Director
Paul Durdin

Welcome to the first edition of Street Smart for 2015. Transport issues are again in the media spotlight – whether it’s how the super city funds its land transport programme, or safety issues surrounding visiting drivers, everyone has an opinion. The diverse range and nature of suggestions shared by public commentators highlight one thing: that we are dealing with complex issues and careful consideration is required to ensure ‘indirect’ effects do not simply shift the problem to another part of society.

The team at Abley loves dealing with complex problems and we’re well known for our involvement in transport research, road safety and the integration of land use and transport planning. Perhaps less commonly associated with the team is our involvement in the delivery of projects. This edition of Street Smart highlights a broad range of projects at various stages of delivery.

Keeping fresh and on top of the latest technologies is something we take huge pride in. As part of our commitment to keep on the cutting edge, take a look at our newly published website www.abley.com and let me know what you think.

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Have You Ever Crossed a Road?

Until now practitioners in Australasia have had no consistent guidelines for selecting pedestrian crossing facilities. These guidelines are necessary as they contribute to identifying the right kind of pedestrian crossing facility, which can reduce delays to both pedestrians and vehicles, improve safety outcomes, and increase the walkability of the pedestrian environment.

Austroads commissioned Abley to develop a web-based tool applicable to both Australia and New Zealand that would provide a consistent standard for analysis and account for pedestrian perceptions of walkability.

The tool has been developed to be responsive, supported on all modern web browsers and can be accessed simultaneously by a large number of users. The online tool assesses the suitability of different types of pedestrian crossing facilities according to the physical and operational parameters of a site and its safety performance. For each potentially feasible option, the tool then evaluates pedestrian and vehicle delay, safe sight distances, pedestrian level of service and, using default economic parameters developed for each Australian jurisdiction and New Zealand, calculates a benefit cost ratio.

Australasian engineers, planners, policy makers and researchers now have access to a best practice tool for the selection of pedestrian crossing facilities. The tool and associated research report can be accessed through Austroads at http://bit.ly/austroads_pedestrian

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**Iconic Footbridge gets Funding Approval**

A funding injection from the NZ Transport Agency means a proposed footbridge across the Tekapo River inlet linking the Church of the Good Shepherd with the Lake Tekapo village centre will proceed as planned.

Funding was approved following the submission of a business case prepared by Abley for the Mackenzie District Council that demonstrated the project’s need, benefit and viability from a road safety and tourism perspective.

The footbridge is designed to remove the need for pedestrians to cross State Highway 8 twice when walking between the Church of the Good Shepherd and the Lake Tekapo village centre – or four times for a return trip. Abley prepared evidence that demonstrated the footbridge would improve safety and provide wider benefits of improved access to the Lake Tekapo Walkway and other walkways and cycleways in the area. As a result, the project was assessed as having a profile that qualified for funding from the National Land Transport Programme.

Construction of the footbridge is underway with the piers already implemented and beams and trusses currently being constructed in a Christchurch workshop. The footbridge will become a highly popular tourist attraction along the Lake Tekapo walkway, providing a safe point for people to view and photograph the Church of the Good Shepherd, lake and mountains.

More information about the footbridge can be found here: http://www.laketekapofootbridge.co.nz/

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**Shared Space Open to Enjoy**

In our Spring 2013 newsletter our feature project was a shared space that was being planned for Kaiapoi, the focus of the article being the collaborative approach design process.

The shared space and the new library are now up and running and Kaiapoi have a new public space to be proud of!

The building was officially opened on Saturday 17 January 2015 and has been named the Ruatanuiha Kaiapoi Civic Centre. This is a project Abley is proud to have been involved with.

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A new signal controlled intersection, modelled and designed by Abley for Waimakariri District Council is now at an advanced stage of construction.

The intersection, located at the eastern edge of Rangiora Town Centre (RTC), has undergone many transformations over the years. It is a high-profile site that includes the Rangiora War Memorial Cenotaph and accommodates the main north-south route through Rangiora in an offset arrangement. The optimal solution for the intersection has been subject of considerable public debate.

The improvements currently under construction are an integral part of a series of town centre improvements to local infrastructure identified as part of the RTC 2020 strategy to facilitate growth and enhance access to the town centre. A key feature of the scheme is the realignment and signalisation of the north-south corridor and the enablement of High Street to revert to two-way operation.

Abley has been involved in the project from concept design right through to detailed design, including every aspect of the traffic signal specifications from ducting and loop detectors to signal poles and lantern displays. Abley has modelled and developed a signal phasing strategy that assists both right turning traffic and crossing pedestrians whilst minimising delays. The project will significantly improve traffic circulation and safety for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles in and around the revitalised town centre, and also better integrate the Cenotaph with public space.

Further information about the project can be found at http://www.waimakariri.govt.nz/your_council/district-development/rangiora-town-centre/red-lion-corner.aspx

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Staff Profile: Courtney Groundwater

MSC BE(HONS) GIPENZ
Senior Transportation Engineer
Courtney is a Senior Transportation Engineer who joined Abley in early 2010 and has recently transferred to the Abley Auckland office. In 2012/13 Courtney travelled to the United Kingdom to complete a Masters Degree in Transport Planning and Engineering at the University of Leeds. Courtney’s Masters dissertation focused on a cost benefit analysis and was entitled “Valuing Citywide Walking and Cycling in Christchurch”.

Courtney leads the Business Cases and Funding service area within Abley with a particular focus on road safety and active transport business cases. She has recently assisted several local road controlling authorities to successfully obtain National Land Transport Fund funding for projects including:

- Mackenzie District Council’s Lake Tekapo Footbridge which connects the Village Centre to the Church of the Good Shepherd (see article in this newsletter). Construction of the bridge is currently underway.
- Auckland Transport’s Safer Communities Programme (2014/15). Information was compiled to support the funding application showing how the programme meets the NZ Transport Agency’s funding criteria. This was part of a larger project that also involved the development of a proactive prioritisation process to further improve how investment in the safer communities programme is targeted.
- Selwyn District Council’s Lincoln Rolleston Cycleway. Courtney oversaw the demand analysis and benefit cost ratio calculations for this project. The demand analysis considered the extent to which commute and other utility trips were likely to be made along the route and how demand was expected to increase with the growth of the district.

Courtney also has a wide range of other transport experience including streetscape and scheme design, integrated transport assessments for resource consent applications, planning for walking and cycling and parking demand management.

Courtney grew up in South Canterbury near a small town named Pleasant Point before moving to Christchurch to study civil engineering at the University of Canterbury. In her spare time Courtney attends pottery classes where she achieves varying levels of success in creating useable dinnerware. She also has a passion for travel and particularly enjoys observing how problems are solved differently across cultures.

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Many successful businesses have one thing in common – they deliver a great customer experience.

For Foodstuffs, customer experience starts and ends at the boundary of the site, not just at the supermarket door.

Abley has been working alongside Foodstuffs for the past five years helping to improve the customer experience between the road and supermarket. While some fundamental rules apply in the design of functional parking areas, the devil is in the detail, and each site needs to be considered on its merits. Understanding the movement patterns of people to, from and within the site, as well as the mode of transport they’re likely to be using is essential. This requires an understanding of not only the supermarket’s catchment, but also the nature of the surrounding transport environment, proximity to public transport and the uptake of cycling.

A common mistake in the design of parking areas is the exclusive focus on accommodating vehicles. At some stage of every journey all customers will be a pedestrian. Therefore providing for the safe and convenient movement of people moving about the site on-foot is an absolutely critical consideration. In a supermarket context, many customers will be pushing trolleys laden with groceries, thus placing greater importance on the need for high quality walking facilities. When all the above is combined with the need to accommodate delivery vehicles, cycle parking, landscaping and movement, the design of parking areas can become a more complex task than you think.

If you want to give your customers a great experience make sure you don’t overlook the design of the parking area.

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