

Media Release

Draft Transport Plan open for public consultation

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Traffic will be slowed and pedestrians given greater priority in the new central Christchurch under a draft transport plan the public is now invited to have their say on.

Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Minister Gerry Brownlee released on 15 November 2012 the Accessible City draft Transport Plan and is inviting the wider community to make their comments and contributions.

Transport was excluded from the Christchurch Central Recovery Plan when it was launched in July 2012, allowing for a comprehensive plan to be developed. Mr Brownlee says the draft plan prioritises streets for buses, cycles, pedestrians and private vehicles as a way of improving travel across the city.

"What we now have is a very detailed outline of the way transport will work in the new CBD, with changes to roads, public transport, pedestrian areas and cycleways.

"Our aim is to ensure the new central city area is attractive for people to live and work in, and visit, and is easy to get to by car, bike, bus or on foot," Mr Brownlee says.

"We have worked with our transport partners to take a closer look at creating efficient and integrated links between the central city and other key activity centres in the city, as well as the rest of the region, in a new and innovative way."

The draft plan prioritises streets for buses, cycles, walking, and private vehicles, as a way of improving travel across the city.

Cathedral Square would become largely pedestrian only, and the overall speed limits within the CBD's core would be reduced to a maximum of 30 km/h.

Mr Brownlee says the speed reduction in this central area will improve safety for both pedestrians and cyclists.

"Pedestrians will have priority on the streets throughout the city's core, and there will be an emphasis on the development of attractive walkways within the frames and Te Papa Ōtākaro, linking to Hagley Park.

"Separate cycleways will also be developed in the frame area, as well as cycle-priority streets in the CBD."

More public off-street parking facilities will be encouraged, but not in the traditional sense.

"We are interested in seeing parking buildings adjacent to streets prioritised for cars, rather than those that have a cycle or pedestrian focus," Mr Brownlee says.

"Ideally these will be built mid-block, rather than on a corner, to minimise their visual impact."

Mr Brownlee says new off-street car parking buildings could be designed to achieve an active ground floor and with the potential for a range of uses.

This announcement was originally published on ccdu.govt.nz and beehive.govt.nz

The overall concept is to have at least one public parking building within five minutes' walk of anywhere in the CBD's core.

Mr Brownlee says accessibility is the plan's priority.

"We want an environment that is easy for everyone to access, including those with disabilities, the older generation and those who have young children too.

"An accessible city will create an economically prosperous city and offer accessible tourism opportunities, and once our new city is back up and running this will ensure it can be enjoyed by everyone."

The draft plan is now open for consultation and people have until Friday 1 February 2013 to make submissions through the CCDU website.

Physical submission forms are also available for download from the website or from the Christchurch City Council offices.