

Johnsonville Community Association

Submission to WCC Bike Plan

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Tony Randle, President of the JCA

Email address: jcainc2@gmail.com

The following is the Submission of the Johnsonville Community Association (JCA) to the Wellington City Council (WCC) 2021 public consultation on the proposed Bike Plan.

The JCA would appreciate the opportunity to present its submission in oral form.

The Bike Plan investment is excessive

While the JCA supports investment in improving the transport across the city, we are concerned about the relatively large amount planned for cycling which is only used by a small number of the city's residents ... only about 3% of commuters from Johnsonville use bicycles.

It is also a concern that many of our community who are unable to drive due to health, age or physical impairment, cannot also cycle for the same reason. It is unfair that the city invest so much in a mode of travel that cannot be used by so many of our more vulnerable residents.

In contrast, the preferred alternative mode to driving for Johnsonville residents of all types is a bus PT service that has not had any investment in the past two decades. It is disappointing to note that this still has a smaller planned budget than the WCC plans for cycleways.

The JCA requests that the WCC proceed with cycleway investment more slowly than proposed in the Bike Plan so that the uptake of cycling promised by the plan is proven before major changes are made to our travel corridors.

No changes to Johnsonville Road

The Wellington City Council's new Bike Plan includes adding a "Primary" cycleway along the length of Johnsonville Road. Because Johnsonville Road is quite narrow, there is not room for street-side car parking and a protected cycleway (like the city has built in Island Bay). And because the WCC Parking Policy gives priority to cycleways over car parks, this will mean that most of the car parks along Johnsonville road will be removed to make space for a cycleway ... a change that will severely impact the numerous retail businesses along our main street.

As any business owner along Johnsonville Road will tell you, there are actually very few cyclists that travel along Johnsonville Road, during the day and the evening there are almost none so any new improved cycleway will not be used. A key reason we have few cyclists

along this road, is it is both difficult and unsafe for many cyclists, especially through the busy roundabouts. The other is Johnsonville is too far and too hilly for most people to choose to cycle to work.

Is there an Alternative?

The WCC has long held that Moorefield Road is the main cycleway route into and through Johnsonville. There is already a wide combined walkway cycleway built along the Western side of this road. In addition, this cycleway leads to our schools and provides a safer connection along 50kmph roads to Ngaio Gorge.

In addition, there is already a cycleway (also little used) along Broderick Road that those few hardy cyclists travelling up/down Ngauranga Gorge.

On this basis, if the WCC insist on building a cycleway through Johnsonville, then the JCA requests the Primary cycleway route should be via Broderick Road/Moorefield Road and **not** along Johnsonville Road.

There is already a cycleway along Johnsonville Road that appears to meet the need of the few cyclists that use it. There have not been any reported serious accidents or issues involving cyclists along this very busy street. Therefore, the JCA requests that the WCC change its Bike Plan and remove Johnsonville Road from the list of streets that are proposed to be changed.

Conclusion

While cycling and walking will clearly be an important alternative mode for parts of the city that are flatter and closer to the CBD, the key alternative mode that needs investment in North Wellington is bus based public transport (the Johnsonville Line cannot really be improved by further investment). The WCC Bike Plan focus should therefore be on improving cycling facilities in those areas that already have significant proven cycle use and any success in these areas can then provide the justification for further investment in more distant suburbs such as Johnsonville.

The JCA makes the above points to help ensure the WCC Bike Plan works for the best interest of our community and the wider city.