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Auckland triples spend on cycling

Hollingsworth, Julia. **NZ Newswire** [Wellington] 01 July 2014.

Abstract (summary) Translate [unavailable for this document]

Auckland Council will spend three times the amount it did last year on improving cycling safety on Super City roads.

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Would-be Super City cyclists may be more likely to haul out their helmets with the council trebling its spend on improving cycle safety.

With cities around the country focusing more on bike-friendly infrastructure, Auckland Council has followed suit and boosted its cycle spend by over \$20 million on last year.

In its Annual Plan released on Tuesday, the council set aside \$32 million for footpaths and cycling - up from the \$10m the council has spent for each of the last three years.

The plan, which was passed on Thursday last week, also put aside \$2m of its \$825m total transport spend for a Beach Road Cycle Route.

Cycling advocates Generation Zero are heralding the decision as a move in the right direction and say the budget increase will allow for increased cycling safety.

"This is a major win for Auckland and everyday people who would like to cycle but don't feel safe with the current infrastructure," spokesman Dr Sudhvir Singh said.

Generation Zero set in motion a campaign to highlight what they called Auckland's "shameful cycling budget" after the council set aside only \$10m for cycling again in its draft plan.

Over 3000 people signed Generation Zero's petition in January to increase the speed of construction and amount of money invested in cycling infrastructure.

Wellington City Council also tripled its cycle budget for this year, and councillor Andy Foster says all of New Zealand's major cities are upping their game for cyclists.

"All the cities are seeing that cycling is an important part of a transport network," he told NZ Newswire.

Wellington City Council increased its budget from \$1.8m last year to \$4.3m this year, a massive increase on the \$70,000 it spent on cycling in 2008, Mr Foster said.

Only 2.7 per cent of Wellingtonians cycle to work but the number has doubled since 2006 and he expects it to keep climbing as new infrastructure makes cycling safer.

"The better infrastructure you create, the more people will go, 'I'll cycle now', because they feel safer," he said.

Christchurch City Council has set aside \$70m creating a network of suburban cycleways.

Credit: Julia Hollingsworth; NZN

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Indexing (details)

Cite

Subject	Infrastructure; Budgets; Councils
Title	Auckland triples spend on cycling
Author	Hollingsworth, Julia
Publication title	NZ Newswire
Publication year	2014
Publication date	Jul 1, 2014
Year	2014
Dateline	AUCKLAND
Publisher	Australian Associated Press Pty Limited
Place of publication	Wellington

Country of publication	Australia
Publication subject	General Interest Periodicals--New Zealand
Source type	Newspapers
Language of publication	English
Document type	news
ProQuest document ID	1541634019
Document URL	http://ezproxy.aut.ac.nz/login? url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/1541634019?accountid=8440
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Last updated	2014-07-01
Database	2 databases View list

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