

Report 08.453  
Date 9 June 2008  
File TP/11/09/03

Committee Transport and Access  
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## Consideration of submissions and recommended Regional Walking Plan

### 1. Purpose

To provide the Committee with an overview of the submissions received on the draft Regional Walking Plan and to seek the Committee's view on the recommended final Regional Walking Plan (**Attachment 1**).

### 2. Significance of the decision

The matters for decision in this report **do not** trigger the significance policy of the Council or otherwise trigger section 76(3)(b) of the Local Government Act 2002.

### 3. Background

The existing Regional Pedestrian Plan was adopted by the Regional Land Transport Committee (RLTC) in May 2004. The plan was subsequently reformatted and published alongside the current Wellington Regional Land Transport Strategy (RLTS) in August 2007. The RLTS noted the need to review all implementation plans to ensure they are aligned with the strategic framework provided by the current RLTS. Review of the Regional Pedestrian Plan was signalled to take place in 2007/08.

The Regional Pedestrian (Walking) Plan has been reviewed with the assistance of a technical/stakeholder group comprised of representatives from Greater Wellington, the region's Territorial Authorities (TAs), Transit New Zealand (Transit NZ), Land Transport New Zealand (Land Transport NZ), Ministry of Transport, Living Streets Aotearoa, Regional Public Health, Wellington Chamber of Commerce, Automobile Association, Sport Wellington, Accident Compensation Corporation and New Zealand Police.

The review process has involved two stakeholder workshops to assist in development of a draft plan, followed by formal public consultation on the draft. The matters raised in the submissions have been carefully considered and the draft plan amended where appropriate.

Discussion about the key issues arising from submissions is set out under section 5 of this report. A table of individual submitter points and responses is provided in **Attachment 2**.

The recommended revised plan is provided in **Attachment 1** for consideration.

#### **4. Consultation**

The Regional Land Transport Committee, at its meeting on 9 April 2008, approved the draft Regional Walking Plan for public consultation.

Consultation commenced on 19 April 2008. The draft plan was mailed to approximately 140 stakeholders including:

- Land Transport NZ
- Transit NZ
- NZ Police
- Ministry Of Transport
- All local council's in the region
- Historic Places Trust
- Accident Compensation Corporation
- All district health boards in the region
- Regional Public Health
- Disability Reference Groups
- Road Transport Forum New Zealand, Automobile Association, Heavy Haulage Association
- Toll New Zealand Ltd
- ONTRACK
- Public Transport Operators
- Walking advocate groups (eg. LSA)
- Cycling advocate groups (eg. CAW, BikeNZ)
- Iwi representatives
- Wellington Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Sport Wellington (for SPARC)
- Youth Council's and Forums
- Victoria and Massey University Student Associations
- Parents Centres NZ, Playcentre Association, Kindergarten Inc, Te Kohanga Reo Trust
- Grey Power Associations and Age Concern

A media release was prepared and public notices were placed in the Dominion Post and Wairarapa Times Age. The Council's website had a dedicated page with an electronic submission form.

Submissions closed on 19 May 2008.

## **5. Submissions**

### **5.1 Overview**

15 submissions were received on the draft plan. While this is a relatively low number of submissions, those received provided comprehensive and considered feedback.

4 submissions were received from members of the general public with the remainder from TAs (Kapiti Coast District Council, Porirua City Council, Upper Hutt City Council and Wellington City Council) and other key agencies and groups (Land Transport NZ, Transit NZ, Regional Public Health, Capital and Coast District Health Board, Korokoro Environmental Group and Victoria University). This level of response from the general public was not unexpected given the strategic nature of the plan. It is likely that consultation on local level strategies will result in a higher level of general public interest and feedback.

Of the 15 submitters, only three indicated a wish to be heard in support of their submission. These submitters will be heard at the beginning of the Regional Land Transport Committee meeting on 13 August, prior to considering the report on submissions.

The Committee has been provided with full copies of all the submissions (**Attachment 3**).

### **5.2 Submission analysis and response**

The issues raised by submitters through their submissions ranged both in terms of topic and specificity. Submitters commented on high level strategic issues through to detailed operational issues.

In general, submitters noted their support for the draft plan. Submitters also raised issues and suggestions as to how they believed the plan could be amended or improved.

The following sets out some of the common and more significant issues raised by submitters and the officer comments in response.

#### **5.2.1 Local strategies**

Many submitters supported the initiative to develop local walking (and cycling) strategies and it was noted that many TAs have already begun developing or have adopted such strategies.

Upper Hutt City Council did not support this initiative for all TAs, suggesting that development of such a document would be overly onerous and have little benefit to those local authorities with lesser pedestrian numbers, or whose asset management plans were already adequate in addressing the pedestrian network.

### *Comment*

The development of local walking strategies was identified as an intervention to be included in the draft plan through the workshop process. The stakeholder and technical group largely agreed that it is an important step in allowing TAs to first agree priorities and targets for walking and pedestrians relevant to their communities, which could then form the basis for review and improvement of their local pedestrian networks (taking account of best practice guidance).

We accept that the scope and comprehensiveness of any local walking strategy developed under this action area would range greatly depending on each TA's situation. However, we do think that all TAs would benefit from having a strategy, not least to support funding applications to Land Transport NZ for pedestrian improvements. It is therefore recommended that this initiative be retained in the final plan.

### 5.2.2 Local level targets

Several submitters suggested that specific targets for local authorities be included in the regional plan. One submitter suggested setting generic targets that all TAs must meet, and that these targets are given 'legal weight' through the Wellington RLTS and Regional Policy Statement so that TA compliance is mandatory. Another submitter suggested that it would be helpful to set sub-regional targets for walking (in consultation with the relevant TAs) to focus attention and set individual accountabilities for achieving regional targets.

### *Comment*

We agree local targets for walking, that take into account the direction provided by national and regional targets, would be helpful. However, we do not believe that the region should set local level targets in a top down approach for the reasons set out below.

Regional targets are set out in the Wellington RLTS. There are currently three targets for walking which relate to the regional outcomes of increased mode share, safety and level of service. The RLTS seeks to increase all types of walking trips – to school, work, shop, socialise, etc. However the RLTS target for increased active mode share uses the measure 'journey to work trips' as this is the only measure available through the census. Other measures may be available when the Ministry of Transport Household Travel Survey results are released with a regional breakdown and could be used to develop new targets in the next RLTS.

Local authority targets are best determined at the local community level as part of the development of local walking strategies. These targets should respond to local issues and priorities. For example, while Wellington City may seek a particularly challenging journey to work mode share target in recognition of the opportunities to increase this type of walking trip through more inner city living, other authorities may decide to focus on increasing walking to school trips and walking trips combined with public transport journeys.

Greater Wellington would be happy to assist TAs in developing their local targets through provision of available data and trends where these are available.

### 5.2.3 Land use influences

Several submitters rightly noted the significant contribution that land use development and urban form can have towards walkability. They noted that facilities and connectivity for pedestrians in new land use development, together with compact urban form, appropriate co-location of activities, and encouraging higher density residential development close to public transport routes are all important factors in encouraging people to make walking trips.

#### *Comment*

The draft plan included the action 'Provide for pedestrians in land development'. The text for this action has been amended to specifically recognise the importance of compact and well planned urban form, in response to submissions.

### 5.2.4 Road safety emphasis

Submitters noted the importance of improving pedestrian safety and some queried whether the draft plan included sufficient interventions to contribute towards the ambitious regional target around reduced pedestrian injury numbers.

Several submitters also raised concern that the *RoadSense* programme may not be continuing in the Wellington region.

#### *Comment*

Pedestrian safety improvements are woven throughout the draft plan under several action areas. In particular, it is expected that local walking strategies developed under the first point of the action area 'Improve the pedestrian network' will not only include infrastructure improvements that address pedestrian safety, but will also consider initiatives such as reduced pedestrian wait times at signalled crossings and education/awareness campaigns to address specific local issues. This will be particularly important in Wellington City where the majority of the pedestrian crashes occur.

The technical working group discussed potential for greater enforcement of the road rules to address pedestrian safety, for example vehicle speed limits, car drivers not giving way to pedestrians, pedestrians crossing against signals. The group was unable to identify a regional intervention that was likely to be effective in terms of enforcement and generally concluded that advocacy for changes to existing legislation (e.g. higher fines, dominant vehicle rule) should be undertaken through the regional road safety implementation plan and specific detailed issues addressed through local road safety action plans.

The draft plan identifies road safety skills for children as an initiative, primarily through the implementation of *RoadSense*. The *RoadSense – Ata*

*Haere* strategy is a partnership between Land Transport NZ and New Zealand Police aimed at developing a school-wide road safety culture. The Police Road Safe series forms an integral element of the strategy. Land Transport NZ funds *RoadSense* facilitators to help develop initiatives within schools, but we understand that the facilitators are currently focussing on schools in some of the higher risk areas of New Zealand only. It is recommended that this be an item for further discussion between road safety and active mode stakeholders and that Greater Wellington advocate to central government for further resources if required.

The Regional Walking Plan is supported by a Regional Road Safety Plan that provides a specific focus on road safety initiatives and action planning, and a Regional Travel Demand Management Strategy that addresses safety issues as part of school and workplace travel plans and neighbourhood accessibility plans. These two supporting plans are also due to be reviewed over the next two years.

### 5.2.5 Pedestrian access to railway stations

Several submitters suggested that this action area be expanded to include improved access to all passenger transport services, particularly bus stops and stations.

#### *Comment*

We agree that improving pedestrian access to all types of passenger transport is important. However, a need for additional emphasis on pedestrian access to rail was considered to be warranted.

Improving access to the bus stops is expected to be addressed under the first action area 'Improve the pedestrian network' and it is identified as a particular item for consideration in developing priorities for the local pedestrian network improvements. Best practice in relation to pedestrian access to passenger transport (including bus stops/stations) is addressed in the Land Transport NZ *Pedestrian Planning and Design Guide 2008* referenced in the plan.

Pedestrian access to the region's railway stations was highlighted as a particular issue during development of the previous regional pedestrian plan and Greater Wellington subsequently commissioned comprehensive pedestrian accessibility audits of all stations in the region. Once completed, the audit reports were circulated to all those agencies with a responsibility in relation to the recommended improvements.

Progress in implementing the improvements has been slow to date and this is thought to be largely due to the somewhat complex ownership issues on and around railway stations and uncertainty about funding and responsibility. For example, it is likely that identified improvements on the station land itself will need to be agreed and funded by Greater Wellington and/or ONTRACK, whereas identified improvements around or adjacent to the stations (eg. adequate signage and safe crossing points) will be the responsibility of territorial authorities.

It makes sense that wherever possible, all agencies work together to ensure the improvements are carried out in a coordinated way to ensure that all pedestrians using a particular station experience a seamless and ‘accessible journey’. However comments received from submitters on the draft plan confirmed that the responsibilities, timing and funding issues were still not clear and further amendments have been made to the final plan to clarify these areas.

Porirua City Council noted that the timing of the station upgrade programme is based on need to meet the requirements of the new train carriages, rather than pedestrian volumes or pedestrian needs. The funding and timing element of this action and consideration of advancing pedestrian improvements on or around any particular station will be subject to funding through TA and GW Annual Plan processes.

### 5.2.6 Recreational walking

Several submitters said they would like to see more emphasis on recreational or leisure walking. Submitters sought new walking routes and connections through Greater Wellington-managed parks and forests.

#### *Comment*

We recognise the health and wellbeing benefits associated with walking, the potential transfer of people who walk for leisure to walking for transport purposes, and the opportunities for shortcuts and walking connections through recreational land.

The Regional Walking Plan is an implementation plan of the RLTS and is therefore appropriately focused on interventions for walking as a mode of transport. Other strategy documents and plans (eg. *At The Heart – Regional Physical Activity Strategy*) take a greater health or recreational perspective in relation to walking.

Management plans for regional parks are the appropriate place to consider opportunities for new walking routes and connections through park land. A recent example is the concept plan approved for new walking and cycling tracks in Queen Elizabeth Park that will provide a safe, direct and attractive commuter track between the communities of Paekakariki and Raumati/Paraparaumu.

### 5.2.7 Improve information for walking

Submitters generally supported the proposal to investigate a new online journey planning tool, for walking (and cycling) trips which are not associated with a public transport journey. Many noted it would be a useful tool for people to access information about proposed walking trips.

Several submitters sought a tool that was multimodal and integrated with the existing public transport journey planner. Another raised concern about the possible high cost of developing such a tool and suggested that local walking maps in hard copy and online were a better option.

Several submitters suggested that on-street ‘way finding’ signage and maps be included as an initiative under this action area in the plan.

*Comment*

The current Metlink journey planner provides for multi-modal trips combining walking and passenger transport. The purpose of this new tool is to provide information for trips which are made by walking (and cycling) as the main mode for a trip. The Metlink journey planner will continue to be used for combined walk and passenger transport journeys. A separate tool is proposed for trips where walking (or cycling) is the main mode as it allows for greater functionality and features specific to these types of trips. These online tools will be linked and integrated wherever possible to ensure they are easy to find and to use.

Recent technological advances mean that this type of application is relatively affordable compared with previous online tools. An online journey planning facility has many advantages over hard copy only maps, although we expect there will be a continued need for local hard copy maps produced by local authorities and organisations.

On-street, ‘way finding’ signage and maps are expected to form part of the local authority pedestrian strategies and network reviews identified under the first action area of the plan. These are likely to be more appropriate in areas with higher existing and potential pedestrian volumes. The best practice guide (Land Transport NZ - Pedestrian Planning and Design Guide) referenced in the plan includes best practice examples and guidance for pedestrian signage and ‘way finding’ treatments.

#### 5.2.8 Regional walking forum

Submitters were generally very supportive of a proposed new ‘walking forum’ of some kind to allow key agencies to share information and best practice and coordinate activities in relation to walking and pedestrians. One submitter recommended a combined ‘active modes’ or ‘sustainable transport’ forum rather than a separate walking forum or cycling forum.

*Comment*

It is likely that the new walking forum will be run in conjunction with the existing cycling forum in some way, and the plan notes this intention. However it is recommended that the exact details of how these forums will operate be determined outside of this action plan in consultation with the relevant stakeholders.

#### 5.2.9 Funding issues

Several submitters noted their support for the action in the draft plan to advocate to central government for adequate funding for walking improvements and initiatives. Living Streets Aotearoa, however, suggested that a re-allocation of funds from road capacity projects to pedestrian projects may be sufficient.



Two TAs noted that without more external funding from national or regional sources, it was unlikely that they would be able to significantly increase the level of service for pedestrians than is currently planned through their Long Term Council Community Plans. Upper Hutt City Council noted that they had experienced difficulties obtaining funding from Land Transport NZ for pedestrian facilities in the past. Porirua City Council stressed that it should not be assumed that additional rates funding would be available and suggested that walking projects with high regional priorities should be funded from regional or national sources.

#### *Comments*

It is appropriate that Greater Wellington continue to advocate for adequate funding from central government, to allow local and regional authorities to carry out improvements and initiatives that will contribute to achieving the ambitious targets signalled in the draft Updated New Zealand Transport Strategy.

Development of local walking strategies in each TA is expected to improve the ability of TAs to obtain funding support for improving their pedestrian networks in two ways.

1. Land Transport NZ advise that they are more likely to subsidise local projects identified in a local walking/pedestrian strategy.
2. Identification of a particular project in a local strategy, with some explanation around why it is a priority will assist in any request for R or C1 funding through consideration and development of the Regional Transport Programme.

The Regional Transport Programme process is also the appropriate place to consider allocation of available funding between different modes and projects.

#### 5.2.10 Minor matters

In addition to the significant issues and responses outlined above, a number of more minor matters were raised by submitters (primarily around responsibilities and timings for actions). Amendments have been made to the draft plan in response to these matters where appropriate.

## **6. Considerations for other processes**

Several initiatives suggested by submitters are already being addressed or can be considered further under the Regional Travel Demand Management Strategy. A major component of that strategy is to progress a school, workplace and community travel plan programme throughout the region. Greater Wellington is the lead agency in coordinating this programme. Initiatives in the Regional Walking Plan will support and complement the region's travel plan programme.

There were also several issues raised by submitters where advocacy by Greater Wellington to central government may be required. The first was a perceived

infrequency of meeting of the National Advisory Group on *Getting there* raised by Living Streets Aotearoa. The second was the perception that facilitation of the *RoadSense* programme was no longer continuing in the region, as noted by Kapiti Coast District Council and Upper Hutt City Council. These issues are noted for further investigation/discussion and advocacy if required.

## 7. Adoption of a final Regional Walking Plan

The draft Regional Walking Plan has been amended in response to the matters raised through submissions, where appropriate. The recommended final Regional Walking Plan is set out in **Attachment 1** to this report.

### 7.1 Policy framework

The policy framework for the Regional Walking Plan is provided by the Wellington RLTS.

The aspiration for walking and cycling as set out in the RLTS vision is:

*People will generally walk or cycle for short and medium length trips. Pedestrian and cycling networks will be convenient, safe and pleasant to use.*

The RLTS sets out the following regional outcomes and targets for walking:

Outcomes	2016 Target
Increased mode share for pedestrians and cyclists	Active modes account for at least 15% of region wide journey to work trips
Improved level of service for pedestrians and cyclists	Nearly all urban road frontages are served by a footpath
Increased safety for pedestrians and cyclists.	Fewer than 100 pedestrians injured in the region per annum.

The RLTS includes a number of policies relevant to walking that seek to: support continuous development of the pedestrian network and integration with other modes; support the uptake of walking, particularly for short trips; and support improved pedestrian safety.

The RLTS also includes a policy to prepare and review implementation plans for pedestrians, in accordance with the regional framework provided by the strategy, that identify the needs and proposed actions specific to walking.

### 7.2 Action programme

The Regional Walking Plan responds to this policy framework by providing a series of actions which seek to contribute to achieving the RLTS outcomes:

- (a) Improve the pedestrian network
- (b) Improve pedestrian access to railway stations
- (c) Provide for pedestrians in land development

- (d) Encourage walking to school
- (e) Influence central government policy
- (f) Seek adequate funding
- (g) Facilitate information sharing
- (h) Promote the wider benefits of walking
- (i) Improve information for walking trips.

The purpose of the plan is to identify the range of interventions at the strategic level that need to be progressed within the region to contribute towards the outcomes in the Wellington RLTS.

The plan facilitates regional coordination of activities by identifying the lead responsibility, timing and funding sources and project targets for each action.

The effectiveness of the plan relies on commitment from all key stakeholders. Local councils play a vital role in relation to walking as the owners and managers of much of the region's pedestrian infrastructure and regulators of land use development activities. Development of local strategies that identify local issues, priorities and targets, taking account of the best practice guidance, will be an important first step in progress towards the desired RLTS outcomes for walking.

## 8. Next Steps

- Final Regional Walking Plan considered by RLTC: 13 August
- Copies of final plan distributed to all stakeholders/submitters: Aug/Sept 08

## 9. Communication

The adoption of the new Regional Walking Plan will be communicated via:

- Media release
- GWRC website (final plan available as a pdf)
- Mail out to all key stakeholders and submitters

## 10. Recommendations

*That the Committee:*

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the content of the report.*
3. *Confirms the Committee's support for the redrafted **Regional Walking Plan (Attachment 1).***

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**Attachment 1: Recommended Regional Walking Plan – August 2008**

**Attachment 2: Submission summary and response table**

**Attachment 3: Full copies of submissions on the draft plan**