

Living Streets Aotearoa



Submission from Living Streets Aotearoa - Wellington Regional Land Transport Plan

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Submission

Living Streets Aotearoa supports the vision for our regional land transport network and suggest it is also integration that is important – both with sea modes and urban planning. However the priorities are at odds with this vision and are biased towards private vehicle use of the roads. This is clearly reflected in the funding allocation.

However we do not support the focus on addressing car traffic congestion and peak demands nor the need for ‘Roads of National Significance’ – the RLTP should reflect the decision of the Basin bridge Board of Inquiry.

We do not support the cursory discussion of improvements to the pedestrian network as if this was related to a cycling network – they are two distinct and separate modes and should be treated accordingly. We do not support shared paths as a transport solution – they reduce walkability.

We seek a review of the funding priorities to support the vision and improve public transport and walkability. We support a review of the safety emphasis so a wider view of safety including modes is used, and that safest modes like buses and walking are promoted.

Of the priorities in this plan, we support:

- 1 Improvements to the public transport spine through Wellington (not the BRT model)
- 2 Regional rail plan
- 3 Integrated ticketing (as long as it meets the requirements of an effective system)
- 4 Ngauranga to Petone walkway

Review of 2010-2040 targets – working paper 1

Living Streets note targets are being reset to 2025. The targets proposed are very modest goals and since the planning horizon has been shifted to 2025 we would like much more ambitious targets.

We do not accept that there should be any target for pedestrian death and injury – the only sensible goal is zero injuries.

Working paper 4 Development of future scenarios

We support the development of future scenarios as a method of avoiding the unsuccessful previous attempts at crystal ball gazing. However it should be explicit what scenario is being planned for and priority given to achieving that outcome.

The models don't seem to cover pedestrian activity at all and it is unclear what the figures/targets are based on. We note there is an expectation of a huge increase in car trips even considering the large uncertainty factor. This is clearly a failure of previous plans that needs addressing.

Living Streets Aotearoa would like to see a clear future being planned for – of those provided we support the Wellington expansion scenario and congestion charges.

Outcome 2.2 RLTS

We note that it is not possible to identify what the target for walking is as it is unhelpfully combined with cycling – the two modes have quite different needs and motivators. We recommend a separate target for walk mode share.

It is also noted that the targets have not been met and we are not aware of any programme to increase walk mode share. These are very modest targets.

Separate measures for walking are required. The per km crash rate is not useful for pedestrians who walk shorter distances than any vehicle mode but for longer times.

A congestion measure for pedestrians is required – there are unacceptable delays crossing roads in many areas and in particular around the Wellington Railway Station and along key walk routes. Alternatively a minimum level of service for crossings should be adopted.

That 90% of people report a good or neither good nor bad level of service for the strategic pedestrian network says more about the survey method than any real response.

Outcome 2.3 RLTS

Reduction in pedestrian casualties - Road safety for pedestrians in Wellington shows a high personal risk. It is time to adopt a serious approach to road safety and use a zero target for accidents (the Swedish Vision Zero policy shows that this does work). There are no acceptable injuries nor desirable crash levels.

Outcome 6.1 New developments are not monitored properly and many have poor walkability and connectivity.

There are measures for walkability that should be used – this measure needs to remain and actually be developed.

Outcome 6.2 Integration between modes

Walking access to stations and bus stops should be measured and reported – It is easy to determine walk access to stations and bus stops through mechanisms such as the community street review and Living Streets can help with this.

A recently Community Street Review Epuni station found many shortcomings that would deter people from walking to this station and would prevent wheelchair access.

Walking Network Chapter 10

Living Streets Aotearoa strongly supports the statement in 10.1 that the walking network is a key component of a transport system. We support the outcomes of increased safety for pedestrians, increased mode share for pedestrians, improved level of service for pedestrians, a reduction in transport emissions and improved public transport. We suggest a separate outcome of increased walk mode share to school.

We believe that a further outcome of improving liveability of the urban areas by integrating transport into urban design is required and a measure should be developed (and not making urban design subservient to transport needs).

We note that walking was not discussed in depth in the section on transport network issues and that where it is discussed it is as an 'active' mode together with cycling. To increase walk mode share and address walkability issues, walking must be treated as a separate mode with its own issues and opportunities to address – it is the universal and only non-vehicle way of getting around. This will require a much more sophisticated survey of walking opportunities and barriers than that provided by the 'cordon count' and should be funded accordingly. Living Streets would be happy to help develop this.

The graph showing rates of walk travel to work highlights issues of how data is represented and also areas where walking should be promoted more strongly – Porirua, Hutt, and Masterton all have significant numbers of residents working locally who potentially could walk to work. Wellington city has a high walk to work mode share but with its compact form should have potential for a much higher share. Living Streets would like to see a more ambitious target for mode share of both walking and public transport use so that this can be the focus of regional plan efforts. With nearly half the regional population in Wellington this target should be

- ❖ 20% regional walk mode share
- ❖ 30% walk mode share target in Wellington.

If only about 50% of Porirua and Hutt trips to work are into Wellington then there is great scope in those areas for improvement to walk mode share also. This should be a separate target.

Living Streets would like to see the school travel plan process in all schools by 2025. This will need greater funding for both plan development and implementation. This will require fixing unwalkable aspects of school routes and promotion.

- ❖ By 2025 all schools in the Wellington region have implemented a school travel plan

Living Streets would like to see a much stronger focus on public transport and walk mode share in this plan as these two travel options are strongly linked and can be promoted together. This will mean that data needs to be collected and presented on trips that include public transport and walking. We would like to see much better data collection on walking that can differentiate work or school trips separately from short local and other trips, so that activity to increase walk and public transport mode share can be effectively targeted and monitored.

- ❖ Undertake annual surveys of walk mode share and barriers and opportunities to improve walkability

Living Streets would like to see a performance measure for all pedestrian injuries on the road network and not just vehicle crashes. This should use the ACC data on injuries on the street from falling and other means due to low-standard pedestrian infrastructure (it is estimated that the same number of pedestrians are injured in this way as from vehicle crashes). There is a strong leadership role for regional council in this area, which would include promotion of NZ good practise such as the NZ Pedestrian Planning and Design Guide, and, specific investment funding for safer pedestrian facilities.

- ❖ Identify all pedestrian injuries in the road network – including non-vehicle injury
- ❖ NZ Pedestrian Planning and Design Guide adopted and implemented in all territorial authorities

Leadership is required in developing regionally significant walking routes –

- the Golden Mile and other connecting routes identified in the 2004 Jan Gehl study
- links to PT stops,
- north-south links such as the Great Harbour Way, (the GHW should include walk-only footpath in all built up urban areas and because it is one of the few flat walks it should be wheelchair accessible along its entire length - currently even the Oriental Parade to Kilbirnie route is not accessible)
- east west walk links such as along SH58 (from the Hutt to Pauatahanui which has an increasing population but no walking infrastructure) and also along the southern side of the Pauatahanui inlet
- Porirua to Tawa – currently inadequate footpath and will be more barriers post-Transmission Gully
- promote sustainable transport like the 'Open Street' event and Walk2Work Day
- we would like to see a strong PT promotion – e.g free rides at the start of winter and on some weekends, for particular events
- school travel plans should be funded to the level where they can be implemented in all schools. This is a key to support future sustainable travel choices. We would like to see a stronger focus on walking and using public transport in these plans.
- support for the Walk21 conference in Wellington. Living Streets would like to see Wellington host the prestigious Walk21 conference and put some work into preparing a bid in this plan
- PT access available to all regional parks
- Undertake active transport research similar to that done in Auckland
- Improve walk access to all railway stations with pedestrian priority through 'park and ride' carparks
- All roads including state highways should be walkable - stating that some people may not feel safe walking on a road should be a call to action not a reason to ignore walkability

- Some crossing points have been identified as a barrier to walking and we support remedies for those. There are many other places that have not been included such as Pukerua Bay, and

We note some walk routes have been identified where walking is 'suppressed' and are not aware of the process used to identify these areas in particular and not others. Instead it appears to be a justification for programmed works.

- Ruahine Street from Mt Victoria tunnel to the corner of Wellington Road is well used by pedestrians despite the very poor crossing opportunities and the lack of enforcement of parked vehicles on the footpath. We recommend pedestrian crossings are installed to aid pedestrian movement.
- SH2 from Wellington to Petone has a footpath that has now become 'shared' which does reduce walkability. The last 800 metres to Petone of this route is on the shoulder of the 100km/hour road which does reduce walkability. The trees along this two hour walk continue to be pruned so they do not provide shade which does reduce walkability.

We would be happy to assist a regional process to identify key routes that need improvement. Some areas identified in various studies include:

One minor point which would be good to change is the image at the end of the walk chapter on page 100 depicts some people cycling – surely an oversight, and an image of people walking would be much better.

Public Transport

Living Streets recognises the close relationship between pedestrian networks and public transport use – pedestrians are the public transport users. Public transport is far more efficient at moving large numbers of people over longer distances than any other vehicle mode.

We do not support an expansion of 'park and ride' facilities. These are not an efficient use of the very valuable land around transport stops and do not encourage compact development. In addition park and ride facilities are often a barrier to pedestrian access to stations.

We support a faster implementation of the Wellington City bus review and implementation of bus priority around the city. These improvements are urgently needed and should not be delayed.

Improved signage and bus stops can and are being introduced now. However these are often poorly designed and create conflict between pedestrians waiting for buses and pedestrians walking through. Bus shelters have been inappropriately sited in many places causing visual and physical barriers on the footpath. These should be remedied as a priority and meet minimum standards of the NZ Pedestrian Planning and Design Guide.

Living Streets supports integrated ticketing and would like to see its implementation accelerated. However any ticketing system must be shown to be effective before it is rolled out to ensure it delivers the results expected

The Basin Reserve flyover Board of Inquiry has made its decision to turn down the application. The Ngauranga to Airport plan identified the Basin as needing improvements for public

transport, walking, and cycling. The RLTP should have plans to address the identified needs in this area.

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