

Living Streets Aotearoa



Submission from Living Streets Aotearoa to Upper Hutt City Council on Upper Hutt City long term plan 2018

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Submission

Living Streets Aotearoa thanks the Council for this opportunity to submit on the long term plan. We would like to make these proposals additional to the letter sent from Living Streets on 25 March 2018.

Good pedestrian infrastructure, slower speeds, encouraged by good urban design, make towns and cities safer and more attractive and encourage visitors and residents alike to linger, enjoy and spend. Walking is people's favourite active leisure activity so better connected suburbs and parks, footpaths and reserves will be popular with residents.

Living Streets have successfully lobbied Government for a Funding Assistance Rate for footpath maintenance, this will be included in the local roads maintenance class in the new GPS on Transport. This should relieve pressure on Council budgets and allow increased spending on pedestrian infrastructure with a matched contribution. There is also available an increase in funding for the Walk and cycle activity class for new initiatives to support more walkable places. Appropriate standards and design guides are available with the NZ Pedestrian Planning and Design Guide, RTS 14 for vision impaired pedestrians, and NZS 4212:2001 for accessible buildings.

Good data is the basis for good decisions. There is now an international standard for measuring walking that can assist in identifying and monitoring progress on walking initiatives
<http://www.measuring-walking.org/>.

Walk to school

Living Streets is concerned by the nationwide drop in the numbers of children walking to school. From 1989/90 to 2010-14 the numbers of 5 to 12 year-olds walking to school plummeted from

42% to 29% (MoT data). This is something we can take action on and a target in the long term plan to improve the walk to school mode share is important.

A school travel programme for every school in Upper Hutt would be a step in the right direction to get students more active. Improvements in physical and mental health and alertness of students and congestion would all improve with more walking to school.

Safer speeds

Living Streets support the review of speeds in Upper Hutt and would like to see a reduction in speeds outside schools to 30 km hour. We also support the reduction in speeds on all roads to an appropriate safe design speed. Speed is a key factor in reducing road crashes, and the impact of those crashes reduces with lower speeds.

More accessible streets

Living Streets sees the new GPS on Transport funding as an opportunity for Upper Hutt to improve accessibility on footpaths. For instance ensuring all intersections have drop-down kerbs from the footpath to allow easy access for buggies and wheelchair users, and all drop-down kerbs have tactile markings for vision impaired people.

Accelerating footpath maintenance work should be considered in light of this new GPS on Transport funding that will be available for footpath maintenance and walking programmes. This will allow for improvements that will particularly benefit the health and safety of the ageing population.

More public seating should be provided in all areas to enable those with mobility issues to walk around remaining active and being part of the community with appropriate rest stops.

Part of making streets more accessible is good wayfinding through signposting and provision of maps at appropriate high use areas. For example, improved signposting for the sculpture walk from the Railway Station would be useful. More information on walking times and a map at the railway stations would be helpful.

Supporting public transport use and the walk to work

Upper Hutt has good train and bus services. Promoting use of these services reduces congestion on roads and is the safest way to travel. A target rate for public transport use (target 10%) and to increase the number who walk to work (target 5%) would be useful.

Living Streets would like to see audits around train stations and main bus stops to see what improvements can be made e.g. more shelters and seating, wayfinding signs and maps for visitors, timetable information, and minimum footpath standards to access the stops.

[Community street reviews](#) are a useful cost effective tool to identify pedestrian improvements (such as those mentioned above) undertaken by users.

Optional projects

In a 10 year plan it is important to plan for some of the more ambitious projects to keep Upper Hutt vibrant. Therefore we support proceeding with the optional projects at their relatively modest cost. In particular we support the walking network upgrade, the residential stimulus

policy and the city centre open space projects. The Walking network upgrade should focus on improvements for older people and children, particularly on their walk to school. Living Streets supports well designed dedicated-pedestrian footpaths as the best practise way to encourage walking particularly for these two groups.

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