



THE NEW ZEALAND
AUTOMOBILE
ASSOCIATION
INCORPORATED

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Christchurch City Council
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Dear Sir/Madam

SUBMISSION BY NEW ZEALAND AUTOMOBILE ASSOCIATION

The AA is an incorporated society with over 1.3 million members, including approximately 120,000 Canterbury motorists. AA members collectively pay over \$2 billion in taxes each year through fuels excise, road user charges and GST – money used by the government to fund the National Land Transport Programme.

The AA was founded in 1903 and has grown from a pioneering automobile club to an organisation that offers motoring advice, insurance, financial, maps and travel guides to a large cross-section of members. It is regarded as the leading advocate for New Zealand motorists and their interests.

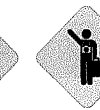
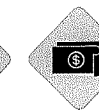
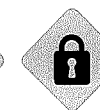
We are presenting this submission because we have a vital interest in future of the City of Christchurch and therefore wish to contribute to the overall redesign plans.

The AA will be conducting a survey of its Canterbury Members and will make the results available to CCC, CERA and ECAN.

We will be discussing the questionnaire with city council officers and other interested parties prior to the survey being sent out to our members in the near future.

Initial views of AA:

1. There needs to be a recognition of the now dispersed CBD – this has happened and is likely to remain, i.e. hubs or clusters.
2. The function of the central city needs to be redefined and done so **very** carefully.
3. The essence of the present system of roading (the good features) must be preserved, i.e. one ways streets; more central city parking; the Ring Road' system; less in-road and roadside "furniture".
4. A total reconsideration of public transport is vital – to better connect the activity hubs such as shopping complexes (The Orbiter) and the new commercial areas around the city. More appropriate buses are required for each purpose. Consideration must be given to new bus technologies - hybrid or electric trolleys in preference to the lite rail concept.





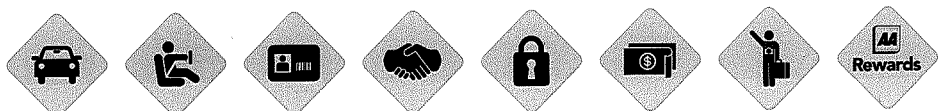
5. Recognition of the flexibility and versatility of the motor car (in what ever form and powered by whatever fuel) and that the personal transport provided by the motor car will remain the most appropriate personal transportation for the foreseeable future.
6. Any proposed provisions for cycling needs to be a requirement of a thorough reconsideration with dedicated (separated) cycle ways, wherever possible subject to proven demand.
7. Very cautious and careful consideration be given to the possible use of the present heavy rail system – from Rolleston / Kaiapoi / Rangiora / Pegasus / Ashburton but only after exhaustive research and maybe trials with leased rolling stock. The AA does not see this as a priority but simply a matter for later consideration once the population centres have 'settled'.
8. Full consideration to be given to uninterrupted effective bus lanes where appropriate, not the presented disruptive and ineffective system, but properly provided for and retro-fitted to some arterial roads where the carriage way is able to accommodate such lanes.
9. Forward thinking innovative corporate vehicle use – the future of the company car must surely be limited. Please refer to the attached articles as an indicator of some possible ways forward.
10. We need to ensure a vital city where people can move freely and safety by whatever mode of transfer they wish to use.

The AA wishes to be part of the process as a key stakeholder.

We will make further submissions but wish at this stage to notify of our interest and sincere desire to be part of an 'holistic' rebuild of our city.

Yours sincerely,

Warren Masters
NZAA District Council – Canterbury/Westcoast



SHARING THE SPACE - ANSWER TO TRAFFIC CONFLICTS?

With the advent of cycle lanes, bus priority lanes, and various traffic controls and calming measures there were expectations that conflicts and collisions on our carriageways would be reduced. But quite the contrary appears to be happening with car drivers, cyclists and pedestrians around the country literally coming to blows to punish or prevent intrusions into what they consider to be their designated corridors.

So it would seem the prescribed cures are actually exacerbating the disease as traffic planners impose more and more curbs and controls on traffic flows in an attempt to create safer spaces for cyclists and pedestrians. And the answer may in fact be fewer controls or even none at all.

Successfully implemented in the Australian town of Bendigo and being proposed as part of the CBD upgrade in inner Auckland City is a traffic management concept known as Shared Space. Pioneered by the late Dutch traffic engineer Hans Mondermann, in a Shared Space environment the barriers between pedestrians and vehicles are actually reduced, and road markings, traffic signs and signals largely eliminated. Amazingly this lack of imposed controls on vehicle direction makes drivers more aware of their surroundings and actually appears to reduce conflicts and accidents. Rather than speeding through a neighbourhood on the track predetermined by marked lanes and regulated by traffic signals, drivers are forced to slow down and be aware of other vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians.

As Shared Space advocate and UK traffic engineer Ben Hamilton-Baillie explains: "If you're faced with a traffic signal, you don't have to think anymore: Whether you go depends on whether the light is red or green. In the absence of such things, we're perfectly capable of reading and understanding the situation so that if Grandma's in the road ahead of you, you don't run her over."

Mondermann spent much of his later career implementing Shared Space schemes in small Dutch towns such as the city of Drachten and the result has been a measurable reduction in accidents and injuries in many locations. The Shared Space concept has also been used in the small German town of Bohmte, in Scandinavia, and the United Kingdom. In the United States of America, Shared Space schemes are being implemented in Seattle, Portland (Oregon), San Francisco, Santa Monica, Cambridge, and New York City.

World expert in the field of creating safe walking environments, Dr Rodney Tolley, advised the City of Greater Bendigo Council that Shared Space would be a cost-effective way of meeting the twin goals of slowing traffic and creating more pedestrian space, whilst at the same time making the CBD more attractive. He promised it would turn the CBD into a calm, healthy, beautiful and safe but functional space and move Bendigo to the forefront of city centre planning and development in Australia.

In designing a Shared Space traffic management system, Tolley says it has to be accepted that accidents will happen and speed limit signs, signals and other traffic controls won't prevent them. So on streets which are used by pedestrians, cyclists and cars, the speed of the cars must be reduced to a level which guarantees that no-one is killed in a crash. This principle is based on the Vision Zero approach to traffic safety adopted in 1997 in Sweden.

Known as the father of Vision Zero, the director of traffic safety at the Swedish Road Administration Claes Tingvall, says the key to reducing road deaths and injuries is the radical notion of moving responsibility for accidents away from road users and on to those who design the road transport system.

"A couple of hundred years ago it was said that people got diseases because they were immoral and they weren't living according to God's will, and it's still more or less the same today with crashes," says Tingvall. "We have come to understand that it is bacteria and viruses that make us ill. But crashes and injuries are still very much blamed on the victim for being stupid or irresponsible."

With Vision Zero the traffic planning authorities accept that accidents will happen, so the best course of action is to try to minimize the effects: traffic is slowed, intersections are redesigned, guard rails put up, and rigid roadside objects like power poles, trees and rocks are removed.

Recent Shared Space applications began with the 1970s Dutch 'woonerf' concept, in which streets are treated like extended back yards. Cars do not have priority but their drivers submit themselves to a 'common law' of equal speed for all street users. In such zones, pedestrian priority is applied to the entire surface of the public space, and this is possible not just in side-streets in residential areas, but in the hearts of towns and cities

"The CBD should be conceptualised as a canvas not a conduit, in order to eradicate current conflict points or corridors and equitably redistribute urban space giving priority to the largest volumes of people," says Tolley.

If traffic is slowed to speeds which do not endanger pedestrians, it allows the carriageway space to be shared safely by the various modes. In most CBDs the road network provides a continuous even surface for wheeled vehicles while pedestrians are channelled onto a set of footpaths which are not a network as they are interrupted at every road intersection. By creating a network of footpaths the priority at road intersections is reversed.

Thus, where vehicle networks are crossed, priority is given to pedestrians and reinforced by the provision of pedestrian crossings on 'speed tables' – broad level-topped humps – which are the width of conventional crossings, and are paved with similar materials and laid at the same level as the footpath. At four-way road intersections the full square is raised and paved at footpath level. The effect of this is to create a continuous pedestrian network and give drivers a distinct visual clue as to who has the priority. On remaining street space, it is possible for speed to be reduced by 'traditional' traffic calming, such as chicanes, humps and central islands.

At the heart of Shared Space is the concept of integration in contrast with the principle of segregation - the idea of separating different functions and different users within the urban landscape - which continues to underpin most conventional traffic engineering schemes around New Zealand. Integration, on the other hand, is achieved through traffic management methods which rely on the design of the road, the environment around the road and the behavioural psychology these generate, to inform the driver that this is a social space and extra caution must be exercised.

In contrast to current design practice, Shared Space strives to combine, rather than separate, the various functions of public spaces. In this manner Shared Space aims to improve the quality of public spaces and the living environment for people, without needing to restrict or banish motorised traffic. The way in which the shared space concept is implemented varies, but there are key measures - such as the removal or reduction of traffic signs, markings and other instructions to drivers - which aim to prevent the road looking like a space designed for traffic. The concept taken to its fullest requires the removal of the separation between motorised vehicles and other road users, mainly through the removal of the traditional footpath, kerb and controlled crossing points, resulting in a shared surface streetscape.

The Shared Space approach produces an environment which is extremely safe for pedestrians. As long as the speed of all vehicles is slow enough, it is easy for pedestrians to get along with cars and buses. This concept allows for a new design of urban space, which is not orientated along the lines of motion of vehicles, but is based on spatial concepts. This is usually rather puzzling to motorists, which makes them automatically slow down, which in turn is the basis of the pedestrian safety in these places. Street users negotiate priority and movement through the use of 'eye contact'.

Tolley says the traditional policies of segregating traffic flows often increase the feeling of safety, but what feels safe is not necessarily safe - and conversely what feels unsafe may actually be quite safe. Shared Space is successful because the perception of risk may be a means or even

a pre-requisite for increasing objective safety. In other words, when a situation feels unsafe, people are more alert and there are fewer accidents. Because the Shared Space approach lowers vehicle speeds and volumes it is not necessary to set aside dedicated travelling lanes for bicycles, thus releasing more space to be shared.

In a way Shared Space is nothing new as effectively it was the default mode before the separation of vehicles and pedestrians became the accepted approach to designing public spaces. Even today, almost all car parks, courtyards, mews developments, market places, campsites and country lanes involve the informal sharing of space for different uses and by different modes of movement.

Examples of successful Shared Space applications overseas include Biel in Switzerland where a town centre intersection of nine roads, carrying 12,000 vehicles per day (including 1,000 buses), as well as 5,000 bicycles and uncounted pedestrians, has been turned into a new Town Square. All signs have been removed except for, on the approach roads, a 'shared space' sign to show the 20 kph limit and pedestrian priority.

After three years of operation of this 'Encounter Zone', an evaluation found that: People and vehicles safely 'negotiate' their way across the space.

Traffic mixes very comfortably.

The town centre is used again by people on foot.

Traffic throughput is maintained at previous levels.

There have been no serious injury accidents.

Vehicles pass through the junction in the same time as before, because although they go more slowly, they keep moving because they are not stopped by traffic signs or lights.

In Drachten, in the Netherlands many signs and conventional highway elements have been removed, including all of the town's 13 sets of traffic lights. Major intersections have been converted to roundabouts: at smaller intersections users just make decisions on their own. This approach has completely eliminated serious injury crashes and road fatalities and created a surge in bicycle and pedestrian traffic.

The key question for New Zealand traffic planners is whether the culture which allows the Shared Space concept to work in other countries with higher traffic densities can be nurtured here where road users are wedded to aggressively demanding more "right-of-way" than they really need in order to complete their journeys. It will worth watching how Aucklanders adapt to the proposed Shared Space projects in their CBD.