

SUBMISSION

On the Draft Regional Walking Plan

May 2008

1. Introduction

Wellington City Council (WCC) welcomes the opportunity to make a submission on the draft Regional Walking Plan (RWP). This, in conjunction with the upcoming draft of the regional cycling plan, are critical documents for the region's response to climate change and sustainable transport, and the Council commends the work that has been carried out by Greater Wellington Regional Council (GW).

2. Background

Wellington City Council is currently developing its own Walking Plan for the city, which is expected to be adopted in June this year.

Our overall goal is for Wellington's transport network to support the economic, social, cultural and environmental aspirations of its citizens. This will mean ensuring the state highway system and arterial roads provide efficient access to the city and to key transport hubs, while also encouraging public transport and walking as ways to get around the areas of high-density development. It will also mean promoting developments that increase the energy efficiency of the transport system. The city's Transport Strategy (2006) contains the following objectives:

2.1 More liveable: Wellington will be easy to get around, pedestrian-friendly and offer quality transport choices.

Good access from homes to shops and services, places of work and recreational destinations is essential in any successful city economy. Ensuring the city is more liveable will mean:

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- priority walking routes to and within the central city

2.3 More sustainable: Wellington will minimise the environmental effects of transport and support the environmental strategy.

..... Environmental sustainability in transport will mean:

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- continuing modal shift of commuter traffic to public transport, walking and cycling.

2.4 (a) Better connected: Wellington will have a highly interconnected public transport, road and street system that supports its urban development and social strategies.

This will be reliant on recognising the roles of all types of transport (car, bus, train, cable car, ferries, taxis, commercial vehicles, walking and cycling). Ensuring the city is better connected will mean:

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- a well-connected system of local roads and streets, footpaths and cycleways

2.4 (b) Healthier: Wellington's transport system will contribute to healthy communities and social interaction.

People's transport choices can have a significant effect on health. Lower levels of activity contribute to heart disease, diabetes and other diseases. There are also links with

respiratory diseases resulting from vehicle emissions. Improving health outcomes will mean:

- promoting walking and cycling and reduced dependence on motor vehicles for short trips through the travel demand management programme

2.5 Safer: Wellington will seek to improve the safety and security of its citizens as they move around the city and region.

.... Transport safety and personal security will be enhanced by:

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- programmes aimed at pedestrian security

The WCC Walking Plan will also form a key part of the actions arising from the draft Ngauranga-Airport Corridor Plan recently approved for consultation.

3. Comments

3.1 General

Wellington City Council is generally supportive of the main thrust of the draft Walking Plan which aligns well with its Transport Strategy and the intentions behind its own proposed city Walking Plan. Council officers have participated in the working group which assisted Greater Wellington in developing the draft Plan.

The Council does, however, wish to make some comments and suggestions regarding the Plan as follows.

3.2 Strategic Alignment

The RLTS 2016 targets of particular relevance to the draft Walking Plan are:

- Active modes account for at least 15% of region wide journey to work trips
- Nearly all urban road frontages are served by a footpath
- Fewer than 100 pedestrians injured in the region per annum.

The Regional Walking Plan and Cycling Plan Review – Background Issues Paper, published by Greater Wellington Regional Council contains the following charts:

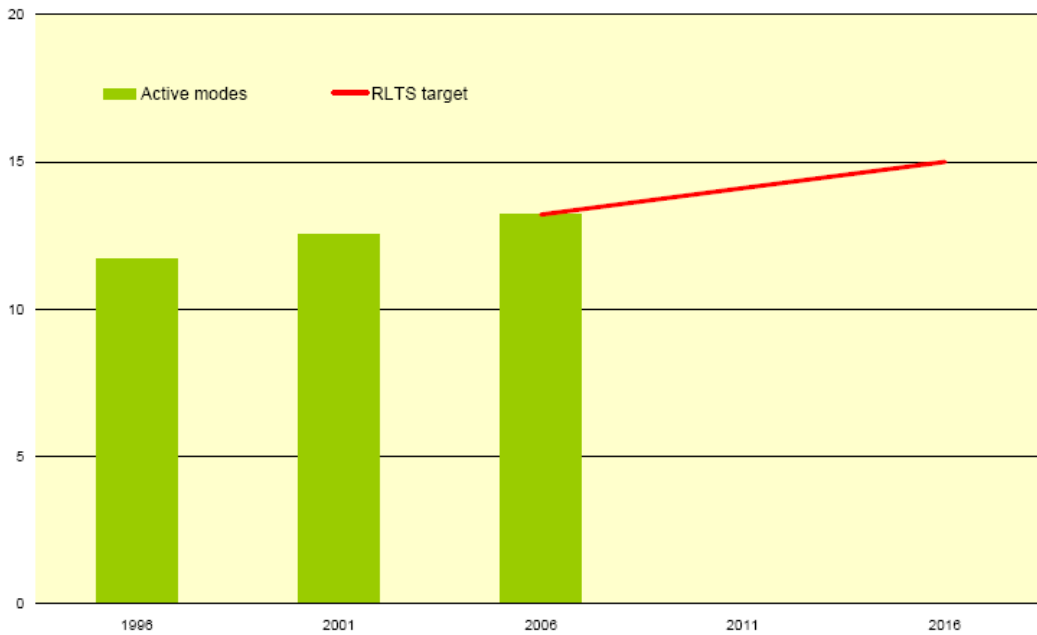


Figure 1: 2006 active mode share of journey to work (%). Source: Statistics New Zealand

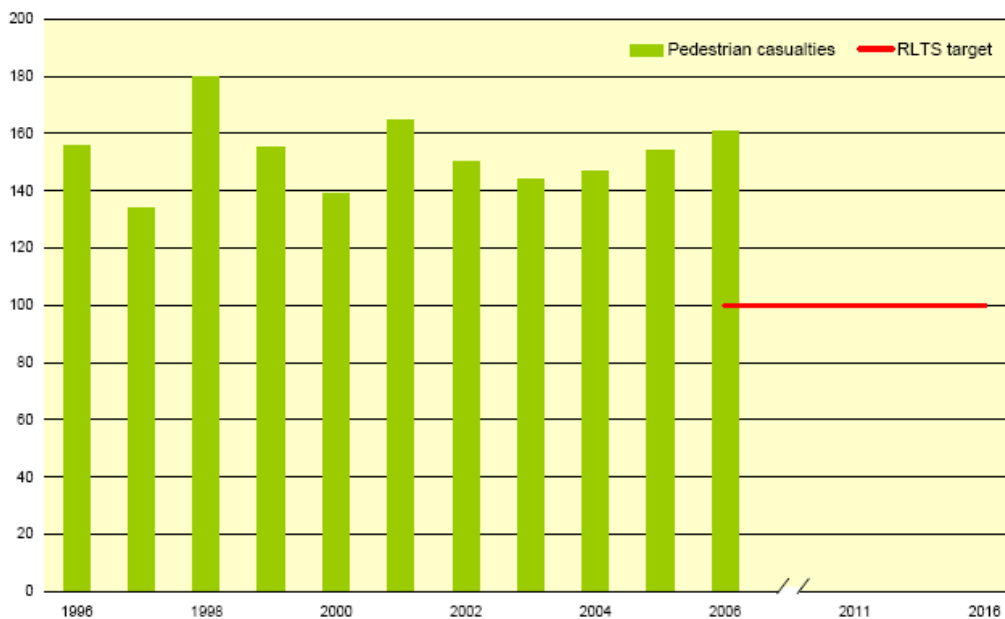


Figure 10: Pedestrian casualties, Wellington region. Calendar year. Source: Land Transport New Zealand

These indicate that in terms of meeting the first target of active modes accounting for at least 15% of region wide journey to work trips, the region appears to be on track. However, performance against the third target, fewer than 100 pedestrians injured in the region per annum, is some distance away from being achieved, and in fact, the trend is going in the wrong direction. Note too that over 50% of pedestrian casualties in the region occur in Wellington City.

An examination of the Walking Action Programme tables in the draft Regional Walking Plan shows that for the main part, the focus is on increasing walking mode share, although safety improvements are embedded in many of the proposals. This suggests that the draft

Plan is misaligned with the strategic objectives of the RLTS, and either the emphasis of the Plan needs to be changed, or the RLTS targets for walking need to be revisited.

3.3 Setting Sub-Regional Targets

The RLTS has set targets for active transport in the region. Wellington City currently exceeds the targets and has the highest number of commuter trips taken on foot in the Country.

While the targets set out above may be appropriate for the region as a whole, different cities within the region have different characteristics, and so different targets are appropriate. The following table from the Background Issues Paper shows walking mode share by TA:

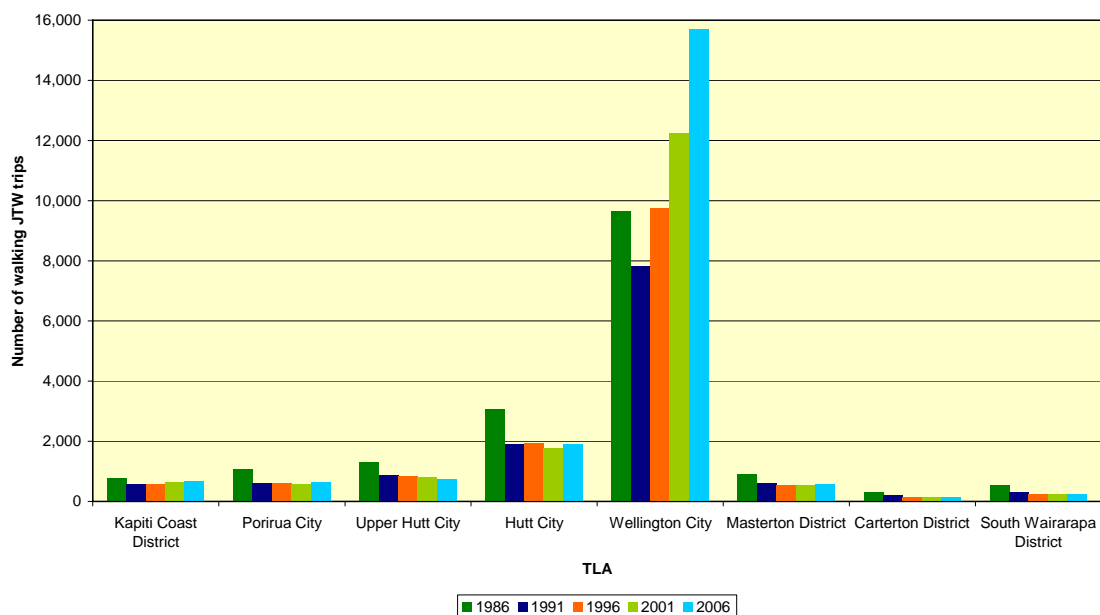
Territorial Authority	Cycled	%	Walked/ Jogged	%	Total number of trips by all modes
Kapiti	273	1.7%	690	4.5%	15,222
Porirua	114	0.6%	636	3.6%	17,610
Upper Hutt	282	1.8%	759	4.9%	15,612
Lower Hutt	627	1.6%	1,908	4.8%	39,702
Wellington City	2,160	2.6%	15,696	18.8%	83,643
Masterton	303	3.7%	567	6.9%	8,205
Carterton	48	1.9%	144	5.7%	2,547
South Wairarapa	54	1.8%	246	8%	3,057
Totals	3,861	2%	20,646	11%	186,000

Table 1: 2006 Journey to work mode share for walking and cycling by territorial authority. Source: Statistics New Zealand

This shows that Wellington City Council is already exceeding the regional journey to work target, whereas other Councils are some considerable distance away from it. This is not to denigrate their efforts as different conditions exist in say, Upper Hutt, from Wellington City.

Moreover, different trends are found in cities within the region. The following chart shows that since 1986, walking to work has been growing strongly whereas in the other cities, it has either been flat or declining slightly. There are likely to be a number of reasons for this including the increase in inner city dwelling in Wellington, its more compact nature, and the relative decline in employment in other cities.

Journey to Work - walking



To give greater relevance to the draft Plan, it would be helpful to set sub-regional targets for walking (in consultation with the relevant TAs). This would help gain their commitment and focus their attention on achieving their individual target. It would also assist with ensuring that the overall target was achieved by setting individual accountabilities.

4. Conclusion

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on this document. Wellington City Council is broadly supportive of the general intention of the draft Regional Walking Plan, but has some concerns around its alignment with the RLTS and suggests that it would be helpful to set some walking targets for cities within the region. The Council does not wish to be heard at the submission hearing.