

## **PART 1.0 ■ EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **1.1 Vision**

This Strategy identifies a walking and cycling vision for the Gisborne District and provides a strategic approach to further the realisation of the community vision, which is:

*Gisborne District is a walking and cycling friendly region. Walking and cycling are safe, convenient, enjoyable and popular forms of transport and leisure that contribute to community health, well-being and tourism.*

At a time when the benefits of walking and cycling are being increasingly recognised, there is also a growing recognition that further action is likely to be required for these benefits to be fully realised. This strategy provides a strategic direction to encourage and direct such future action.

### **1.2 Purpose of the Strategy**

The Strategy identifies actual and potential walking and cycling networks and facilities, as well as actions that are designed to increase pedestrian and cyclist numbers. The Strategy seeks to address the significant issues identified by the community in relation to these activities, including increasing safety and improving the experience for those who already participate to some extent.



### **1.3 Implementation and Review**

One of the fundamental roles of Council is to promote the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of the community. Council's leadership in the development and implementation of this strategy is derived from this fundamental role. The Strategy anticipates that a wide range of other bodies will also take responsibility for its implementation including Land Transport New Zealand, Transit New Zealand, Gisborne Police, Health Agencies, Tourism Eastland, sports and recreational clubs and private individuals.

Important steps in Council's implementation of the Strategy will be the preparation of proposed ten-year implementation programmes, to provide input into the Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP), as well as 12-month "action plans" to provide input into Council's annual plan process. The Strategy's implementation will be reviewed on a three yearly basis to ensure that progress is being made.

## 1.4 Public Survey Results

A Public Survey conducted in July 2004 indicated that 80% of the respondents either walk, bike or play sport on at least a weekly basis. Only 6% of the sample did not undertake any of these activities in the past year and this was usually for health or age reasons.

Just 3% of those surveyed considered the existing provision of cycling facilities to be very satisfactory. The survey results indicate that the community consider there to be serious safety issues associated with the existing cycling facilities.

Walkers were generally more satisfied with facilities although only 6% were very satisfied with the current walking facilities.<sup>1</sup>

Most people walk or ride for fitness and the results infer that most participants are aware of the health benefits. Safety was given as a significant reason for non-participation and as a significant concern by those who presently walk or cycle.

## 1.5 Environment and Human Behaviour

The Strategy identifies two key components that need to be considered to increase the uptake of walking and other sustainable transport options like cycling. The first is the environment and the second is human behaviour.

Better public transport, safer routes, pleasant surroundings and small to medium distances are all key environmental elements that make walking and cycling attractive. There is a need for education and promotion so that people want to participate and understand the benefits of walking and cycling. These benefits are not just around health outcomes. They also include a greater sense of community, less traffic congestion, greater economic benefits and an increase in creativity, particularly in children. The benefits are detailed further in Part II of the Strategy.

## 1.6 Gisborne Environment - Issues

A mild climate and relatively flat urban topography make Gisborne potentially an attractive location for cycling and walking. Why do more people not take advantage of this opportunity to walk or cycle as transport or for leisure?

One frequently cited reason is that most walking and cycling activities occur within the road network and little conscious provision has been made to date for the specific needs of cyclists particularly. Recognition of the need to consider and plan for cyclists and walkers, as legitimate road network users, is essential to the success of this Strategy.



<sup>1</sup> Gisborne District Cycling and Walking Survey as Digi Poll Ltd survey conducted by International Research Consultants Ltd, prepared for Gisborne District council in July 2004. Page 8.

The design, construction and maintenance of road facilities, especially intersections, roundabouts and road markings are key components which determine the safety of cyclists, and walkers to a lesser extent, within the Gisborne District.

To help encourage walking and cycling for leisure, the Council should strive to provide high-quality leisure routes, recognising the importance such facilities have on the health, well-being and attractiveness of the community.

## **1.7 Conclusion**

This Walking and Cycling Strategy seeks to support and encourage walking and cycling as part of daily life activities. The aims is to help promote more active lifestyles and improved physical, mental and emotional health, as well as encouraging increased community "connectedness" and to offset the isolating effects of busy lifestyles, home entertainment and motor vehicle use.