

Cycle Action eNews

March 2011



March meeting of Cycle Action - not to be missed!

We would love to see all our members and friends to celebrate a new era for cycling in Auckland.

When - Thursday 31 March, 7.30pm.

Where? - Pioneer Woman's Hall, Upstairs off Freyberg Square, High St - hall entrance beside Courthouse Lane. Go up the stairs. Map here: <http://www.zoomin.co.nz/map/nz/auckland/auckland+central/freyberg+place/2/-pioneer+womens+hall/>

Grab a glass of wine and a nibble while you enjoy our guest speakers:

- Barb Cuthbert and Max Robitzsch – '**Cycle culture for the Supercity**': watch the presentation CAA recently prepared for the Auckland Council's Transport Committee. It shows the range of CAA's initiatives and cycling priorities to boost the City's cycling culture.
- Stephen Smythe - '**The Greenways project**': an exciting concept for connected cycleways across & around the Auckland isthmus



CAA presents the case for more cycling (culture) to Council

We are enjoying the fresh air that is blowing through the corridors of City Hall, with Councillor Mike Lee's Transport Committee proving to be an inclusive and forward-looking body - open to new ideas about how to help the Mayor deliver his vision of the liveable city.

Cycle Action Auckland was invited to present our Citywide cycling priorities to the 1 March Transport Committee meeting. Our presentation, 'Building a Cycle Culture for the Supercity' is available on the Auckland Council website. <http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/SiteCollectionDocuments/transportcommitteecaapresentation20110301.pdf>

The presentation was all about the cycle culture we are starting to see daily on the streets of Auckland, as more and more people in their everyday work and casual clothes use bikes for everyday transport.



We showed Cycle Action's involvement with a wide variety of initiatives - the 'Cycle Chic' fashion show event; workshops and projects with bus and ferry companies; our urban design evening; our work in Hastings to promote its selection as a Model Community for cycling; and more standard events such as our community cycle rides and support for school cycle/travel plans.

The serious side of the presentation was a simple and strong Supercity-wide cycling priority strategy - proposing where Auckland should invest its efforts in the coming years to create a connected cycling route network to rival that of Melbourne in terms of safe and easy cycling. Our concept focuses on a number of radial routes extending along main motorway, railway and arterial road corridors - mostly off-road, to attract all types of cyclists. Integration of cycling

with public transport (bikes on buses, cycle access and parking at train stations and ferry terminals) also features prominently.

The strategy was received very well by Auckland's councillors, and to help bring it into reality, will now be workshopped on 7 April with Auckland Transport's staff and key cycling people from Auckland Council and NZTA. Special thanks to Greg Wood who helped gloss up the presentation for us. He is the secret weapon every volunteer group dreams of having - super talented and fun to work with.

Greenways Cycle Routes Ideas Proposed



Aucklander Stephen Smythe is working on the Greenways Project, a proposal which floats the idea of optimizing the city's green spaces to create a city ring-route for cyclists, with radiating shared pathways or cycleways. The Greenways Project is mapping a network of cycle routes that offer cyclists an alternative to road edge lanes. Although some of the Greenways routes will be familiar to Auckland cyclists and walkers, much of the inspiration behind the campaign comes from Stephen's creative thinking on the potential use of green and coastal areas.

Cycle Action welcomes debate on new ideas and is providing a forum for Stephen to present a preliminary version of his scheme for feedback before the official public launch of The Greenways Project website. If you'd like to hear Stephen's presentation on the Greenways project, come along to the Cycle Action Auckland's next meeting (see details above). Stephen is an architect, property developer, ex-Northcote Councillor and long time resident of Auckland. He has a keen interest in and spatial understanding of Auckland city and was a participant in a recent Auckland City initiative - Liveable Arterials.

Melbourne comes to Auckland - One day seminar, 15 April

'Lifting cycling to the next level – lessons from Melbourne and Portland'

Cycle Action is delighted that Auckland Transport has agreed to our request to host Bike Victoria's 'Bike Futures' one day seminar in Auckland on Friday 15th April. Members of the CAA committee have attended the two day 'Bike Future' seminars in Melbourne. We know that many sustainable transport planning and engineering professionals amongst our members and friends will be keen to grab this rare opportunity to link into the Australian expertise and perspectives offered by this seminar.

Only 80 tickets are available. Seminar details and registrations are available on: <http://www.bv.com.au/general/bike-futures/92331/>



Collaborative work to make cycling safer

The new CAN/BIKENZ collaboration has resulted in a [Safer Cycling Programme](#) contract with NZTA which will deliver projects over the next 18 months that will:

- Establish an assessment process for cycle trainers, training programmes and ongoing support for trainers.
- Develop and deliver nationwide workshops where cyclists and bus and truck drivers experience the road from the others point of view.
- Advise on key road user audiences and messages that will best educate cyclists and motorists to use shared road space safely.

These projects address two of the three priorities requested by a joint CAN/BIKENZ media team after the too many cycling fatalities that occurred last November. These were:

1. All NZ kids learn bike skills and adults skill for the road.
2. Urban cycle lanes are continuous and shoulders on key rural cycle routes are sealed.
3. A fresh education campaign that will change the behaviour of motorists and cyclists who share the road.

For more information, contact [Barb Insull](#) - BikeNZ Board Director and Cycle Action Secretary.

Bike Wise Month is over, but the ride continues

It was a fabulous summer for cycling in Auckland, and February's Bike Wise Programs are continuing to pedal into autumn. The month brought Len Brown on a bike to this year's Go Bike Bike Breakfast, at the Viaduct, where he discussed his cycling initiatives for the city. We are equally amazed by regular Aucklanders putting foot to pedal all over the city. Bike Wise month brings the opportunity to encourage existing and beginner cyclists alike. Whether it is challenging one to extend a recreational ride into a weekly commute or helping beginners onto a safe path, Bike Wise month in Auckland aimed to engage.

CAA teamed with Auckland Transport on many of the city's Bike Wise initiatives this year: Summer Rides, Try My Bike, Bike 2 Work, and the Go by Bike Breakfast. These events were fun ways to promote cycling in Auckland and

great opportunities to meet and encourage other everyday cyclists. The successes of these events are not merely contained to a single month, they are found riding on Auckland Roads and Cycleways each and every day. For beginners and experienced cyclists alike, Bike Wise Month is like rounding a corner to be greeted by a group of cheering supporters; a friend and a warm cup a coffee at a café, or savouring the joy of propelling yourself. Watching the smiles on the faces of other participants simply makes you want to get on your bike!

February was Bike Wise Month, but the fun doesn't have to stop there. There are 485 participants of the Auckland Bike 2 Work Challenge (the largest enrolment yet) still commuting to work by bike. Awesome! The program runs until April 18th and it is still not too late to register. Log only 10 rides and you could be bringing home the grand prize, a new Avanti 8C. Participants also receive weekly encouragement to help establish long-term habits.

Christchurch cycling news from Rebecca McFie

Rebecca McFie is a highly talented Christchurch journalist with the NZ Listener. She wrote the feature on cycling in Oct 2009 which made the front cover, and provides superb investigative items on a diverse range of subjects. See http://www.listener.co.nz/issue/3623/features/14177/crash_course.html

Despite having to move out of her damaged house in Christchurch, she is still writing and riding her bike around the city. She reports "One great thing out of all this - more people are biking. I have done all my observations of the battered city by bike, because the view is better and because it's the most efficient way of getting around damaged and gridlocked roads. It's also a good way of releasing some of the "flight" response that is pulsing through us all." Rebecca and other Christchurch cyclists are in our thoughts. We know it will be long recovery, but it's great to know that cycling is playing its part.

Explore the Super City

CAA's summer ride program, [Explore the Supercity](#), like our spring rides, proved to be extremely popular with beginner riders keen to take up cycling and those keen to discover safe, easy routes around the Auckland Region.

Highlights included kicking off the Hobsonville Point Farmers market with Frocks and a troop of BMX riders; and seeing a woman join our Devonport ride with pride after learning to ride only three days prior at one of Auckland Transports adult learn to ride sessions.

Huge thanks go to Cycle Action members who have volunteered to lead rides and support new cyclists: Jane Ardmore, Richard Oddy (Pedaltours), Hamish Mackie (TERNZ), Gax Sancivens, Sallie McAra, Adrian Croucher, Julian Hulls (Nextbikes), Stephen McKernon, Debbie Lang (AT-North Shore), and all of you who come to participate and ride along side. A special bouquet to Jan Gemmell who always turns up to help with rides and volunteers her cordon bleu chef skills to cater for our high profile events! You are all rich treasures! Cycle Action couldn't grow and achieve its objectives at the speed it is without you!



Regional Roundup - North

Marine Square, Devonport

Marine Square at the Devonport Wharf is an important transition point as cyclists, pedestrians and motorists converge (sometimes a bit hazardously) as they rush to and from the ferry. The area is being upgraded by Council, and Cycle Action has made a case for more cycle parking, non-slip boardwalks, "share with care" status with pedestrians prioritised over motorists, and some engineering considerations. You can read our submission [here](#).

Fabulous February - Bikewise month on the Shore

Debbie Lang, Auckland Transport's energetic and innovative North Shore cycling and walking co-ordinator, has led the City with a fabulous 'Ride your Bike' summer programme extending over 2 months, catering for new and experienced riders.

Bike to Work Wednesdays have been popular with 100 cyclists taking part so far, all stopping into one of the 10 participating cafes for a free coffee on the way to work. A lot of those cyclists also braved the rain to attend the Go By Bike breakfast in Takapuna.

The Beginner Bike Sessions have been so popular that an extra session had to be added to the programme. 50 people took part in the 4 sessions including 10 people who had never ridden a bike before.

One of those new riders followed up her sessions by attending the Devonport Sunday bike ride, receiving a round of applause when she made it to the end of the ride. As a result of her experience she brought along a friend to the next beginner bike session. Her friend had also never been on a bike before, but had always dreamed of feeling the wind



on her face. She couldn't sleep the night before the session because she was so excited, and when she pedalled for the first time the grin stretched from ear to ear.

There are two social bike rides for beginners left in the programme, one in Sunnynook and one in Albany, with 30 people registered for each ride.

The Try My Bike Wine and Cheese evening run in partnership with Frocks on Bikes was a highlight of the programme. Despite the rain, 50 people came out to 'try' the bikes on display and enjoy good company while talking bicycles.

The bike maintenance workshop also proved to be popular with 40 people coming along to learn how to fix a puncture and do basic maintenance at home.

Over in Sunnynook, a series of four weekly family bike evenings were held for local families. Over 50 people attended each session with parents riding with their children in a range of fun skill based activities.

Cycle Action thoroughly enjoyed helping with the events. We continue to see lasting benefits of increased everyday cycling from the on-going support and originality that is the hallmark of Debbie's cycling initiatives.

Mayor commends Belmont Intermediate - stars of school cycling

Imagine a school where 40% of the students arrive daily on cycles, and only 11% are dropped off by cars. That's our star cycling school, Belmont Intermediate. The school was nominated by Cycle Action for a CAN national cycling award last year and was a popular winner. We were thrilled that the Mayor, Len Brown agreed to present the award at a school assembly recently, and joined in the students' applause and cheers of delight as Len and school principal, Justin Sommerville, rode into the hall on a tandem (photo at right).

Len and Justin completed a memorable day for the school by leading the cycling students on a lap of honour around the school playground, while the remaining students and teachers joined in the fun with whistles and more applause. This is leadership at a practical level - we encourage more schools to pedal up to join the healthy and active school travel movement.



Regional Roundup - West

Waterview - Board of Inquiry

NZ's biggest roading project - with its significant implications for Auckland's cycling network - has progressed to a 6 week hearing before a Board of Inquiry, chaired by Judge Newhook.

The proceedings began with caucus sessions at which non experts and experts worked through many of the issues to report to the Board on their discussions - with the aim of establishing common positions and agreements. Cycle Action's committee members, Max Robitzsch and Barbara Cuthbert, were accepted by the Board to have relevant professional expertise, which allowed CAA to participate in the transport and open space expert discussions. Barbara also appeared before the Board to speak to [CAA's submission](#).

The caucus sessions were productive in resolving some of the cycling issues raised in our submission, such as new local cycling connections and wider shared paths. Sadly, no agreement was reached on the major and hot issue - the funding of a cycleway above the future Waterview motorway tunnel, linking the existing NW cycleway on SH16 and the new cycleway built by NZTA beside the new SH20.

We attended some of the hearing days, and pay tribute to the dedication of the Waterview residents (who have had 10 years of uncertainty due to the project) and Albert Eden Local Board member, Margi Watson, who was present at the hearings every day. We were also impressed by the large number and diverse range of submitters supporting the Waterview cycleway.

Our presentation to the Board stressed the importance of the Waterview cycle link to local and regional connectivity, and concluded by stating: *"...it is neither inappropriate nor too late for NZTA and Council to settle on an appropriate funding agreement to provide the cycleway as part of the Waterview Project. We consider this to be a public priority, given the transport responsibilities of both bodies, and ask that attention be given to providing the cycleway early in the project..."* *"We ask the Board to assist and ensure, as far as it is able to direct the parties, that the cycleway link is not divorced from the project. The cycleway should not be deferred to some unknown time, when budget and resolve may somehow, somewhere be found. The Waterview Project's main goal is to close a major gap in our transport network. It should not leave this significant cycling gap in its wake."*

Regional Roundup - Central

Harbour Bridge Investigation gets Council support

Auckland Council has decided to convene a steering group of stakeholders to continue investigation of a walking and cycling link across the AHB. The creation of the steering group follows strong support from Mayor Len Brown for a link across the Bridge. Backing up his campaign promise, the Mayor has asked for further investigation of the shared path across the AHB as one of his priorities for cycling in Auckland.



The importance of walking and cycling across the Bridge is also recognised as one of the key transport initiatives for a well-connected city in Auckland Council's proposed City Centre Master plan. After years of much more hesitant support from the region's Councils, this is a very positive move.

The proposal for the development of a Council-led steering group comes after more than a year of discussion with NZTA about the AHB Pathway project, a privately funded tolled walking and cycling facility underneath the bridge's southbound clip-on extension lanes.

Big loss for CBD cyclists – 'Bike Central' to close

Bike Central, set up by Paul Sumich and winner of a cycle friendly award from NZTA, is closing down at the end of March. This will leave a big hole for inner city cyclists and the Britomart Transport complex. How can a city that aims to be 'the most liveable in the world' do without a place for commuters to leave their bikes and have a shower and a coffee in the CBD?

Ian McKinnon Drive

Cycle Action Auckland's "infrastructure team" has been assisting Auckland Transport with the final design of the new walking and cycling links along Ian McKinnon Drive (between Dominion Road and Newton Road overbridge). We are very pleased with the level of input that we have been offered, and have particularly enjoyed very fruitful collaboration with Irene Tse at Auckland City and now AT. This has resulted in protective islands between the cycle lanes and the traffic lanes at several merge points, to prevent drivers from cutting across the cycle lanes. The new cycle lanes and shared paths (designed to be useful for commuters too) will help the many people who already use this link into the city, while also making it much less hostile for novices and casual riders. Construction start is targeted for middle of 2011.



Central Motorway Junction (CMJ) Cycleway

We have been a bit silent on this one for a while, and we cannot yet give you all the news we'd like. However, the extension of the Northwestern Cycleway through Spaghetti Junction and then down Grafton Gully towards the lower CBD is still very much alive. In fact, design is currently proceeding - delayed not by problems with the concept, but by a number of changes that Cycle Action very much supports, and which will make the project much more transformative.

As we have been asked by NZTA (the project funders & sponsors) not to steal their thunder, details will have to wait a little longer. We are happy to comply, as we really appreciate the dedicated and collaborative cycle planning work of Scott Wickman from Tommy Parker's Highways team at NZTA.

CBD and Quay Street



We are extremely pleased to learn from Auckland Transport that the recommendations we made last year for cycling improvements in the CBD have now been unearthed again (they were made moot when the relevant budget disappeared late in the term of the last Auckland City Council). Some of these improvements, especially along Quay Street, may now still be implemented in time before the Rugby World Cup.

We are particularly hopeful that we will see the closing some of the gaps of the off-road cycling route along the "red fence" of Ports of Auckland - especially just east of the first fence section (east of the Countdown supermarket, northern side). For those who prefer on-road cycling, we can report that the first of the advanced cycle stop boxes we sought have started appearing at newly completed Quay Street intersections.

Regional Roundup - East

Tamaki Drive

Cycle Action continues to be involved in planning with Auckland Transport (AT) to improve the infrastructure and road sharing culture on Tamaki Drive. Since late 2009 there have been various improvements - such as action to remove hazardous car parks/extend "no stopping" restrictions, erect three speed indicator ("Slow Down") signs, install new sections of cycle lane (between Atkins and Kelly Tarltons, 163 Tamaki-Marua Cres, and between Auckland Rd and Sage Rd), and the flashing cyclist warning sign at the Tamaki Drive - Ngapipi Road intersection.

A large number of smaller, common-sense improvements - such as relocating road signs located dangerously within the cycle paths - are also now being investigated by AT and Cycle Action's Tamaki Drive project team. The cycle lane will also be swept more regularly to remove glass and debris (contact Auckland Transport via [their website](#) if you think your local road or cycleway needs to be swept urgently).

These are a good start, but more is needed for Auckland's busiest cycle route. There are also some concerns about the flashing sign, for which we need your input - see below. The main issue is that is no allocated budget for improvements, and we know that funds will be short for major projects - especially after Christchurch.

Tamaki Drive / Ngapipi Road cycle alert sign

The flashing cyclist alert sign at this intersection has attracted keen interest from cyclists, so it's good to be able to report from Auckland Transport that it has been activated by around 160,000 people riding over the in-road loops. Even better news is that since the sign was installed there have been no reported crashes at this notorious cycling black spot.

Like all warning measures, the sign cannot give fail-safe security - so we are continuing to work with Auckland Transport to monitor its performance. If you have concerns or recommendations regarding the sign or the intersection's safety, please contact [Barbara Cuthbert](#) with a short message of key facts to help with the monitoring.

Auckland Transport advises cyclists to use the cycle lane (so the the sign is activated) - they will be marking the "trigger points" more clearly within the next 2-3 weeks, and will be doing more regular maintenance of the curb side/cycle lanes to encourage use. Cycle Action have stressed that the turns to and from Ngapipi Rd continue to be hazardous to people cycling into town on the lane, so we are reviewing this next week with Auckland Transport.

Auckland Transport accepts that the flashing sign is only a safety tool. While the overall safety of the intersection is being reviewed, please take extra care using this section of road and report any problems to the AT action line. <http://www.aucklandtransport.govt.nz/about-us/contact-us/Pages/default.aspx>

(As an aside, we know that only a small proportion of incidents are reported to the police - so please make sure to report all injury accidents or really dangerous close calls to the police, as these count for road safety improvement decisions. The police are also taking a particular interest in complaints about dangerous driver behaviour around cyclists.)

AMETI projects

Cycle Action remains closely involved in Council's Auckland Manukau Eastern Transport Initiative (AMETI) projects, which aim to improve the transport connections in the Tamaki River area between former Auckland City and Manukau City.

We recently participated in the first stakeholder discussions between the project team and local groups. One of the points we particularly stressed was the need for more off-road cycling facilities - to encourage those back onto bicycles that are not keen on riding with cars (women, children - in fact, all of us on those days when we'd rather not see cycling as an adventure). Since AMETI will include several brand-new or totally redeveloped roads, we feel that it will be comparatively easy to include off-road paths which are useful for all cyclists.



We are also very keen to finally hear more about the future cycle facilities on the new Panmure Bridge (photo at right)- where we feel that upgrades on both sides are needed, so "wrong way" cyclists do not have to cross busy Pakuranga Road twice.

Regional Roundup - Cycle Action Waiheke

One of Waiheke's most vivacious cycle ambassadors, Tanya Batt, left the Island in style recently. She was heading off on a month long ride to Wellington, visiting schools to promote children's stories about cycling. A critical mass of around 40 children and parents followed her in a group send off ride to the Wharf where Tanya performed her new ACDC inspired anthem "Cycling all night long". Check out this great little film at this [Youtube link](#).

A free cycling training workshop was held at the popular teenager's event, the "Little Day In". Children were taught hand signalling and emergency stops on a course set out by Tom Ransom. Around 30 children also completed a questionnaire on their cycling habits with the children highlighting their desire to see more cycle lanes to help them get about independently.

Auckland Transport and CAW have been in discussions with the Island's three schools about creating a combined schools travel plan. This will allow schools to survey transport habits to school, ask for better walking and cycling upgrades to local roads, and allow funding for cycle skills training.

The summer has brought a record number of cyclists to ride around the beaches, vineyards, cafes and bush clad roads of Waiheke. Fullers' free cycle map has also been a strong draw card, highlighting a choice of themed routes around the island. The map is available from the Waiheke ticket office on Pier 2, the Waiheke ferries and can be downloaded from <http://www.fullers.co.nz/destinations-tours/waiheke/bike-waiheke.php>



The ongoing trial closure of the Esplanade coastal road (photo at right), connecting Blackpool and Surfdale, has been gathering more and more support as many cycling families, fishermen, walkers and horse riders have enjoyed this piece of iconic Auckland coastline without the pressure of motorised vehicles. School bike train groups are just starting up to allow their children to cycle to school using the Esplanade from Oneroa/Blackpool as a safe car free training environment.

Membership

Almost 100% of Cycle Action's funding comes from membership subscriptions. Our volunteer committee make these subs go a really long way with minimal administration expenses or overhead costs. Details about how to become a member are on the [Join Us](#) page of our website. Join as an individual, family or as an organisation (if your business needs to pay on an invoice email membership@caa.org.nz).