Are our cycleways created equal?

Ōtautahi Christchurch has completed over 60km of their 100km major cycleway programme, with 8 of the 13 cycleways either completed or partially completed.

The designs of these cycleways vary, not only from one cycleway to the next, but also along the routes of each cycleway. With so much of the city’s network now completed, are we looking at these local cycleways to understand what is great and what is not so great for the users - people who cycle.

Do we know if the type of cycleway we’re building is impacting the uptake of people choosing to bike?

In 2022, I did a research project looking at the impact of cycleway design on usage. The research involved a survey which attracted over 400 responses. As well as looking at cycleway features that increased and decreased cyclists’ enjoyment while riding, the survey also looked at what type of cycleway is preferred and how safe people feel riding on a cycleway and a road.

In Ōtautahi Christchurch political debate on cycleways continues to dominate headlines with some who have been vocal in opposition in the past, now looking at shared paths as the solution to maintain car par or traffic movements and provide a safe space for people biking.

Is this type of compromise a good outcome for people who bike?

The presentation will answer the question, are our cycleways created equal? It will share the key take-aways from the cycleways built in Ōtautahi Christchurch – what works well and what’s not so great.

Finally, it will answer the question, should shared paths become the solution to retain car parks, traffic movement and ensure a cycleway design is supported by the politicians who are normally against them?