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Submission:

## Living Streets Aotearoa

1. Living Streets Aotearoa is the New Zealand organisation for people on foot. We are a nationwide not-for-profit organisation with local branches and affiliates throughout New Zealand that advocates for walkable communities and promotes the significant social, environmental and economic benefits of walkable environments.
2. Living Streets Aotearoa exists to support the diverse needs and aspirations of people on foot. Our aims include the integration of walking into decision-making in transport, urban design, public health and community development planning.
3. Walking is the ultimate low-emissions form of personal transport.

## Charging Our Future

4. This document is a strategy for expanding the electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure system in NZ. The strategy includes the following statements:
  - (Outcome 3) Aotearoa's EV charging system is underpinned by integrated and streamlined cross-sectoral planning and standards.
  - (Further actions focus area 2b) Implement a consistent, practical planning and approval process for new EV chargers across councils.

## Potential effects on existing walking networks

5. Footpaths in suitable locations and of a suitable size within both the road reserve and open spaces are critical to create an attractive and well-used walking environment. The walking environment can be degraded by poorly planned structures that reduce the width of paths and capacity for walking, and there may be more pronounced effects on the accessibility of those people with physical, sensory, cognitive or neurological accessibility needs.
6. Recommendations for adequate provision for pedestrian needs is found within Pedestrian Network Guidance on the Waka Kotahi website:  
<https://www.nzta.govt.nz/walking-cycling-and-public-transport/walking/walking-standards-and-guidelines/pedestrian-network-guidance/design/paths/footpath-design-principles/>
7. Many existing footpaths in Aotearoa's towns and cities do not meet recommended widths to accommodate pedestrian activities.
8. We submit that the construction of charging stations on footpaths should be disfavoured, due to potential adverse effects on the walking environment, and should only rarely be considered. Where consideration is being given to installing charging stations on the footpaths, then we submit that they should only be allowed where it can be demonstrated that any effects on the walking environment are negligible, including at times when the charger is being used.
9. Any approval processes for EV chargers that do not adequately consider footpaths and any adverse effects on the walking environment from additional structures may have the effect of discouraging walking and increasing emissions.

## Recommendation

10. Living Streets Aotearoa makes the following recommendation:  
Any planning and approval process, particularly any stream-lined processes for EV chargers should require that:
  - EV chargers are placed within parking spaces on the street (with adequate protection of the infrastructure) or in off-street locations rather than public footpaths.
  - Where placement of EV chargers on footpaths is being considered because of a lack of other alternatives, any application should include an assessment of effects on the walking environment (current and anticipated) to ensure that any negative effects on the walking environment are negligible. The assessment should be consistent with the Waka Kotahi Pedestrian Network Guidance, and have additional consideration for those with physical, sensory, cognitive or neurological accessibility needs.