



**Glasgow's Strategic Plan for Cycling
GoBike, (Strathclyde Cycle Campaign)
Response**

**To: The Working Group
Glasgow's Strategic Plan for Cycling, 5'**

27th July 2010

Thank you for giving GoBike the opportunity to respond to this draft version of 'Glasgow's Strategic Plan for Cycling'. We would like to take this opportunity to also thank the funders of this project. We hope the Working Group will take into account the following GoBike comments and suggestions when publishing the final 'Strategic plan for cycling'.

Section 1: Introduction:

Page 3, Para.2. 1st line: We suggest that, at present, it is unlikely that Glasgow will surpass Edinburgh in cycling facilities by 2014. As the remainder of the paragraph refers to sporting facilities, we suggest the first line should read:

'By 2014, Glasgow will have some of the best sport cycling facilities in the country'

Section 3: Strategic context:

Page 7, Glasgow: 'Sustainable Glasgow Report':

We feel there should be more emphasis on changes to road infrastructure and plans for new builds to incorporate cycling facilities, particularly whilst developing a network of cycle routes throughout the city.

Page 8, Glasgow: 'Glasgow's Environmental Strategy':

We understand this is the same document as the 'Environment Strategy and Action Plan, 2006-2010'. We suggest you should also refer to '**Glasgow's Climate Change Strategy**', which is due to be published, with an action plan, later in 2010.

Page 8, Glasgow: 'City Plan 2':

We feel there should be more emphasis on the implementation of the priorities of this plan as its publication was sometime ago and probably requires updating.

Page 9: 'At its core, the Plan will':

We suggest that you add further bullet points as follows:

- ***'Put active travel at the heart of Glasgow City Council's planning policy and ensure that all departments coordinate an active travel strategy'.***
- ***'Engage with all GCC Elected Members to lobby for improved cycling facilities within their wards'.***

Page 9, Para. 2.:

We are unaware of further plans to improve the Colleges Cycle Route except between Hyndland Road and University Avenue. We think there should be more emphasis throughout the document on continuing route maintenance and on the ability to use cycle routes for commuting and work purposes. For example, neither the Colleges Cycle route nor the 'Velo-city cycle route' have been adequately maintained. We would like to emphasise this point by referring the Executive to the resolution of the Glasgow 2001 Velo-City cycling conference, quoted as follows:

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500 delegates from 42 countries around the world attending the Velo-city 2001 Conference in Edinburgh and Glasgow have affirmed the theme of "Partnership for Change" in helping to promote cycling. Cycling is a key component in the global push for environmental sustainability as well as a form of transport which enhances personal health. The economic benefits of cycle tourism and the development of a new cycling "culture" through the support and enthusiasm of children have been stressed.

The conference has raised public awareness in both Edinburgh and Glasgow of the wider benefits of cycling in an international context and helped add credibility to the growing commitment by both Councils to continue to develop and enhance their cycle facilities, training and education.

We feel the following point could be included at this stage:

'Glasgow City Council and its partners will place more emphasis on developing cycling facilities throughout the City and have a determination to move road planning priorities from emphasis on the car to emphasis on active travel'.

Section 4: Partnership:

We suggest the Working Party should consider the following bullet points for inclusion:

- ***'The Partners will make sure that a cohesive cycling strategy is implemented as soon as possible throughout Glasgow City Council.'***
- ***'The Partners will liaise with neighbouring local authorities to extend Glasgow city cycle routes into the surrounding area, aiming to reduce the amount of commuter car traffic and increase commuter cycle traffic.'***
- ***'The Partners will work in partnership with the, recently formed, Glasgow Cycling Forum, (chaired by Cllr. Matthew Kerr), to improve the visibility of cycling in Glasgow.'***

Section 5: The Vision:

We particularly commend the sentiments outlined in this vision, particularly the ambition that cycling will be the biggest participation activity in the city by 2020. As suggested by Dr. Harry Burns, the Chief Medical Officer for Scotland, during the recent launch of the Bike Club, cycling can sometimes be healthier than running. At this stage, we feel that there could be a further mention of the Glasgow Cycling Forum. We would also like to see the following points emphasised:

- **All planning consents perused for cycling opportunities particularly for new builds and their effect on the surrounding road usage.**
- **All new school builds to have a complete school catchment area active travel plan at the planning stage.**
- **All current schools to be encouraged to create active travel plans throughout their catchment areas.**

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- **Emphasis will be on the visibility of cycling opportunities and joined-up cycling networks throughout the City, including the City centre, such as the introduction of advanced stop lines at all signalised road junctions and dropped curbs whenever necessary.**

Section 6: 'Key themes and programmes':

Page 15: Health:

'The key opportunities':

Bullet point 2:

Evidence: Is there evidence that 10% of pupils would actually prefer to cycle to school? If so, perhaps the Working Party should quote this in the strategy document to give the point more emphasis. As 10% is not a very high number, perhaps the Working Party might consider a higher target as a medium/long term activity, particularly as there is now additional resource through Glasgow's 'Bike Club'.

School run: There is an opportunity to reduce the car traffic associated with the school run which has become a major problem for the health of Glasgow's citizens and environment. As it seems the amount of cars on the road is considerably reduced during the school holidays, particularly at rush hour, this could be quoted as a key opportunity.

Eco Schools Award: We understand that Glasgow schools have the option to explore 'Eco Travel' as a voluntary part of 'Eco Schools Award' but only one school has taken up this option. As part of the Glasgow Cycling Strategy, it would be appropriate to lobby the City Council to make this a compulsory part of achieving the award.

Bullet point 3:

Safer Roads/20mph: We feel that the introduction of a 20mph speed limit on all City roads would be a big step forward to encouraging safer travel and so more cycling on city streets. We suggest that, due to its importance, you give a proposed reduction in speed limits a separate paragraph in the strategy document.

We understand that, due to cost and the problem of policing, there is some doubt about the feasibility of a reduction in the speed limit in all parts of the City. We accept that this proposal might only be an achievable outcome in the long term.

For further information, we would like to take this opportunity to quote from Cllr. Craig Mackay's research as follows:

"4. Sustainability and the Environment Policy Development Committee, 28th April 2010"

'....if the same level of investment was maintained as was being proposed for the current financial year, it would cost £12.7m and take 127 years to implement 20mph Zones across the city, and £3.5m / 35 years for 20mph Speed Limits. A mix of the two systems would obviously be somewhere in between these two figures.

Accepting that these are very much ballpark figures, and that there can be no financial commitment to take this forward to its conclusion, the reality is that there is

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little prospect of the 20mph vision being achieved in Glasgow any time soon. Effectively all that has been approved is that the council supports the idea of reducing speeds in residential areas, but is realistically going to be unable to achieve this in any substantial way any time soon. The best we can hope for is that the schemes to be introduced this year will prove to be successful and popular, which might potentially generate the political will to prioritise the expansion of the scheme in future years.

'The key opportunities' – additional bullet point:

Involvement of the medical authorities: We feel that there is an opportunity to promote of cycling, particularly to children and parents, through influential bodies such as GP surgeries.

Pages 16 & 17: Transport

Para.1:

We would like to query the following statement on the last line of the first paragraph.

'...cycling is once again becoming a popular form of transport and leisure activity for the citizens of Glasgow'

We agree that cycling is definitely becoming a more popular form of transport and leisure in Glasgow than ever it used to be. We would like to query the phrase 'once again'. If there is evidence that cycling was once more popular than at present then quoting this may give this statement greater impact.

Para. 3:

We feel that this paragraph suggests that safe cycling on roads is of secondary importance to the use of dedicated cycle routes. Perhaps some re-phrasing might be necessary. We also feel that the Working Party should emphasise the importance of joined-up, on-road cycling facilities as much as dedicated cycling routes.

The visibility of cycling to car, bus and lorry drivers is paramount. At this point, we would encourage the Working Party to include examples such as lobbying private bus and taxi companies to include cycle awareness as part of their training programmes such as that initiated by a GoBike member with First Bus.

Transport: Key challenges:

Bullet point 1: '*.....since this can be expensive and the reallocation of road space etc....*'

The first part of this bullet point is vital to the whole of a comprehensive cycling strategy. We feel that emphasising the problem of expense is negative and does not comply with the opportunities outlined in other parts of the Strategy. We also challenge the assumption that the reallocation of road space is not always possible as capacity requirements, more often than not, reflect the availability of space available. There is an opportunity to lobby the City Council to dedicate a greater part of its transport budget, (10%), to improve and increase city cycling facilities, to increase road capacity and to achieve reductions in carbon emissions.

Bullet point 6: We would like to amend this bullet point to read:

'Develop short lengths of cycling and walking routes as part of cycling permeability within the city centre and to and from all residential areas thereby serving large numbers of commuters'

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Additional bullet point: We suggest the addition of a bullet point emphasising shared road use as well as shared pedestrian/cycle paths to encourage faster cycle travel, particularly as a greater number of experienced cyclists will mean greater use of on road/car shared facilities.

Section 7: 'Implementation and Development':

7.1.1. 'Initial activity', page 18: Bullet point 10: '*Provision of a full time member of staff*'

As noted in 'Strategic outcome 2' an officer is already in post to manage the Glasgow area 'Bike Club' and there is already a GCC cycling officer reporting to LES. As we understand this is a new position, would it be feasible to give more details at this stage? (eg. Responsibilities, reporting to, funded by etc.)

7.1.2. 'Medium and long-term aims, page 18: Bullet point: '*Targeted activities aimed at ensuring the road environment is as safe as possible for vulnerable road users...*'.

We would like to think that this bullet point should read: '*...environment is safe for vulnerable road users..*'

We feel that the inclusion of '*as possible*' immediately creates doubts that the road environment can ever be safe. CTC has demonstrated that an increase in the number of 'on road' cyclists, (number of miles cycled), leads to a decrease in the number of accidents - 'safety in numbers'. This should be one of the major aims and outcomes of a cycling strategy.

7.1.2: Additional bullet point:

We would like to see further mention of the participation of all City Council planning officers, perhaps emphasising this as an additional bullet point.

Many of the previous points emphasised in this response, such as the introduction of a total 20mph speed limit are, understandably, long-term aims. Some of these may bear repeating at this point and considered for inclusion in the relevant 'Strategic outcomes'.

Appendices:

Strategic outcomes:

We feel it would be useful if the Working Party consider adding the following actions and anticipated outcomes in the relevant sections of the appendices:

- Reduction in the car school run.
- Participation of the Eco Schools Award.
- Commitment to get (15%/20%?) of school pupils cycling to school.
- Review of cycle routes and implementation of active travel plans within all school catchment areas, particularly at the planning stage.
- Commitment to allocate 10% of the City Council's transport budget to the maintenance of current cycle routes and to the introduction of new cycling facilities
- Liaison with all neighbouring local authorities to extend and join-up cycle routes into the surrounding area, particularly discouraging commuting by car and encouraging active travel.
- Commitment to restrict parking on cycling routes.

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- Commitment to survey and anticipate the use of all road and pedestrian routes for ease of cycling prior to planning route changes and upgrades.
- Commitment to introduce specific strategies such as:
 - The introduction of on-road 1.5m minimum width, painted cycle lanes on all major and inner-city roads
 - Advanced stop lines at all major road junctions
 - The introduction of dropped curbs at all points where this facilitates the ease of cycling between shared roads and shared walkways..
 - Allow more one-way street contra-flow options where these improve the speed and directness of journeys by cycle.
- The introduction of 20mph speed limits on all residential and inner-city roads.
- Liaison with bus, taxi and private hire car companies to improve their driver's awareness of cycling.

We would like to thank the Working Party for taking account of our comments and look forward to publication of the final '**Glasgow's Strategic Plan for Cycling**'.