



Report 08.761
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Committee Regional Transport
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Recommended Regional Walking Plan

1. Purpose

To provide the Committee with an overview of the submissions received on the draft Regional Walking Plan and to seek the Committee's agreement to adopt the revised Regional Walking Plan as set out in **Attachment 1**. This report follows the Committee's initial consideration of the revised plan at its meeting on 13 August 2008. A copy of that report (08.454) is provided in **Attachment 2**, for the Committee's reference.

2. Significance of the decision

The matters for decision in this report **do not** trigger the significance policy of the Council or otherwise trigger section 76(3)(b) of the Local Government Act 2002.

3. Background

The Regional Walking Plan has been reviewed with the assistance of a technical/stakeholder group comprised of representatives from Greater Wellington, the region's city and district council's, the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA), Ministry of Transport, Living Streets Aotearoa, Regional Public Health, Wellington Chamber of Commerce, Automobile Association, Sport Wellington, Accident Compensation Corporation and New Zealand Police.

The review process has involved two stakeholder workshops to assist in development of a draft plan, followed by formal public consultation on the draft. The matters raised in the submissions have been carefully considered and the draft plan amended where appropriate.

The Committee considered the submissions, officer responses and the recommended plan for the first time at their meeting on the 13 August 08 (Report 08.454). The Committee did not make any resolutions and left the report on the table, asking officers to give consideration to, and provide

clarification on, a number of matters arising from the Committee's discussion. These matters are addressed in section 4 below.

4. Matters arising from 13 August RLTC meeting

Several issues were raised for further consideration or clarification, as set out below.

- 4.1 There was discussion amongst the Committee about the level of involvement by city and district councils in developing the draft regional walking plan and the need for greater buy-in from local councils.

During development of the draft plan two workshops were held involving city and district council officers, advocacy groups and other stakeholders such as NZ Police and regional health representatives. Workshop material and iterations of the draft plan were also circulated for further feedback and comment prior to full public consultation. While consensus could not always be reached on every issue, we believe the plan addresses the range of issues and proposed interventions identified by the working group, and the actions are framed in such a way to allow flexibility when the detail beneath them is developed by the responsible agency. In this way the plan recognises the differences between city and district councils in the region and enables them to decide the appropriate scope, focus and timeframe to suit their local community needs.

- 4.2 Concern was raised about the potential hidden costs to territorial authorities from implementing the plan.

The regional plan identifies at the strategic level all of the types of interventions we¹ should be progressing in the region to achieve the desired outcomes for walking identified in the Regional Land Transport Strategy (RLTS). How far and how fast the various implementing agencies (including city and district councils) choose to progress these interventions is up to those agencies. For city and district councils the key process for these decisions will be through local Annual Plans and Long Term Council Community Plans.

The expectation is that the various interventions be progressed in accordance with timeframes in the plan, where these are specified. Timing of implementation should also consider the need to contribute to ambitious targets for walking and cycling in the Wellington RLTS, the Government Policy Statement (GPS) on Land Transport Funding, and the New Zealand Transport Strategy (NZTS).

- 4.3 Two issues were raised in relation to targets. The first, whether the RLTS active mode share target of 15% by 2016 is ambitious enough – particularly given recent targets published in the NZTS and GPS 2008. The second, whether walking and cycling targets for each city and district council should be set through the regional plan.

¹ The region's organisations responsible for implementing identified actions.

Work has been initiated by NZTA, assisted by GW officers, to translate the medium term targets in the GPS (which have a 2015 timeframe similar to the RLTS) to the regional level and to gain an understanding of how well current RLTS targets are aligned. The GPS target for active modes is to increase the **number** of walking and cycling trips by 1% per year through to 2015. The RLTS seeks a 2% increase in **mode share** (proportion of all trips) by 2016. To achieve this mode share increase in the Wellington region will mean that an increase in actual walking and cycling trip numbers of 31% by 2016, or an increase of 3.1% per year². The initial conclusions from the NZTA work is that the stretch target for active modes in the Wellington RLTS (journey to work only) is more challenging than the national target. No change to the current Wellington RLTS target for increases in active mode use is therefore recommended.

In terms of each city and district council's contribution to this regional target, it is most appropriate that this be decided by individual councils and their communities through local strategy development and Annual Plan processes. This is because councils need to respond to their particular community needs and its willingness to pay. It is likely that Wellington City will continue to drive increases in walking and cycling in the region, particularly for journey to work trips, whereas other areas will need to work towards reversing the current flat or declining trend in the short-medium term. It is recommended that each local council determine its contribution towards the regional target.

- 4.4 Some concern was raised at the meeting about whether pedestrian access to bus stops and transport interchanges are adequately covered in the plan.

Improving pedestrian access to all public transport services is important. Access to bus stops and public transport interchanges is expected to be addressed under the first action area 'Improve the pedestrian network' as these are part of the road network. Officers have amended the text of this action area to explicitly mention the bus stops and public transport interchanges (page 5 of the revised plan). Access to railway stations is still singled out as a specific action due to more complex ownership and responsibility issues that are involved.

- 4.5 The Committee queried whether the Great Harbour Way concept could be identified in the plan in some way. This concept is a continuous cycleway/walkway around Wellington's Harbour from Lambton Harbour to Days Bay.

Officers considered this request and have added a new action to the plan which seeks to address the issue of walking linkages between Petone and Wellington City that will require coordination between several parties. The new action is set out on page 10 of the plan: 'Investigate high quality improvements to active mode facilities between Petone and Ngauranga that connect the adjacent local networks'. Joint responsibility for progressing this action is identified as the NZTA, Wellington City Council and Hutt City Council as part of the Ngauranga Triangle Strategic Study.

² Assuming growth rate in trips by all modes increases at the same rate as the previous ten year period.

The Great Harbour Way concept has also been raised by a number of submitters on the Draft Regional Cycling Plan. The Committee will be considering those submissions shortly.

- 4.6 The need for the regional walking plan to consider all types of walking trips, not just trips to work and to school, was raised at the Committee meeting.

While the plan includes a specific action area around ‘walking to school’ (the review process identified the need for some specific initiatives around walking to school to address safety issues for children) it also targets other trip types through various action areas. For example, the first action to ‘Improve the pedestrian network’ (page 5 of the plan) targets all destinations including retail, health and recreation destinations. Walking trips within neighbourhoods and communities for all purposes are addressed under the action ‘Provide for pedestrians in land development’. Actions around funding, advocacy, promotion and information in the plan also relate to all walking trip purposes.

Officers are satisfied that the recommended Regional Walking Plan includes interventions to address all types of walking trips including to work, leisure, shop, education, public transport, and other destinations.

- 4.7 The need for the plan to be more positive about recreational walking was raised.

Walking for leisure or recreation has important health, fitness and wellbeing benefits. As a plan to implement the RLTS, the regional walking plan is appropriately focused on interventions for walking as a mode of transport. However, people who walk for recreation are also more likely to consider walking as a mode of transport for specific trip purposes.

The plan specifies actions to improve the walking network, including access to recreational destinations, and by promoting the wider benefits of walking. Other strategy documents and plans (eg. *At The Heart – Regional Physical Activity Strategy*) take a greater health or recreational perspective in relation to walking.

Officers are satisfied that the recommended Regional Walking Plan appropriately has a transport focus, but that it supports walking for leisure through many of its actions.

- 4.8 It was suggested that the plan include a statement of how it would be monitored.

The reference to monitoring has now been strengthened in the plan by including specific mention of the monitoring role of Greater Wellington, NZTA and city and district councils as part of the responsibilities section at the beginning of the plan.

- 4.9 The use of the terminology Regional Walking *Plan* was queried and it was suggested that perhaps the term *Framework* would be more appropriate.

The current terminology agreed through the recent Wellington RLTS review process was *Corridor Plans* and *Implementation Plans* that sit alongside and implement the RLTS. The Regional Walking Plan sets out a range of high level action areas and identifies responsibility for progressing these. It includes actions which are the responsibility of Greater Wellington, other national or regional agencies, local councils, or a combination requiring a coordinated approach. This differs from local council policies, plans, strategies or frameworks which should include the detail around those actions for which they are the lead agency, and will signal the extent to which those actions are to be implemented in their communities.

No change to the established terminology of Regional Walking *Plan* is recommended.

5. Submissions

Fifteen submissions were received on the draft plan. Of those, only three indicated a wish to be heard in support of their submission. The Committee heard these submitters at their meeting on 13 August.

Report 08.454 (Attachment 2) identified and discussed the significant issues raised by submitters. Key themes raised in submissions were:

- General support for development of local strategies for walking, but need for flexibility in scope
- Whether local level targets for walking should be provided
- Need to recognise the importance of land use influences on walking
- Need for the plan to address road safety
- Need to improve pedestrian access to all public transport nodes
- Need to take account of recreational walking
- Support for improving information for walking with various views on journey planner and signage
- Support for combined regional forum for walking and cycling
- Funding issues around walking infrastructure

A table of individual submitter points and responses was provided as Attachment 2 to **Report 08.454**. This can be found at:

http://www.gw.govt.nz/council-reports/pdfs/reportdocs/2008_454_3_Attachment.pdf

The Committee was also provided with full copies of all the submissions as Attachment 3 to **Report 08.454**. This can be found at:

http://www.gw.govt.nz/council-reports/pdfs/reportdocs/2008_454_4_Attachment.pdf

6. Recommended final Regional Walking Plan

The draft Regional Walking Plan was amended with consideration given to the matters raised in submissions and to the discussions of the Committee on 13 August. The recommended final Regional Walking Plan is set out in **Attachment 1** to this report.

If approved, copies of the final plan will be distributed to all stakeholders and submitters in November 2008.

7. Communication

If adopted, the Regional Walking Plan will be communicated via:

- Media release
- GWRC website (final plan available as a pdf)
- Mail out to all key stakeholders and submitters.

8. Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. *Receives the report;*
2. *Notes the content of the report;*
3. *Agrees to adopt the final Regional Walking Plan, as set out in Attachment 1; and*
4. *Delegates to the Chair of the Regional Land Transport Committee authority to approve any final amendments to the plan resulting from this Committee meeting.*

Report prepared by:

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Attachment 1: Recommended Regional Walking Plan – October 2008

Attachment 2: Report 08.454 Consideration of submissions and recommended Regional Walking Plan