

Living Streets Aotearoa



Submission on Draft Government Policy Statement on Land Transport 2021/22 – 2030/31 from Living Streets Wellington

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Date: **11 May 2020**

Living Streets Wellington, part of Living Streets Aotearoa, is pleased to have this opportunity to submit on the GPS on Land Transport.

We support the direction of the GPS overall. We are pleased to see funding directed to a more sustainable future and the inclusion of rail and coastal shipping in this policy on 'surface transport'.

We would like to see more people out walking more often, enjoying our public spaces and being part of their communities.

Wellington has the highest rate of walking to work at about 20% of the adult population, which rises to 68% for the inner city. Public transport use at 17% is an important adjunct to increase walking catchment areas. School children also have a high rate of walking to school at about 50%. A sustainable transport system needs to move other places in New Zealand to these levels and beyond to meet climate emissions targets, health objectives and social equity for all New Zealanders. The GPS is the vessel that must carry us to a more sustainable future.

We support investment being closely aligned to desired outcomes and would like to see funding tied to use of best practise standards, particularly for pedestrians and walking infrastructure.

Our comments relate to greater clarity of outcomes under this GPS.

1 Safety

We support safer footpaths, roads and cycleways or rori iti. We support enhancing the safety and accessibility of footpaths, bike lanes and cycleways.

However, action to date with recent road rule proposals works directly against this priority and will make footpaths less safe, less accessible, reduce the service levels for pedestrians and discourage people from travel on foot. This raises the issue of alignment, monitoring and compliance with the existing GPS and this new GPS.

We would like to see greater transparency in decision making relating to actions that impact the GPS: transparency is aided when decisions match best practice. For pedestrians the best practices are provided in the NZ Pedestrian Planning and Design Guide, RTS 14 and NZS 4121, and international guidance such as the Global Street Design. Funding should be related to using best practice.

Transparency is also aided when evidence is available through robust data collection. Pedestrian and walking data is lacking and this has been raised as an issue over many years.

2 Indicators

Indicators are a key to well-directed funding and good management for any system. Transport has lacked robust data on pedestrians, and despite this being identified as a priority in the Transport Evidence Base it still has not progressed. Walking data should be a high priority in this GPS.

We would like to see SMART indicators that require a particular level of action, otherwise we are likely to continue spending money with little objective value derived, for example:

- * What reduction in DSI is the target, and what actions will achieve this.
- * What access standard to PT should be met.
- * What is the desired mode share for walking desired.
- * What emission target will be met in the interim before the Climate Change Commission targets are set.
- * What are the levels of service and the standards to be achieved.
- * What indicators measure footpath safety, being safe and feeling safe - DSI does not cover these.
- * What is the state of the footpath asset, particularly after a FAR was introduced for the first time in 2018; for example how many footpaths comply with minimum widths.

We would like to see a specific walk to school target and associated funding to halt the decline in active travel to school. There is significant potential to improve this with targeted action informed by robust data. Specific targets for walking are required, combining indicators with other active modes will not achieve the objective.

The Ministerial direction priority for better data is supported but needs to be more specific.

3 Funding

We support better use of existing infrastructure as a priority for funding. To that end it is pleasing to see an increase in maintenance funding for state highways and local roads over time.

4 Walking and cycling activity class

Living Streets Wellington supports improvements for walking and cycling, and would like to see all road users have safe and pleasant places to travel. Despite the FAR for footpath maintenance we have not seen a significant increase in footpath maintenance. We recommend funding is linked to meeting best practise standards and guidelines such as in the New Zealand Pedestrian Planning and Design Guide, RTS 14 and NZS 4121.

5 Rail and coastal shipping

We support inclusion of rail and coastal shipping to provide a more balanced approach to all travel that is necessary for Wellington and other cities to function, and acknowledges that rail and coastal shipping are more efficient in moving freight and passengers in many situations.

6 LGWM

We support the Ministerial direction to progress LGWM and particularly look forward to the early delivery programme commence before the general election, which includes many of the walking elements.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss our submission in more depth.

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