

Active Modes Infrastructure Group (AMIG) Update

AMIG held its latest meeting in Wellington on August 17th, with some new reps from Palmerston North and New Plymouth councils present. The number of developments in walking and cycling planning/design being trialled, refined, or just discussed around the country continues apace, and it always seems surprising that we get to the end of the agenda reasonably on time. Here's some key points of interest from the latest meeting:

- Some disability groups indicated that the black-on-orange **temporary path detour signs** are difficult for sight-impaired pedestrians to see and read, especially against the 'sea of orange' on a site. It was suggested that traditional white-on-blue pedestrian symbols would stand out more. This approach was endorsed in principle by AMIG, although the finer details will need to be worked out.



- **Crossing treatments** got some attention at this meeting in various ways. The question of how to mark shared walk/cycle priority crossings is being pondered in a few cities; would green/black or green/white zebra stripes achieve the necessary effect? There was also some discussion about whether zebra crossings on side-roads without belisha poles or US-style rapid-flashing beacons could be considered in NZ; neither appears to be widely supported at the moment.

- There is some desire around the country in trying out **30km/h school speed zones**, in line with the growing interest nationally in speed management. NZTA has some concerns about national consistency and the potential for driver confusion with another school speed limit; there is also the challenge of achieving a subsequent mean traffic speed of no more than 10% over the 30k limit (in line with the *Setting Speed Limits Rule*). There is currently some work to review speed compliance at about 50 school zones in Christchurch, which will no doubt inform the ongoing debate...



- Some of you may have taken part in a recent industry survey about existing **pedestrian planning and design guidance** in NZ (some of it nearly ten years old). The feedback has now been collated and a gap analysis was presented to AMIG, as a forerunner to developing updated industry guidance. There are several "quick wins" to update existing material (e.g. referring to current NZTA processes, linking to CNG info on shared paths), but some things may require a bit more investigation (e.g. testing new monitoring technology, developing new level of service metrics).

- NZTA are developing specifications for the **design, construction & maintenance of walking/cycling facilities** on State Highways. The draft version is focusing on things like shoulder widths, surfacing treatments and maintenance standards. This will be particularly relevant for those SH sections designated as key walking/cycling routes (e.g. Heartland Rides or part of Te Araroa walking path). It is hoped that the final specs can also serve as a model for other RCAs to use for their walking/cycling networks.

- Public **e-scooter sharing** schemes look set to hit our shores very soon, in Auckland and Christchurch at least. There was some discussion around developing codes of practice, covering things like placement of unused scooters, geofencing to limit their location, and user behaviour (especially on footpaths). Watch this space...

- The tricky issue of how to deal with merges from **off-road to on-road cycle facilities** (e.g. approaching some intersections) was debated in detail. Various combinations of sharrow markings and green stripes are the favoured approach; NZTA will work on some revised layouts.



- Finally, this meeting was the last one for NZTA stalwart **Richard Bean**, who is retiring soon. Richard has played a key role in assessing numerous signs, markings and other treatments trialled over the years, and the AMIG Group has always enjoyed his gruff humour. Enjoy retirement, Richard...

If you want to know more about this and previous AMIG meetings, check out the group's webpage:

<http://rcaforum.org.nz/working-groups/active-modes-infrastructure>

The next AMIG meeting will be at the **end of November in Auckland** and will also feature a tour of some of the recent walking/cycling developments in the City of Sails. If you would like to attend, or at least be part of the ongoing email discussion group, contact co-convenors Wayne Newman (RCA Forum; wayne@cresmere.co.nz) or Gerry Dance (NZTA; Gerry.Dance@nzta.govt.nz). And even if you can't attend AMIG yourself, I am always happy to raise on your behalf any ideas or issues regarding walking or cycling treatments that you would like to see discussed.

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