

Living Streets Aotearoa



7 May 2007

Draft Annual Plan
Upper Hutt City Council
Private Bag 907
Upper Hutt

Submission on the Upper Hutt City Council Draft Annual Plan 2007/08

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission on this draft strategy. Living Streets Wellington would like to speak in support of this submission if the opportunity arises.

For any further clarification the contact point is:

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Introduction

Living Streets Wellington is a branch of Living Streets Aotearoa, Inc. Formed in 2002, it is an advocacy group with a vision of "More people choosing to walk more often and enjoying public places – young and old, fast and slow, walking, sitting and standing, commuting, shopping, between appointments, for exercise, for leisure and for pleasure."

The objectives of Living Streets Aotearoa are as following:

- 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
- To advocate for greater representation of walker and pedestrian concerns in urban and regional land use, urban design and transport planning and, as appropriate, at national level
- To education national, regional and local authorities, drivers, pedestrians and others on the benefits of walking, in order to improve road safety for pedestrians
- To foster consideration for people with special mobility needs

This submission emphasises the importance of walking as both transport and recreation, as well as improving access and conditions to create pedestrian-friendly environments.

Proposed Activities

Community Life

Parks and Reserves

Living Streets Wellington supports the provision, maintenance and upgrade of parks and reserves and in particular, encourages further development of walking tracks. This is important in encouraging walking as a recreation activity. However we would also support development of connections and signage for the Hutt River Trail, to improve knowledge and access.

Living Environment

Regulatory Services

Living Streets Wellington supports parking enforcement but would like to see more of a focus on reducing footpath parking and ensuring safe and easily accessible areas for pedestrians, both within the CBD and also the surrounding areas.

Land Transport

Land Transport

Living Streets Wellington would like to emphasise the importance of considering pedestrians in all land transport planning. The Ministry of Transport reports walking

as our second most common travel mode.¹ Walking is also an important contributing mode to other forms of transport eg. public transport and even driving. It is also the only cheap and independent mode of transport for some people eg. children, those living in suburbs with limited/infrequent public transport and those without private vehicles and/or licenses. We are all pedestrians at some point and so planning needs to take this into account as a priority, rather than an adjunct.

We support the inclusion of pedestrian needs in determining road designs in unsafe areas and also the importance of street lighting for safety.

We also support the need for directional signage and would like to see an improvement, alongside Greater Wellington Regional Council and Ontrack, in signage between the railway station and H2O Xstream, as this represents a popular destination point for people from within Upper Hutt and also those outside.

We support the assessment of footpath conditions, provided action is taken for areas not deemed suitable, particularly in considering people such as those in wheelchairs, people with vision impairments and people with prams.

We support a road safety education programme but would like to emphasise the importance of acknowledging pedestrians as important road users and education for both pedestrians and drivers around this.

Summary

Living Streets Wellington supports the proposals within the Draft Annual Plan, however we would like to emphasise the importance of careful planning to prioritise walking as an essential contributing transport option and recreational activity. We would like to see Upper Hutt City Council acknowledge walking as an integral component in its planning.

Thank you for considering this submission.

Living Streets Wellington

¹ Ministry of Transport. Getting There – on foot, by cycle. A strategy to advance walking and cycling in New Zealand transport. 2005.