

Living Streets Aotearoa



Submission from Living Streets Aotearoa on Lets Keep Wellington Moving 2016

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Submission

Living Streets Aotearoa welcomes this opportunity to contribute to making Wellington a better city to be in. Wellington is a great place to live especially because of our small compact well defined city. This makes it relatively easy to walk around with plenty of interesting routes. Wellington has the highest, and increasing, rate of adults walking to work in New Zealand, and walking is the preferred recreational activity. There is nothing 'broke' about Wellington from a walking perspective but we believe it could be much better with even more people out enjoying walking.

Public transport is the natural partner to a great walking city and Wellington has some of the best in New Zealand with high patronage rates and a great culture of using buses and trains. Wellingtonians, and pedestrians, love our clean iconic trolley buses. There are however, identified issues with public transport and these should be addressed urgently to maintain and attract more users.

We note that the Wellington City Urban Growth Plan adopts the sustainable transport hierarchy in Wellington. This means that pedestrian considerations should come first and encouraging more walking in a more walkable environment is required. The area of interest to the 'keep Wellington moving' project is covered by the recently adopted Urban Growth Plan.

Recent roading projects will place even more pressure on Wellington's public transport and walking environment. More private vehicles will be easily able to access Wellington with the concomitant pollution, noise, and pressure on our road space. This is a significant concern. Control of private vehicle entry to the city is needed.

We have identified some key issues with proposed solutions below. Living Streets is in favour of an integrated (rather than one mode) and incremental (rather than large one off) approach to improving our great city.

Issues and solutions

1 Golden Mile public transport congestion

The bus congestion on the Golden Mile is a key constraint on the whole bus network and is well understood. Our suggestions include:

- Close off more Lambton Quay side roads to improve bus flow and pedestrian amenity - remove car and taxi parking to side roads, and ensure accessibility parking is closest to Lambton Quay
- remove bike parking from the footpath and reduce other clutter
- Implement more [Jan Gehl ideas \(2004\)](#) to make better connections with the waterfront
- Implement improvements from the recent Golden Mile Safety Review study (Bullen Consultancy, January 2016)

2 There is low pedestrian priority on the entire network

Road space allocation and traffic signal times favour vehicle movements. Speed limits are too high in many places and not enforced. Footpath infrastructure does not meet the NZ Pedestrian Planning and Design Guide standard in many places which limits accessibility for all. Our suggestions include:

- implement the sustainable transport hierarchy as adopted in the Urban Growth Plan
- Railway Station improvements to improve accessibility and pedestrian priority (as identified in the 2015 Community Street Review [Wellington Railway Station](#) – Living Streets Aotearoa and WCC Accessibility Advisory Group)
- remove slip lanes from Courtenay Place, Aitken/ Hill and Molesworth St, Mulgrave and Thorndon Quay, Bowen and Lambton Quay,
- identify a standard minimum Level of Service for signalled pedestrian road crossings (recommend LoS C) and stop vehicles turning through crossing pedestrians
- develop more smart crossings with longer green 'man' time and longer cross times (Puffin crossings), and more use of countdown clocks
- reduce speed in central area to 30km hour
- reduce speed in all suburban centres and in select compact suburbs (eg Mt Victoria)
- reduce all 70 km/hour areas to 50km/hour
- Speed is the key contributing factor in injury outcome - slower speeds in the central area is essential – trial 30 km/hour zones for some suburbs (such as Mt Victoria which is a contained well defined area), Ruahine St to allow for connection to the Town Belt, Ohiro Road to improve safety for all and improve connections

- Shared paths provide a low level of service for pedestrians and should not be used anywhere in the area of interest of this project

3 Climate change impacts

Promoting and prioritising vehicle use has increased our transport GHG emissions.

- reduce private vehicle use by congestion charges, road 'diets', and removing 'free' parking
- Urban planning requirements need to integrate with transport planning to create compact communities with proper services (not dormitory towns). Creating a great city is the point not a vehicle transport system.
- improve public transport service (frequency, cost, weekend and later service) with good bus to train connections to encourage more users
- support the clean trolley bus system until other more efficient means are available
- improve walking routes to Johnsonville/ Porirua, and the Hutt, issues include disconnect across wide busy roads, noise, and pollution - shade and noise reduction plantings are needed with ample good crossing points
- now that the inner-city bypass is finished, close one lane on each side of Aotea/Waterloo/Customhouse Quays to make a dedicated cycle lane

4 Serious public health issues

There are well recognised serious public health issues with promoting vehicle use including air pollution, crash death and injury, obesity, and a rise in many diseases associated with inactivity especially lack of weight-bearing activity.

- encourage walking with walk focus events, including at parks
- school travel plans implemented at all schools
- workplace travel plans at all local government and central govt, health and education places
- improve suburban walking opportunities by improving connections to suburban centres (eg Kilbirnie pedestrian crossing opportunities on Cobham Drive to the shore, better PT stops, narrower roads)
- Basin Reserve pedestrian priority for the large schools in the area, bus priority through the roundabout, no shared paths
- Safer road approach so all vehicles can be safe on the road

5 Engagement

We support full engagement with Wellington city residents to find a way to improve our city.

We would like to see more information provided about how people get around now, including pedestrians, and the potential for increasing sustainable modes before any decisions are made. This should include who is accessing Wellington hospital and airport, and how frequently.

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