

Wellington Branch Committee
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Proposed ten-year plan submissions
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Greater Wellington Regional Council's proposed ten year plan Submission from Living Streets Wellington

Introduction

Living Streets Wellington is part of Living Streets Aotearoa, which is an advocacy group with a vision of “More people walking more often and enjoying public places - young and old, fast and slow, walking, sitting and standing, commuting, shopping, between appointments, for exercise, for leisure and for pleasure.”¹

Our submission is therefore focused on the **transport** provisions of the plan.

We would like to be heard in support of our submission. Please contact Paula Warren, phone 471 3135.

The importance of transport choices and the role of GWRC

Transport has a major impact on Wellingtonians and their environment. For example:

- Transport systems have a large footprint – perhaps as much as 50% of land in some areas.
- Vehicles contribute the majority of air and noise pollution in most places.

¹ <http://www.livingstreets.org.nz/admin.html>

- Effective transport choices are essential to allow people to participate in economic and social opportunities.
- Transport systems have a significant impact on health, both by creating risks and by influencing the amount of exercise people get on a daily basis.
- Transport is a major cost for many residents.

GWRC has a key role in shaping the nature of the transport network, and therefore people's choices. It is vital that they undertake this role strongly and appropriately.

Modal share

Living Streets Wellington welcomes the proposed targets for walking and cycling, although we would clearly favour a higher proportion of trips under 1km being done by active mode.

We would be interested to know, however, how the council proposes to achieve the very large shift active mode share for the 1-2 km journeys. This will obviously require major changes in local transport systems, to make walking a far more pleasant and efficient activity – better footpaths, fewer delays due to road crossing, etc. It will also require encouragement, and discouragement of car use (e.g. by restricting or pricing parking). Those actions will require city and district council commitment as well as efforts by the regional council.

We do not, however, welcome the proposed modal share for public transport. Public transport should be the predominant mode for longer trips, not a relatively minor mode (15.6%). Increased passenger transport use also increases active mode use, because passenger transport users are less likely to own and use a car, and are likely to incorporate walking into passenger transport trips.

The plan does not propose any increase in that modal share. This seems completely unjustified, given the increased public transport use in recent years, the WCC proposal in their plan to increase bus use, and the effect of rising fuel prices. We believe there is a high potential to increase modal share without requiring major new expenditure on infrastructure (above that already committed), by spreading peak loads, increasing the efficiency of infrastructure use (e.g. introducing more efficient ticketing systems that will reduce dwell time at bus stops), etc. We also believe that additional infrastructure expenditure to meet or drive increased modal share is far more justifiable than providing additional infrastructure for cars (particularly for commuter traffic).

Congestion targets

The congestion targets in the plan plan (average congestion on selected roads will remain below 20 seconds delay per km travelled despite traffic growth) reinforces our concern about the balance in the LTCCP between modes. Clearly, achieving this target will require increased road capacity. Surely the funding to provide that should instead be channelled to increasing passenger transport modal share.

Congestion charging

We support the proposals to seek powers to impose congestion charging. We believe that the income from those charges should be used to support modal shift towards the other modes.

Paula Warren
For the committee