
DRAFT WALKING AND CYCLING POLICIES

1. Purpose of Report

This report seeks Committee agreement to consult on the draft Walking and Cycling Policies. The policies provide a framework for the continued improvement of the walking and cycling environments in Wellington City.

2. Executive Summary

The draft Walking and Cycling Policies are primary elements of the Travel Demand Management Plan developed as part of the 2006 Transport Strategy and are key projects to encourage physical activity under the Regional Recreation Strategy. The draft Walking and Cycling Policies seek to establish a framework for initiatives to improve the walking and cycling environment in Wellington City.

The draft Walking Policy seeks to promote 'walking for a purpose', either as a method of commuting or as a substitute for short trips taken by car. The intent of the draft Cycling Policy is to provide a safer environment for cyclists and to reduce the perception of road danger.

The adoption of the Walking and Cycling Policies will allow the Council to seek supportive financing from funding agencies, such as Land Transport New Zealand. The Walking and Cycling Policies will inform the infrastructure investment programme and other specific projects and initiatives.

3. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

- 1. Receive the information.*
- 2. Agree to consult on the draft Walking and Cycling Policies (attached as Appendix 1 and 2).*
- 3. Delegate to the Portfolio Leader for Urban Development and Transport the authority to approve minor editorial changes to the draft Walking and Cycling Policies as required, prior to consultation.*

4. *Note that the Walking and Cycling Policies will be consulted on in conjunction with the Draft Track Recreation Activities Policy as decided by the Committee on 15 May 2008.*

4. Background

The Wellington City Council Transport Strategy (2006) identified the development of a Travel Demand Management (TDM) plan as a key priority for the next 3 years. The Walking and Cycling Policies are primary elements of the TDM plan. In addition, these policies have been identified by Council as primary projects to promote physical activity under the Regional Recreation Strategy. The Regional Physical Activity Plan '*At the Heart*' has also identified the need for partners to adopt active transport policies.

Wellington is a great city for walking. In particular, the compact nature of the central city means that residents and visitors alike are able to access most activities relatively easily without the need to make a vehicle trip. The Council's efforts to facilitate walking as a commuting choice result in the following positive outcomes:

- Improved health and recreation outcomes
- Reduced congestion, which helps improve productivity and economic activity
- Reduced transport related greenhouse gas emissions
- Reduced transport related particulate emissions (relates to air quality).

For most people, walking is an enjoyable, free and accessible activity and a necessary part of their everyday journeys, whether that be getting to work or for recreation. Wellington experiences a high level of pedestrian activity for both the journey to work and also for movement within the city. Wellington has the highest number of commuter walking trips by population in New Zealand¹ and at nearly 20% of all commuter trips, is one of the highest in the developed world.

Cycling to work in Wellington City has increased steadily over the last 20 years. This is a result of the intensification of Wellington's inner city and surrounding suburbs with more people living closer to their work, making cycling a viable transport alternative.

Cycling is also a commuting choice which, like walking, is non-polluting, quiet and has minimal effect on the built and natural environment. It is an accessible, convenient and environmentally-friendly means of making journeys around the city.

The draft Walking and Cycling Policies seek to establish a framework for initiatives to improve the walking and cycling environment in Wellington. The

¹ Statistics New Zealand, Journey to work mode share 2006

adoption of the Walking and Cycling Policies will allow the Council to seek supportive funding from Land Transport New Zealand.

5. Discussion

5.1 Draft Walking Policy

What will the Draft Walking Policy do?

The draft Walking Policy seeks to promote 'walking for a purpose', such as the trip to work, and to encourage walking trips that would otherwise be taken by car. The draft policy seeks to increase the number of short trips made by people who walk to work or study, either as a single journey, or as part of a journey. This includes increasing walking activity in suburban centres by encouraging people to walk to their local services rather than taking the car.

The draft Walking Policy is aimed at all walkers, whether they have special mobility requirements, have limited experience (e.g. children) or are utility walkers (e.g. commuters). The Walking Policy seeks to ensure that all walkers have a safe and pleasant walking experience, and aims to actively encourage walking as the foremost mode of transportation in the city.

The Walking Policy also seeks to encourage walking to help ease pressure on the city's transport system and to identify a prioritised network of pedestrian connections in the city and suburbs for protection and enhancement. The Policy promotes connectivity between roads and the open space access network.

The key objectives of the draft Walking Policy are as follows:

1. To promote the benefits of walking and encourage more people to walk
2. To improve pedestrian safety throughout the city
3. To improve the experience of those walking through or about the Central Area
4. To improve the experience of those walking to and from public transport stops
5. To increase the number of commuter trips taken by foot to and from the Central Area
6. To increase the number of short walking trips to and from Suburban Centres
7. To increase the number of short walking trips to and from Educational Centres

The objectives will be measured via targets and actions set out in the draft Walking Policy.

What is the key focus for the draft Walking Policy?

Wellington is already a walking city yet work is required to understand the 'pedestrian profile' and improve safety. By establishing and implementing measures to encourage more walking, the draft Walking Policy will help to

strategically target groups who are both willing and able to change their travel habits to include walking in their everyday trips.

One of the key areas of the draft Walking Policy is road safety and the potential conflict between vehicles and pedestrians. The draft Walking Policy considers pedestrian priority at traffic signals while recognising that the signals need to provide for all road users. The tools to enhance pedestrian safety include: safe crossing locations in combination with slow speed environments; crossing facilities, traffic calming and speed limits less than 50km/hr.

The draft Walking Policy also considers:

- Physical barriers
Insufficient or inadequate crossings, cluttered street furniture and litter and limited pedestrian capacity related to footpath width.
- Personal safety
Well maintained and lit streets to facilitate pedestrian confidence.
- Education
Financial benefits of walking (reduced petrol and parking costs), environmental benefits of walking, journey planner, school walking plans and health benefits of walking

5.2 Draft Cycling Policy

What will the draft Cycling Policy do?

The primary focus of the draft Cycling Policy is to make cycling in Wellington a safe and convenient travel mode. The draft policy does not actively seek to increase cycling numbers until the cycling environment is improved. The focus is on areas where existing cycling provision is disjointed or does not allow access to key destinations.

It is considered that infrastructural improvements need to be made so that cyclists are safe on Wellington's roads and that crash numbers are reduced. The safety and convenience focus will improve the cycling environment over time.

The cycling environment needs to be safer and more convenient in Wellington. Cyclists are more likely to be involved in a road crash than a vehicle occupant, pedestrian or bus passenger. Wellington's cycling crash numbers are amongst the highest in the country with cyclists accounting for 14% of all road casualties. The intent of the Cycling Policy is to reduce cycling casualties by making cycling safer and more convenient. When the cycling environment is improved targets can be set to increase cyclist numbers.

The key objectives of the draft Cycling Policy are as follows:

1. To improve cycle safety throughout Wellington
2. To improve convenience of cycling in Wellington
3. To improve the experience of cycle trips to and from the Central Area

4. To improve the experience of cycling trips made to and from Suburban Centres
5. To improve the experience of cycling trips made to and from educational centres
6. To improve the experience of cycling trips made for recreation

The objectives will be measured via targets and actions set out in the draft Cycling Policy.

What is the key focus for the draft Cycling Policy?

The Cycling Policy aims to provide a safer environment for cyclists and reduce the perception of road danger. This will be achieved by a variety of measures including: road improvements to increase cycle friendliness and make cyclists more conspicuous; education and training of road users.

One of the main challenges is to reduce motorists' speeds in key locations to reduce the conflict between motorists and cyclists. Using a combination of lower speed limits and traffic calming in key areas - these include the central city, Golden Mile and residential suburban streets. Other areas where "cycle friendly" improvements can be made is through the design and use of speed humps, platforms and cushions.

The draft Cycling Policy seeks to provide good-quality, continuous, cycle-friendly routes along each of the main transport routes to the city, together with a network of links to each of the suburban centres and access to recreational spaces. Bus lanes and carriageway cycle lanes will be promoted as cycle routes.

Council is undertaking a significant programme of bus priority measures over the next 10 years. The design of new bus routes will cater for the needs of cyclists. This includes the progressive rollout of bus priority measures through the Golden Mile, arterial routes and suburban centres (as proposed in the Draft Ngauranga to Airport Corridor Plan) and presents an opportunity to create an extensive network of shared bus/cycle lanes.

The draft Cycling Policy also considers:

- Catering for cyclists at intersections
Advanced stop boxes, head start special cycle signals.
- Provision of secure bicycle parks
Lockers, shower and changing facilities at key destinations.
- Education
Journey planner, cycle friendly routes and links to recreational areas and promotion of environmental, financial and health benefits.

5.3 Implementation of Walking and Cycling Policies

The implementation programme for the draft Walking and Cycling Policies identifies specific projects and programmes (covering the full range of

engineering, education, enforcement and encouragement activities) with cost estimates and timeframes.

The implementation programmes will be included within the LTCCP and land transport programmes and may be subject to change in accordance with technical, political and financial initiatives.

6. Links to Other Policies

The draft Walking and Cycling Policies take an overarching view of Wellington's walking and cycling environments and look at how Council can make these environments safer and more convenient. Because walking and cycling also play a very important recreational role in the lives of many Wellingtonians, the policies have significant cross over with a number of other Council policies and programmes. These include:

- The Urban Development Strategy
- The Open Spaces Access Plan
- Draft Track Recreation Activity Policy
- SaferRoads/Neighbourhood Accessibility Plans
- Bus Priority Programme
- Footpath Management Plan
- Town Centre and Local Area Plans
- Central City Framework (to be developed)
- Climate Change Action Plan.

It is intended that the Walking and Cycling Policies will be supported by these Plans and implemented through Council's infrastructure and facility investment programme.

7. Proposed Consultation

It is proposed to publicly consult on the draft Walking and Cycling Policies over a four week period in August. This will happen in conjunction with the Draft Track Recreation Activities Policy which focuses on the recreational use of tracks within the open space network. This will avoid duplication and ensure the appropriate connections can be made between these projects. Consultation for the draft Walking and Cycling Policies will be focused on key stakeholder groups, including walking and cycling support and advocacy groups and other community groups.

A detailed consultation plan will be produced in conjunction with external communications.

Consultation techniques will include:

- Press releases
- Website information

- Mail out of draft Policies to key stakeholder groups
- Meetings with individual stakeholder groups
- Submissions (to be available in hard copy and online)
- Oral submissions prior to re-drafting of final versions

The results of the public consultation and recommended final versions of the Policies will be reported back to Committee by November 2008. This will also allow for potential projects to be included in the LTCCP and the National Land Transport Programme (NLTP).

8. Conclusion

This report presents to Committee the draft Walking and Cycling Policies for consultation. The draft policies outline a structured approach to the management of the walking and cycling environments in Wellington. The results of this consultation and the final policies will inform the infrastructure investment programme, District Plan and other specific projects and initiatives.

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Supporting Information

1) Strategic Fit / Strategic Outcome

The draft policies implement Council's strategic direction under the Transport Strategy 2006, the Social and Recreation Strategy 2006 and the Urban Development Strategy 2006. The draft policies also meet the strategic direction of the Regional Recreation Strategy's *'At the Heart'* Regional Physical Activity Plan

2) LTCCP/Annual Plan reference and long term financial impact

There maybe future implications for capital and operational expenditure, however these are not able to be specified at this stage.

3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations

There are no specific Treaty of Waitangi implications.

4) Decision-Making

This is not a significant decision under the Local Government Act.

5) Consultation

a) General Consultation

Extensive consultation is proposed with key stakeholders and the wider community. Approval is sought for public consultation on the draft Policies.

b) Consultation with Maori

Maori will be consulted as part of the proposed consultation process.

6) Legal Implications

There are no legal implications at this stage.

7) Consistency with existing policy

This report is consistent with other Council policy including the Open Spaces Access Plan, the Draft Track Recreation Activity Policy, SaferRoads/Neighbourhood Accessibility Plans, the Bus Priority Programme, the Footpath Management Plan, the Central City Framework (to be developed) and the Climate Change Action Plan.

Appendix One

**Wellington City Council
Walking Policy
June 2008**

Appendix Two

Wellington City Council Cycling Policy June 2008