

Frequently Asked Questions about Cycle Action Auckland's proposal for a walkway / cycleway over the Auckland Harbour Bridge

Cycle Action Auckland seeks access for pedestrians and cyclists across the Auckland Harbour Bridge, similar to that provided by the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

We have recently gained access to engineering reports prepared in 1987 and 1990 by Ministry of Works that show there could be space for two traffic lanes and a walkway / cycleway on each clip-on structure.

Here are some answers to frequently asked questions...

How would the spacing work?

The Ministry of Works engineering reports show an available space of 9.1 metres on the clip-on structure. It also shows 12.8 metres available space on the central structure which, when one deducts the moveable barrier, provides 4 general traffic lanes of less than 3.1 metres each.

Cycle Action Auckland suggests similar sized lanes for the clip-on structure... one lane for general traffic (3.2 m), one for light traffic (3.1 m) and a barrier of 0.3 m. This leaves 2.5 metres available for a walk way (on the Eastern side) and a cycle way (on the Western side).

How will the clip-on's handle the load of all those pedestrians and cyclists?

Cycle Action Auckland suggests that the two existing general traffic lanes be converted into one general traffic (cars, motorcyclists, buses and trucks) and the other a light traffic lane (cars and motorcyclists only). The resultant weight saving would offset the weight of pedestrians and cyclists on the clip-on structure.

Isn't it too windy to allow Aucklanders to walk or cycle over the Bridge?

The outside and inner barriers would provide protection from the elements, and could be fitted with Perspex shields similar to Grafton Bridge. We are not aware of major wind problems for people on the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

Isn't the Auckland Harbour Bridge too steep to cycle up?

The gradient on the bridge is 5% - easy for any cyclist of reasonable fitness.

How will Aucklanders access either end of the Bridge?

The connections to the Harbour Bridge are quite straight forward as there is easy access for cyclists and pedestrians at both ends. The northern end of the bridge can easily be connected from the west to the streets of Northcote Point and from the east via a subway at Stafford Road, with additional possibilities of a boardwalk next to the motorway leading to an existing footbridge at Exmouth Road, and also around to Esmonde Road.

North Shore City Council have scoped out potential routes for a cycleway/walkway on both east and western sides of the motorway.

At the southern end of the bridge there are excellent possible access points to Westhaven via Curran Street and Shelly Beach Road.

If we only have “X” to spend on cycling in the next 10 years, is it best value if we spend the majority of our funding on one scheme?

Transit's 10 year Draft State Highway Forecast says that the "X" dollars for cycling in the Auckland region is **zero**! The estimated \$3 to \$6 million required for this project would come from Transit's overall roading budget, which is a record amount for 2006/07 of \$1.1 billion, with an additional \$2.5 billion allocated from the 2006 Budget.

Cycle Action Auckland does not have a problem with this, especially when one considers the recent comment by the head of the Ministry of Transport, Robin Dunlop: "It's time to recognise that we cannot pave our way out of traffic".

How can we ensure people's safety?

Cycle Action Auckland recommends security camera's to ensure people's safe passage. Transit already monitors the Auckland Harbour Bridge with cameras from their Control Centre just north of the Bridge. If necessary, the walk way and cycle way could be closed in extreme weather conditions.

We are also proposing a barrier between the traffic lanes and the pedestrian/cycle ways.

But isn't there another harbour crossing to be built in the future, which could provide for cyclists and pedestrians?

Firstly, we don't know when the next crossing will be built... in 10 or 30 years? Also, it's a distinct possibility that the next harbour crossing will be a tunnel, as happened in Sydney – so this will not provide for cyclists or pedestrians. So why wait?

Why should we provide access to cyclists who don't pay fuel tax and vehicle registration fees?

Most cyclists also own cars so they do in fact pay vehicle registration and fuel tax when they do choose to drive. Local roads are paid for by local councils, and so cyclists contribute directly as rate payers, or indirectly as tenants paying rent.

Further, the true costs to society of our roading network are estimated to \$1.1 billion* higher than the amount of money the government collects from road users (in the form of petrol tax, road user charges and motor vehicle fees), so it is the taxpayer who subsidises this shortfall. Cyclists, too pay taxes such as PAYE, GST, and other taxes and excise duties.

* The figure of a \$1.1 billion shortfall comes from the Ministry of Transport commissioned report called 'Surface Transport Costs and Charges Study', which is available at <http://www.transport.govt.nz/downloads/surface-transport-overview.pdf>