



Submission on 2023 draft advice to inform the strategic direction of the Government's second emissions reduction plan

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Introduction

Living Streets Aotearoa is the New Zealand organisation for people on foot, promoting walking-friendly communities. We are a nationwide organisation with local branches and affiliates throughout New Zealand.

We want more people walking and enjoying public spaces be they young or old, fast or slow, whether walking, sitting, commuting, shopping, between appointments, or out on the streets for exercise, for leisure or for pleasure.

Our submission covers questions 56 and 57 in the consultation form and relates to Proposed Recommendation 16.

Living Streets Aotearoa supports the Commission's acknowledgment of the important role walking plays as a low-emissions form of transport and an integral part of our transport system. There is strong evidence that improvements in walking networks can build community, support livability of urban areas and individual health as well as reduce greenhouse gas emissions. New Zealand's central government only recently funded footpaths and is still to finalise a comprehensive plan to support walking. Research also shows that most people access public transport on foot, well over 90% on average for bus trips. Improving the walk environment can substantially increase patronage of public transport.¹

Therefore, we are disappointed that the Commission's Recommendation 16 does not make any specific provision for walking. We propose additions to Recommendation 16 to remedy that.

Question 56. Do you support the overall draft advice in this chapter?

Somewhat support

We support the Commission's overall approach to transport emissions reductions, particularly the shift away from a narrow focus on electric vehicles. We support the

¹ See Hillnhütter, H. (2019). *Walking for Public Transport*. Proceedings of the Walk21 Conference, Rotterdam, available at <http://library.walk21.com/>

adoption of the avoid-shift-improve framework, the need for the decarbonisation of transport to address inequities, the acknowledgment that decarbonising transport can improve health and wellbeing, and the strong focus of this advice on increasing walking, cycling and public transport.

However, despite the inclusion of walking in the headline messages of this chapter, there is no specific recommendation to improve walking. Many journeys currently taken by car, especially those of 2km or less, can be replaced by walking, and walking is also the crucial connector of public transport journeys.

A National Walking Plan is currently being developed by Waka Kotahi and the Ministry of Transport, as an action arising out of the first Emissions Reduction Plan, and this is intended to address many of the barriers that prevent more people walking. We recommend that strong support for a National Walking Plan is included in your advice.

We note there is no recommendation for Tier 2 cities, which means that cities such as Dunedin and Whangārei are not included. We consider that Tier 2 cities and other population centres should be included to meet the equity and wellbeing objectives set out in this advice.

Question 57. Do you support our proposed recommendation 16?

Proposed recommendation 16

We propose that the emissions reduction plan for the second budget period must:

16. Simplify planning and increase funding of integrated transport networks that optimise public and active transport. For major population centres, the Government should also complete cycleway networks by 2030 and take steps to complete rapid transport networks by 2035.

Somewhat support

While we support the overall approach in proposed Recommendation 16, it does not go far enough in three regards.

- (1) Walking and cycling are conflated in this recommendation into the combined term "active transport". To progress emissions reductions a more granular approach is needed.
- (2) There is no specific recommendation to increase or support walking.
- (3) Tier 2 cities and other population centres are excluded.

Furthermore, two quite complex processes are combined in one recommendation and would benefit from separation, so our proposed recommendation 16 is in two parts, as follows:

16a. Simplify planning of integrated transport networks that optimise public transport, walking and cycling. Definitions of optimal networks need to be nationally consistent mandatory standards, covering, for example, maximum wait times at signalised pedestrian crossings.

16b. Increase national funding for integrated transport networks that optimise public transport, walking and cycling.

For the second emissions reduction plan, for Tier 1 major population centres, the Government should:

- **fund city plans and significant improvements to the pedestrian network, including crossings, by 2030,**
- **complete cycleway networks by 2030, and**
- **take steps to complete rapid transport networks by 2035.**

For the third emissions reduction plan, the Government should fund improvements to walking, cycling and public transport that enhance equity, wellbeing and emissions reduction in other population centres (Tiers 2 and 3).