



# Smart travel choices key to a sustainable future

A key part of the Urban Development Strategy is to develop and implement a travel management plan, writes BILL WASLEY.

Transport is Canterbury's most significant area of infrastructure provision, given its large public and private costs, contribution to the economic performance of the region, influence on urban form, and other social and environmental effects.

Transport is fundamental to the quality of life in greater Christchurch. It provides people with access to education, employment, services and recreational opportunities. It allows for the movement of freight, essential to economic wellbeing.

How people travel to work and how often affects the physical environment through emissions, noise, congestion and community severance. It affects and is affected by where people live, work and the other places they spend their time. Our future ability to fund our transport methods and networks is, however, about making smart choices.

A draft Greater Christchurch Travel Demand Management Strategy (TDMS) has been produced under the umbrella of the Urban Development Strategy (UDS), greater Christchurch's 35-year plan. The UDS was adopted in 2007 by a regional partnership of the Christchurch City Council, Environment Canterbury, the New Zealand Transport Agency and the Waimakariri and Selwyn district councils.

In the strategy, transport is identified as a key area of infrastructure provision, and one of the strategy's key action points is

to develop and implement a Travel Demand Management Strategy and action plan.

The Greater Christchurch TDMS vision is that by 2026 people will choose the most efficient and sustainable way to travel and move freight. The TDMS was released at the end of last month and is open for public consultation until the end of this week.

Travel Demand Management is about changing travel behaviour by encouraging the use of sustainable options like walking, biking, public transport, car pooling and combining trips.

In greater Christchurch, the car is used for 85 per cent of daily trips and 96 per cent of cars travelling to work are carrying a sole driver and no passengers. Fewer children are walking to or cycling to school, with 34 per cent of morning peak traffic education-related. Significant numbers of people from Waimakariri and Selwyn districts travel to work in Christchurch City, with fewer than 1 per cent travelling by public transport.

The guiding goals of TDM are:

- ❑ A reduction in the number of trips made, particularly by private car.
- ❑ An increase in the proportion of trips made using sustainable travel options.
- ❑ A reduction in the distance travelled for regular and local trips.
- ❑ A change in the time of travel.

Encouraging travel behaviour change has to be supported by the prudent provision of the necessary infrastructure. The UDS partners

are committed to increasing investment in the necessary infrastructure (for example bus priority measures and the new transport interchange) and behaviour change programmes (such as school travel plans).

But it's not just about spending more money. We now need to work smarter to get the most out of these investments, and that's where TDM enters the frame. If we travel differently – walking, cycling, using public transport, car pooling, combining trips, and travelling outside peak hours – our roads will carry more people, not reach capacity and not be as congested. We need to make the most out of our existing network.

Research shows that just one less car trip per week, per household, is enough to stop traffic growth.

The moving of freight is another area where efficiencies can be explored. Nationally, road-based freight is growing by 3.5 per cent a year, and freight-based travel is expected to have doubled nationally by 2040. The challenge for greater Christchurch is to manage the projected demand and ensure the most efficient use of the existing road network space to move freight, while remaining cost effective for businesses and their customers.

The UDS partners are committed to making greater Christchurch's transport network sustainable, user-friendly and affordable. To achieve that we all need to think about the travel choices we make.



**Press, The**  
**12/03/2009**  
**Page: 9**  
**Section: Perspective**  
**Region: Christchurch Circulation: 92465**  
**Type: Metro**  
**Size: 199.00 sq.cms**  
**Frequency: MTWTFS-**



■ Bill Wasley is the independent chairman of the UDS Implementation Committee. Public consultation on the Greater Christchurch Travel Demand Strategy closes at 5pm tomorrow. Copies of the document and summary document, fact sheet and

submission form are available at Christchurch City Council service centres, offices of the Waimakariri and Selwyn district councils and Environment Canterbury, and the Christchurch office of NZTA. Feedback can also be sent through the Have-Your-Say website at

[www.ccc.govt.nz/HaveYourSay/](http://www.ccc.govt.nz/HaveYourSay/) where there are links to the various documents. More information on the strategy is available at [www.greaterchristchurch.org.nz/TDM/](http://www.greaterchristchurch.org.nz/TDM/).



**Healthy option:** Increased cycling will save congestion on the roads