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Introducing Bus Priority in Christchurch

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Outline

- Introduction
- Proposed routes
- Community engagement
- Traffic engineering approach
- Bus boarder trial
- Lessons learned



Purpose

- For complex project, demonstrate relationship between:
 - community engagement approach and
 - traffic engineering
- Discuss lessons learned from introducing bus priority on a large scale

Existing bus priority

- Policy documents ask for bus priority
 - 2003 Christchurch Public Passenger Transport Strategy Update
 - 2004 Citywide Public Transport Priority Plan
- Few isolated bus priority measures in and near city centre
- No enforcement and little compliance



Existing bus priority



Proposed routes

- 3 routes proposed by Christchurch City Council (CCC)
 - Queenspark – ViaStrada
 - Colombo south – Beca
 - Papanui / Main North – Maunsell
- Excludes CBD
- Plus NZTA projects on state highways



Proposed routes map



Community engagement approach

- Aim: address and resolve stakeholder issues before council decision
- 1990s failure of introducing bus priority on Riccarton Road
- Decision to put considerable effort into marketing, consultation and communication
- 60 seminars and workshops

Community engagement cont'd

- Resolve with stakeholders whatever is possible
- Councillors encouraged to get involved to feel and be part of process
- Report outlining all marketing, consultation and communication
- Ownership by asking councillors to identify deficiencies so that they can be rectified

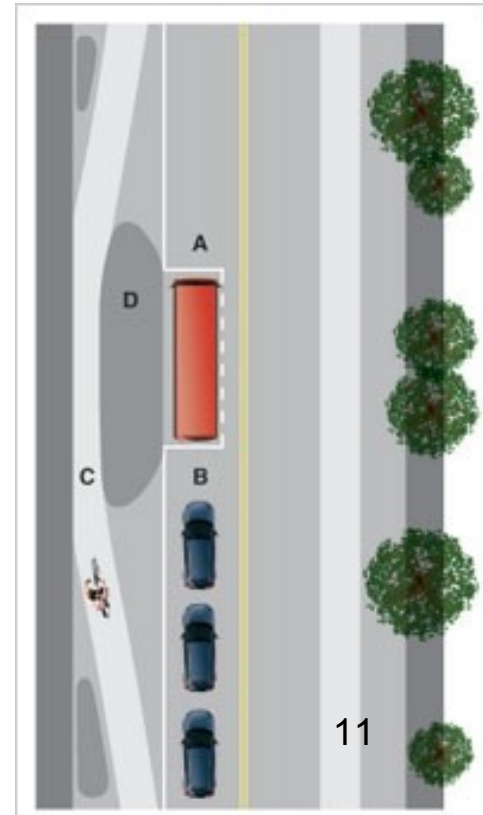
Traffic engineering approach

- One consultancy per corridor
- 3 project control groups (for technical, communications, and key end users)
- Technical meetings involving all consultants
 - Achieve consistency across corridors
 - Enable knowledge transfer
 - Encourage ongoing peer review



Bus boarder trial

- Definition – bus stop at kerb extension with bus stopping in traffic lane
- 22,000 veh/day on 2-lane road with up to 2 km queues
- Cars stop behind stopped bus
- 2 bus boarders implemented
 - In same direction



Reasons for bus boarder trial

- Increase public awareness
 - Very effective and economical marketing
 - Expected controversy
- Create an option other than ‘bus lane’ or ‘do nothing’
 - Another tool in the box
- Technical assessment of the effects of bus boarder on two lane roads
 - Capacity and parking loss

First trial

- Ineffective
 - Cars overtaking bus on flush median



Second trial

- Effective
 - Cars stopping behind stopped bus
 - Expectation that crash rate reduces compared to 'normal' bus stop
- Differences:
 - No flush median
 - Traffic lane width
 - Cycle lane placement



Community reaction

- Strong community reaction against bus boarders
- All local media became involved
- Communications team had no trouble getting media interest for bus priority
 - ‘Trojan horse’



Community reaction cont'd

- Increasing level of understanding and acceptance of bus priority over time
- Community started rallying for bus lanes
 - Including Hills Road retailers!
 - Remarkable because bus lanes require significantly more parking removal

Council decision

- All 3 routes approved for implementation
 - 2 routes unanimous support
 - Queenspark route 1 vote against
- Bus boarders removed (July 08) and to be replaced with (part time) bus lanes

Lessons learned

- Technical exchange most useful
- Key to success was getting public's and councillors' understanding & trust
- Controversial bus boarder trial integral component for community engagement
- Enforcement vital
- Follow-up:
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