no-one. Living Streets sees the provision of paths on both sides of the bridge as critical to the development of a safe active transport pathway in to the central city. At present the dual use of the single path by both cycles and pedestrians is dangerous, and the presence of mobility scooters worsens the problem even further as there is inadequate room for path users proceeding in opposite directions to pass each other. If the north side path can be provided as a clip-on addition it would make huge improvements in accessibility. We acknowledge the likelihood of very high cost, but it is likely to be low in comparison to the provision of further vehicular bridges, which can possibly be avoided if a culture of active transport for central city travel can be developed.

There are no safe crossing points on the road anywhere between the bridge and Tramway Rd. We suggest that the obvious place to address this is the current roundabout at the mosque (the intersection of Boundary Rd and Heaphy Tce). If this roundabout, which currently causes major congestion at peak traffic times in the morning and evening, could be replaced with a light-controlled intersection, preferably of the Barnes Dance variety, it would provide cyclists and pedestrians with the ability to cross safely in any direction, and would free up active transport to the

Events Centre as well as to the Whitiora bridge and the west side of Hamilton. The availability of a guaranteed safe crossing, which is what a Barnes Dance provides, may be the tipping point that persuades commuters and school children (and their parents!) that active transport is a real possibility in this area. This in turn could significantly reduce the vehicular traffic in the area, much of which is currently caused by parents taking their children to school across the dangerous local roads.

Five Cross Roads is an ongoing active transport nightmare – terrifying to car drivers, cyclists and pedestrians alike. All solutions are compromises and all are expensive. Living Streets would like to suggest, albeit tongue in cheek, that since there has been such a massive deferral of expenditure on all other Access Hamilton projects for the 2008/2009 year, perhaps the interest on the unspent money could be used to attack Five Cross Rds. There has long been a suggestion to reduce the intersection to a four-way rather than a five-way intersection by stopping Brooklyn Rd. We feel that this would be the best approach as it allows the possibility of installing light-controlled crossings. Again, this particular one would be safest for pedestrian and cycling modes if a Barnes Dance model were used. Although the wait would be longer for pedestrians, they could make up the time by being able to get across diagonally when their light sequence came up. At present it is common to have to struggle across up to three separate crossings in the area, with no safe access at all – a time-consuming and panic-inducing experience, especially for the elderly, the mobility-impaired, or mothers with prams or toddlers.

I do wish to speak about this submission at a council hearing.

I would be able to attend before 3pm on any of May 19, 20 or 21