



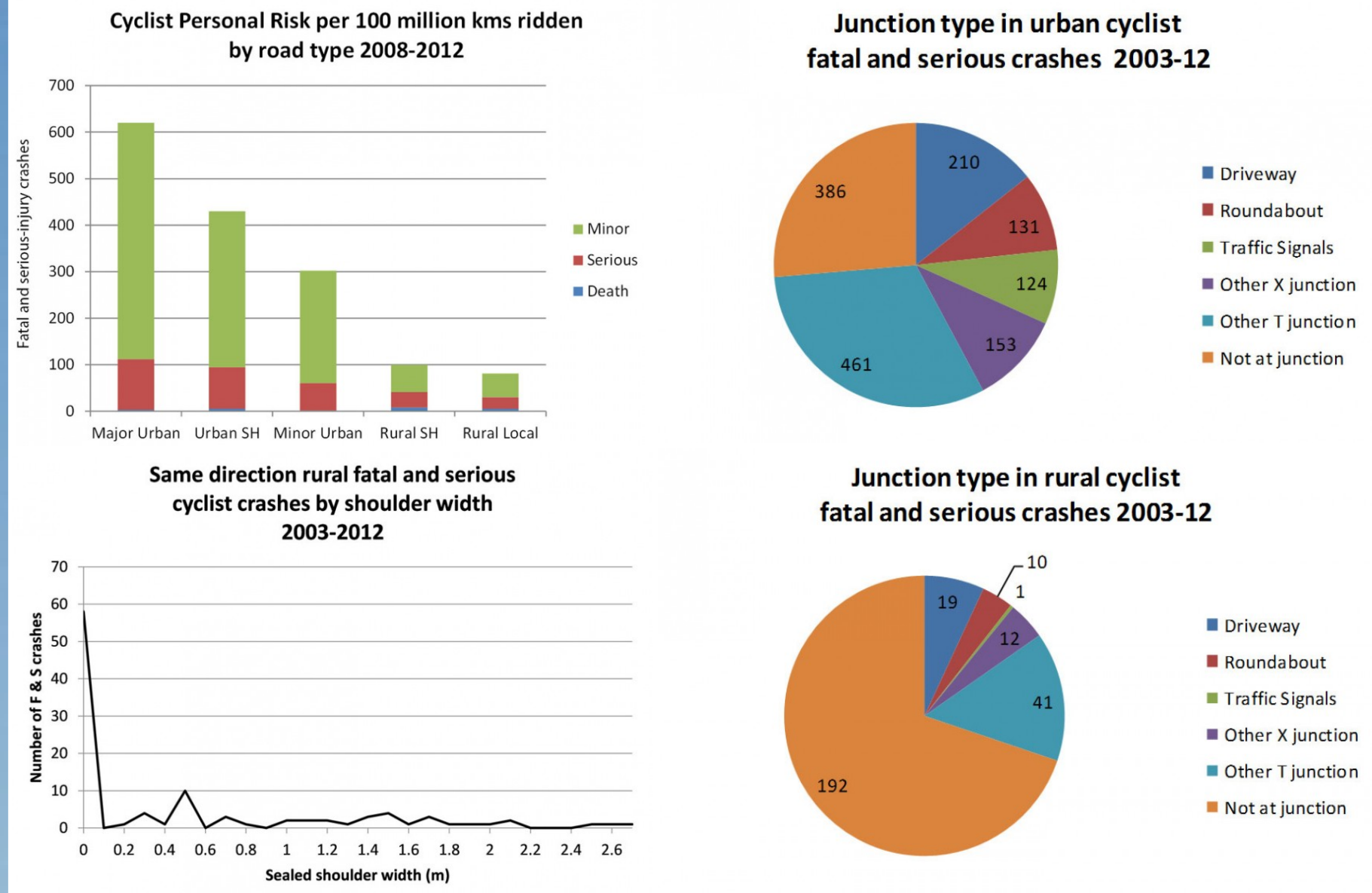
Why don't more people cycle?

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Safety (& perceptions)

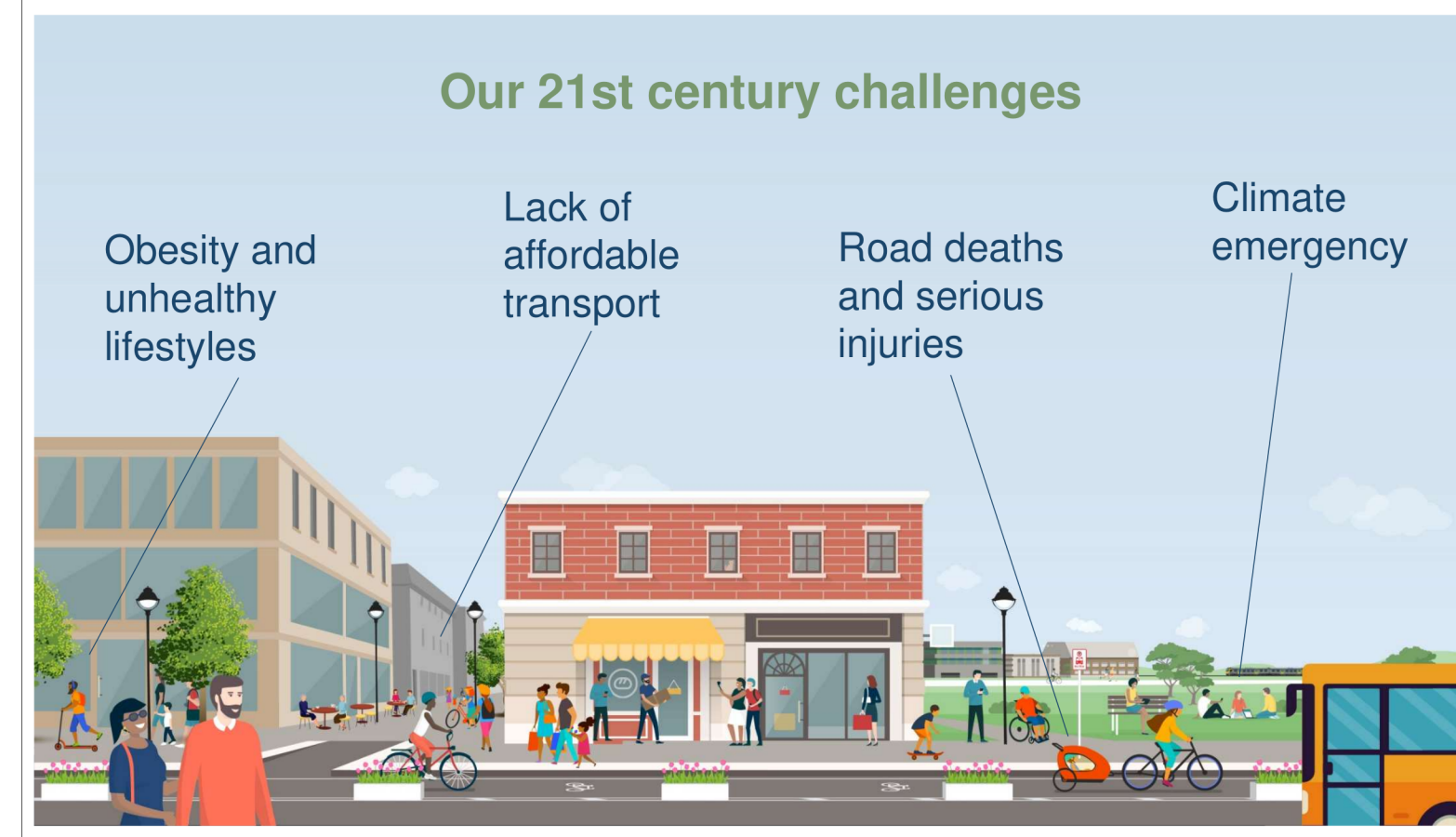
There is risk in cycling, but the perception of that risk is not always accurate. For example, many people are more concerned about the risks of riding on rural roads, but the risks in urban environments are greater, more varied and less easily managed. However, rural crashes are more likely to be serious or fatal due to higher speeds. Personal risks average at the level of 1-6 incidents per million kilometres travelled, so not as high as people fear. Careful and defensive riding can make their risk lower.



Graphs from "Safety Issues for People that Cycle" NZTA Waka Kotahi website

Why we should cycle

It's not the intent of this poster to look in detail at why we should cycle. Community? Amenity? Health? Social responsibility? Here are a few more clues!

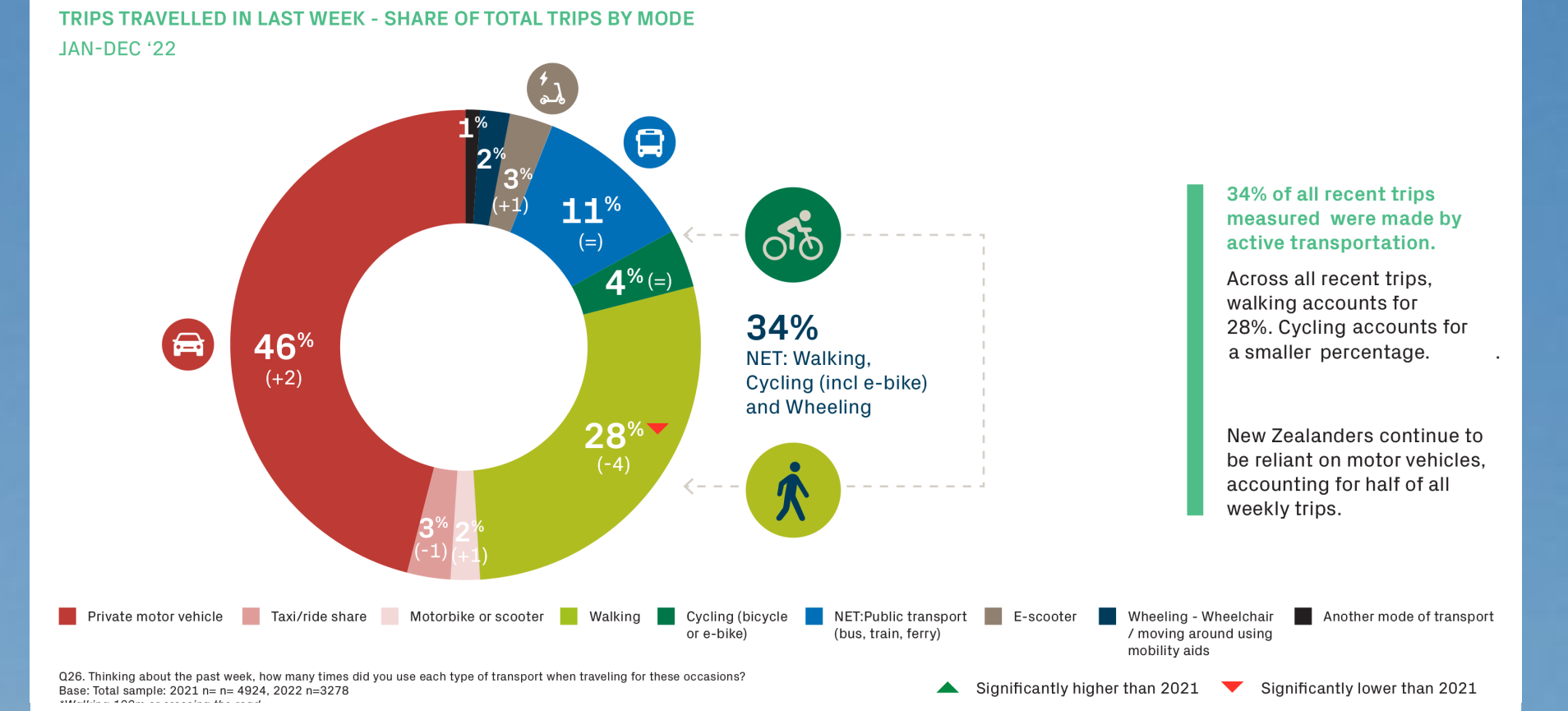


From Viastrada planning & design for cycling course notes

Attitudes to cycling

At times cycling has been marginalised as being only for children or recreation, leading to roads, transport infrastructure and cities designed more exclusively for motor vehicles. Attitudes to cycling are changing but **the biggest barrier to cycling is not feeling safe because of how people drive**. Maybe we have over emphasised the dangers. Despite this, cycling now accounts for 4% of all urban trips nationwide, and a quarter of all people in our urban areas cycled at least once a year.

Cycling and walking account for almost a third of all trips in a week.



Graphic and text adapted from "Attitudes to Cycling and Walking: Final Report 2022" NZTA Waka Kotahi

Not all cyclists are the same!

The four types of cyclists, originally from Portland USA, have been adopted by NZTA Waka Kotahi



They will have different expectations when they travel and can tolerate different "levels of traffic stress" on roads or paths, defined by characteristics of the road and the space allocated for bicycles.

LEVEL OF TRAFFIC STRESS

Level of traffic stress (LTS) is a way to evaluate the stress a bike rider will experience while riding on the road. It is used to categorize roads by the types of roads above who will be willing to use them based on:



- LTS 1** Most children can feel safe riding on these streets.
- LTS 2** The mainstream "interested but concerned" adult population will feel safe riding on these streets.
- LTS 3** Streets that are acceptable to "enthused and confident" riders who still prefer having their own dedicated space.
- LTS 4** High-stress streets with high speed limits, multiple travel lanes, limited or non-existent bikeways, and long intersection crossing distances.

With a bit of a push

A list of likely reasons that people don't cycle comes from this graphic on the Aotearoa Bike Challenge website (left). Each icon linked to advice on overcoming it. The largest barriers to cycling centre around safety and logistics. The ABC challenge uses positive encouragement and a sense of competition between workplaces to increase cycling during the month of February. It has produced some impressive results (right).

What's keeping you from riding?



AOTEAROA BIKE CHALLENGE 2024

- 2,966 WORKPLACES
- 24,167 RIDERS
- 3,582 NEW RIDERS
- 4,627,643 KM
- 333,269 TRIPS
- 275,057 KG CO2

NEW ZEALAND ALL-TIME STATS

- 7,063 WORKPLACES
- 115,307 PEOPLE
- 33,625 NEW RIDERS
- 133,215,617 KM
- 7,121,118 RIDES
- 4,514,655 KG CO2

Graphics from <https://www.lovetoride.net/nz>

Our road rules

- Our road rules are clear and treat cycles as other vehicles, but many drivers of motor vehicles have a view that "might is usually right".
- Understanding of the rules is variable.
- On shared paths the rules are less clear, but rely on people being considerate of others users.
- There are some ambiguities around some shared path rules, and the use of footpaths by cycles. Some of the legislation changes to address these are currently stalled with government.
- Speeding, impaired or distracted drivers are a threat to cycling safety.

How I deal with this

- I ride – any day on the bike is a good day!
- When I'm riding alone – I chose my routes to suit the trip – sometimes I like being a fast "strong and fearless" rider and will ride roads that many cyclists dislike. At other times I enjoy choosing routes with lower "traffic stress". I have a dozen different routes to get 10km from the Christchurch CBD to my home
- I think I have a good safety radar and experience to identify hazards and respond to them. I think of it as "making" my own safety. A big part of that is being aware of traffic ahead AND behind me, I always use a rear vision mirror and dress to be visible.
- Often when I'm riding with a group, I'll be more conservative with route choice, respecting that other riders appreciate lower levels of traffic stress. I'm also aware that group riding has its own hazards.
- I advocate for better infrastructure, and encourage people to ride more.

Our infrastructure

- Where there is little competition for road space, such as on rural roads and quiet streets, cycles can use the same space as other vehicles. It's only when traffic volumes increase and competition for space are higher that separated or protected space for cycles is needed.
- Cycle specific options are being added to existing roads, or as part of new roading projects. NZTA Waka Kotahi has good guidance available for best practice. To be well used, cycle routes should be coherent, direct, safe, attractive and comfortable.
- We know some types of road infrastructure are more dangerous to vulnerable road users, and so options for these users are needed. For example a multi-lane roundabout is not a safe place to cycle through, so a ring-path with safe crossings of each approach road should be added.
- We've seen the effect the 2015 Health and Safety in the Workplace Act has had on temporary traffic management and safety at road work sites. The Act extends beyond worksites. Perhaps we should be asking all Road Controlling Authorities what their safety plan on each of their roads is! We should draw attention to where they are providing roads with known and avoidable dangers.

I am a member of Cycling Action Network and Spokes Canterbury, but the views expressed in this poster are my own.

