



Submission on 2024 draft advice on the fourth emissions budget (2036-2040)

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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.

We wish to express our support and appreciation for the Commission's continued commitment to reducing New Zealand's emissions, and to the policy steps necessary to achieve this, in line with our domestic and international commitments.

Our response to the Proposed Recommendations

Living Streets Aotearoa agrees with Proposed Recommendations 1-6.

Our response to Chapter 4, Transport section

The remainder of our submission is in response to the Transport section of Chapter 4.

Strengthening the EB4 demonstration path

We welcome the Commission's acknowledgement (p. 93) that "More people would be walking, cycling and using public transport" under the EB4 demonstration path, and we support the Commission's assumption that the total distance travelled via walking, cycling, and public transport will have grown to 15% of all passenger kilometres travelled by 2040. This represents a 300% increase over the equivalent figure in the most recent Household Travel Survey, and to achieve this, policies to support walking, cycling and public transport will need to continue to be developed and implemented at all levels of Government – there is no time for an interregnum in which these policies are reversed or left in abeyance.

However, we are concerned that the EB4 demonstration path, as shown in Figure 4.5 (p. 94), shows a rise in household VKT from 2044 onwards, in contrast to the downward trend

shown from 2036-2044. Therefore, we submit that policies, practical measures and infrastructure to

- reduce vehicle speeds
- provide safe, separated walking infrastructure, with good connections to public transport and mass transit
- provide safe, separated infrastructure for bicycles, e-bikes and other micromobility modes, and
- provide safe, frequent, reliable, affordable public transport (both within and between cities and towns)

need to be further strengthened to ensure that household VKT continues to reduce from 2044 onwards, at minimum at the same rate as shown between 2036 and 2044.

A recent presentation from Auckland Transport discussed the very substantial benefits for pedestrian numbers of reducing vehicle speeds. On 24 May 2024, at the Yellow Ribbon Road Safety Alliance Hui in Auckland,¹ Ping Sim of Auckland Transport discussed “The Outcomes from Auckland’s Safe Speeds Programme.” She highlighted that one key outcome from the speed calming measures in Auckland has been a substantial increase in people walking in their local area. Furthermore, the latest research shows 74% of Aucklanders are willing to accept increases in travel time to stay safe.

Ensuring that walking’s contribution to emissions reduction is not negatively affected by increases in other modes

With regards to walking, a recent Waka Kotahi report² shows that there is a high level of satisfaction with and support for walking, but that people’s willingness to walk drops sharply on shared paths. Mode conflict on shared paths is already a problem for pedestrians (and for users of other modes), and given the projected increase in VKT from walking, cycling and public transport, this is likely to increase unless policies are put in place to remove this mode conflict.

Therefore, we submit that all recommended policies in line with the EB4 demonstration pathway should incorporate the principles that footpaths are for pedestrians (which included the users of low-speed mobility devices such as wheelchairs, but not bikes or other micromobility devices). As noted above, Living Streets Aotearoa supports the use of safe, separated lanes for users of micromobility devices.

¹ For more information on this hui, see <https://yellowribbon.nz/yellow-ribbon-road-safety-week-hui/>

² See Waka Kotahi, Understanding attitudes and perceptions of cycling & walking 2023, <https://www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/resources/understanding-attitudes-and-perceptions-of-cycling-and-walking/Waka-Kotahi-Attitudes-to-cycling-and-walking-final-report-2023.pdf>

Secondly, recent evidence³ shows that the proposed increase in the proportion of the light and heavy vehicle fleet composed of electric vehicles would result in increased harm to pedestrians, without measures to mitigate this increased risk. This would also have the effect of discouraging people from walking, thereby reducing walking's contribution to emissions reductions under the EB4 pathway and also lessening the many health co-benefits that would result from having more people walking.

Therefore, we submit that measures to mitigate these risks should be included in policy recommendations for EB4 (and prior emissions budgets). These include:

- road speed reductions
- additional measures to warn pedestrians of approaching electric vehicles
- additional raised pedestrian crossings and other traffic calming measures.

³ Edwards PJ, Moore S, Higgins C, Pedestrian safety on the road to net zero: cross-sectional study of collisions with electric and hybrid-electric cars in Great Britain, *J Epidemiol Community Health* Published Online First: 21 May 2024, <https://jech.bmj.com/content/early/2024/05/01/jech-2024-221902>