



**Submission from Living Streets Aotearoa on  
Government Policy Statement on Transport 2018**

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**Submission**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft Government Policy Statement on Transport 2018/19 – 2027/28.

This Government Policy Statement continues the total lack of support by this Government for walking and pedestrian services. Living Streets suggests ways that the Government can support walking and pedestrian services.

We support the one transport system approach that considers all modes in transport decision making, including those it does not fund. We support including rail in the GPS so that a one system land transport system can be developed.

Treating the transport system as one system requires the fundamental starting point that all modes are a travel choice, so car travel is as much a choice as any other means. The use of congestion as an indicator of poor efficiency should also be applied to public transport and walking 'congestion', with funding and road space allocated accordingly. State highways are no more important than other roads or footpaths and funding weighting should be more balanced accordingly.

We are concerned that throughout this proposed policy statement walking is continually conflated with cycling – they are two separate modes of travel, one completely natural, and the other with a vehicle that requires different infrastructure. Conflating these two is misleading, and referring to walking and cycling infrastructure suggests that only shared facilities are considered, or that bicycles are no longer seen as vehicles. Funding for walking activity accounts for less than 0.5% of funding of the 'walking and cycling' activity class.

\* We support creation of a separate activity class for walking and pedestrian infrastructure that could be created from the proposed 17% increase to the current 'walking and cycling' class. The walking and pedestrian infrastructure activity class would have two goals – a short term goal to gather footpath condition data so that levels of service could be derived with appropriate footpath maintenance funding provided, and one goal to increase walking rates, especially for school children. Support for this programme would require dedicated walking professional support in transport agencies.

### **Strategic direction**

The strategic priorities for transport once again omit that transport is for people and should be focused on what people need – a healthy safe and sustainable life. Transport choices are a service for what people want not an end in itself. Sustainable healthy activity should be a strategic goal for transport – a continuation of the current policy will have significant negative economic impacts on the ageing population and health in particular.

### **Transport demand**

Freight demand on the roads is predicted to increase. This is a government policy choice to increase road freight rather than sea or rail freight. That policy choice is not made explicit.

#### *Objective: a safe system*

\* We support an increase in Road Policing so that urban roads and in particular matters that make pedestrians safer are enforced eg red lights, speeds, footpath safety.

#### *Objective: right infrastructure and services to right level*

- Improved returns from road maintenance.

\* We support a footpath maintenance fund so the number of non-vehicle related incidents to pedestrians is reduced and improved pedestrian amenity encourages more walking. It is estimated that a similar number of pedestrians are injured on the footpath in non-vehicle incidents as are injured by vehicles.<sup>1</sup>

- Improved returns from public transport investment.

\* We support reducing the fare box returns so that more public transport fares can be reduced and services increased, which will encourage greater use of public transport.

#### *Objective: Appropriate transport choices*

The objective on transport choice provides objectives for public transport as if it were the second choice to having a private vehicle.

\* We support a strong goal with appropriate funding to get more people using public transport on a daily basis than use private vehicles. Public transport use requires good pedestrian facilities to support it. We do not support spending public transport funding on 'park and ride' facilities.

There is no objective for walking as a transport choice.

\* We support as a priority commencing a dedicated fully funded GPS walking programme to reverse the trend in the decline in children walking to school.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.livingstreets.org.nz/sites/default/files/INFRASTRUCTURE%20-%201130am%20Jared%20Thomas%20-%20Don't%20slip%20up.pdf>

Pedestrian injury rates have not reduced for many years and it is time some action was taken to improve this.

\* We support a project to review pedestrian death and injury on the roads and develop a programme to address this.

Some sections refer to those 'who are not able to use a car' as if that is the sensible first choice in travel rather than a poor second choice to walking and using public transport (para 123), or some lesser thing that disabled people must do. This value weighting for car users should be removed from the GPS.

\* We support increasing the allocation to Rail – public policy projects and rail safety projects. Rail is an environmentally sustainable mode with high freight efficiency.

*Objective: environmental mitigation*

\* We support further work to assess and mitigate transport emissions on the environment. Particulate emissions and noise have a serious impact on walkability, and reducing emissions will encourage more people to walk more often. We would like to see more actions to reduce the climate impacts of transport in this GPS.

\* We support more research effort to investigate how to reduce demand for private vehicle travel through such measures as charging and parking demand management.

We would like to be heard in support of our submission.

### **About Living Streets**

Living Streets Aotearoa is New Zealand's national walking and pedestrian organisation, providing a positive voice for people on foot and working to promote walking friendly planning and development around the country. Our vision is "More people choosing to walk more often and enjoying public places".

The objectives of Living Streets Aotearoa are:

- to promote walking as a healthy, environmentally-friendly and universal means of transport and recreation
- to promote the social and economic benefits of pedestrian-friendly communities
- to work for improved access and conditions for walkers, pedestrians and runners including walking surfaces, traffic flows, speed and safety
- to advocate for greater representation of pedestrian concerns in national, regional and urban land use and transport planning.

For more information, please see: [www.livingstreets.org.nz](http://www.livingstreets.org.nz)