

Living Streets Aotearoa



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Submission to Greater Wellington Regional Council on the Draft Wellington Regional Land Transport Programme 2021

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Submission

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

The executive summary is a good introduction to the Plan, which is itself a big improvement on previous plans. It is easy to see what is wanted, and has specific measurable targets.

We support the five priority investment areas, discussed in more detail below, particularly with respect to improving walking and public transport access and facilities.

We agree that the three 10-year targets are required and achievable, but they could be more challenging – are a 30% reduction in deaths and serious injuries, a 30% reduction in transport-related carbon emissions and a 40% increase in active and public transport mode share by 2030 good enough, taking into account the climate emergencies declared by local, regional and central government?

Strategic Framework

We have the following comments on specific objectives:

Objective 1, access to transport choices

We fully support this objective and its supporting policies. We suggest that better data is needed about how the system currently works, for example how people access public transport stops.

Objective 2, urban form

We support this, and it should also include a policy encouraging transit-oriented development around railway stations and transport hubs.

Objective 3, environment

We support this.

Objective 4, safety

We support this, and suggest that since vehicle drivers play a key role in transport safety, that driver education and training to encourage and promote safer driver behaviour should be included as a policy.

Objective 5, resilience

We support this.

Investment priorities

We like the weighting of the priorities, and funding needs to match them.

Priority 1, public transport capacity and reliability

We support this, but the phrase “to accommodate future demand” is too passive, implying that there is no place for promoting or stimulating demand—but such activities are essential to meet the mode-share target. We suggest replacing it with a phrase such as “consistent with mode-share targets”.

Priority 2, safe and attractive walking, cycling and public transport

We support this, but there is no mention of micromobility and how it relates to walking. We suggest that it needs to be made explicit that micromobility must not affect walking adversely, nor erode walking’s mode share.

The term “multi-modal” is used as if access by all modes is equally important. We suggest that it be made clear that the now-conventional transport hierarchy applies in such cases – walking at the top, private car usage at the bottom – unless otherwise explicitly specified and justified.

Priority 3, strategic access

We support this

Priority 4, safety

We support this, with the proviso that the introduction of safety measures should not result in any reduction in pedestrian accessibility. If that appears to be the case, the proposal needs to be reconsidered.

Priority 5, resilience

We support this, but note that while road resilience is discussed in detail, rail resilience is barely mentioned (for example, the rail network is not shown in the network vulnerability map, where the transport corridors marked are in fact road corridors).

Regional Programme

Greater Wellington

We support all the identified activities, and particularly those that facilitate walking access to public transport, such as 9 Porirua bus hub, 20 Waterloo station, 30 Wellington Regional Hospital, 39 Smarter Connections. Walking access is essential, but too often it has taken a back seat, with poor and unattractive access (often through car-dominated surroundings), poor signage, unsafe subways, poor lighting and limited accessibility. Many of these are not big-ticket items, and should be a high priority – much higher than free-to-use park and rides, where even the largest car parks add a limited amount of patronage at high cost; take up valuable land that could have a productive use, for example as transit-oriented development; and use scarce resources to in effect subsidise local car use. Money spent on active and public transport access would be a much more effective way of meeting the Plan's targets.

Waka Kotahi

The priority 5 LGWM “early delivery” projects are essential, and with the continuing passage of time becoming more urgent. With the notable exception of the 30km/h limit, little has been done in the last 10 years in the LGWM area to improve pedestrian facilities. That reflects pretty poorly on LGWM and its partners, and needs early attention.

We support the priority 6 LGWM activities, but we do not support increasing State Highway capacity, which would have a negative effect on the targets. That money would be better invested in achieving the desired outcomes, not in working against them.

Projects 9 SH1 Porirua city centre severance, 11 Te Ara Tupua Ngā Ūranga – Pito-one and 31 SH1 Ngauranga Gorge are all long overdue, and the latter one must include the Ngauranga intersection (if not included elsewhere), where crossing any of the roads – necessary to access Ngauranga station and the bus stops—is an appallingly risky experience.

Wellington City Council

We support project 24 Speed management programme, but it should not be limited to areas around schools. Lower speed limits should be rolled out more widely, accompanied by appropriate traffic-calming measures. For example, the default design for pedestrian crossings should include kerb-level platforms, simultaneously improving pedestrian safety and accessibility and creating a safer speed environment.

We support the cycling projects, but its regrettable that the far greater number of walkers – everyone is a pedestrian of some kind, and practically every journey includes walking – is also benefitting from anything near that level of investment. We do acknowledge that there are some walking benefits from cycling projects (including elimination of shared paths, a compromise that has been shown not to work well for any category of user), but outside the LGWM projects it appears that that's about all that pedestrians are going to get. For the primary and only universal means of transport, where improvements are rarely big-ticket

items and with limited (but not always met) maintenance requirements, that is inadequate treatment.

We would like to be heard in support of this submission.

About Living Streets Aotearoa

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.