

2.0 VISION and ACTIONS

2.1 Introduction

In 2002, the Government released the New Zealand Transport Strategy, the first national transport strategy to seek to integrate all modes and users of transport. The Government also identified funding for local communities to facilitate projects or actions designed to maximize the contribution of walking and cycling to achieving the NZTS vision and objectives through initiatives designed to increase participation in walking and cycling activities.

One of the requirements to access government funding, is that local communities need to have their own vision and strategy for walking and cycling in their region. The parties involved in the development of this document acknowledge the benefit of planning strategically for the future health and well-being of our community through encouraging a safe, enjoyable and convenient environment for participation in walking and cycling activities.

Walking and cycling are two of the best and easiest ways of being active. Each can be done in small amounts each day. They are free or relatively inexpensive and can be incorporated into everyday life.

The good news is that New Zealanders already do lots of walking. In fact research from Sport and Recreation NZ (SPARC) shows that walking is the number one recreation activity. Where New Zealand can improve is by making it easier for people to walk.

However both walking and cycling are on the decline. Indications are that between 1990 and 1998 the number of cycling trips in New Zealand reduced 39%.² The decline in both walking and cycling as forms of household travel is most apparent among the young.

There are 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, safe walkways and roads, pleasant surroundings and small distances are all key environmental elements of making walking and cycling attractive. However, people need to want to walk or cycle and understand the benefits of these activities. 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.

2.2 What is a Walking and Cycling 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.

2.3 Why do we need a Strategy?

Walking and Cycling (as modes of transport and as leisure activities) have many social, economic and environmental benefits:

² Getting there- on foot, by cycle, Ministry of Transport, February 2005

- ▶ Walking and cycling provide access, mobility and transport choice to members of our City and District.
- ▶ People engage with their communities more closely on foot and by cycle than when travelling in a motor vehicle. Because of this, walking and cycling can play an important role in the development of more lively, better connected and friendly communities.
- ▶ Walking and cycling are good for our health. They allow us to be physically active while going about our daily business. Walking and cycling are major sources of exercise and leisure.
- ▶ Walking and cycling are among the most environmentally friendly forms of transport. Unlike motor vehicles, they are non-polluting and use no fossil fuels.
- ▶ Tourism can also benefit from walking and cycling. Inviting walking environments encourage tourists to stay longer and spend more; cycle tourists tend to stay longer than those using other modes of transport.

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.

2.4 Council's Role

Council (with the assistance of other agencies) is responsible for the ongoing development and monitoring of this strategy. Council is also one of the key agencies responsible for its implementation. Council provides core facilities and infrastructure on which cycling and walking depend, such as reserves, roads and signs. Council is also one funding source for new initiatives to promote walking and cycling.

Council's involvement in the development and implementation of this strategy is based on one of its most fundamental roles: to promote the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of the communities of their region. In performing this role, Council takes its direction from legal statutes, adopted council documents, strategic documents and processes of consultation to ascertain the needs and views of its communities.

2.5 Other Participants

Other participants in the development and implementation of this strategy include:

Tairāwhiti District Health, Public Health Unit

Involved in promoting safety, including road safety.

Turanga Health, Injury Prevention

Involved in promoting safety, including road safety.

The Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC)

ACC also has a role in promoting road safety.

SPARC and Sport Gisborne

Sport Gisborne promotes active communities through programmes such as "push play" and green prescription. Sport Gisborne is funded primarily by Sport and Recreation New Zealand (SPARC), a government organisation.

Land Transport New Zealand

(LTNZ)- LTNZ's objective is to contribute to an integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable land transport system. LTNZ allocates funding for transport projects throughout New Zealand and promotes road safety. Activities to promote Walking and Cycling are one the specific activity classes for LTNZ funding.

Transit New Zealand

Responsible for operating the state highway system, parts of which are in the Gisborne District walking and cycling network.

The NZ Police

The Police are also involved in promoting general road safety. Police education officers run programmes aimed at walking and cycling safety for school children.

Department of Conservation

A significant provider of recreational walking facilities and information on these facilities.

Sports Clubs (for example: Gisborne Amateur Cycling Club)

Clubs raise awareness of walking and cycling recreational opportunities and take an active role in the development and maintenance of facilities. Clubs are also facility users.

Individuals and Private Business

Individuals are the primary users of facilities such as the transport network and walking tracks. Individuals and businesses are also involved in the development and maintenance of facilities through volunteer work, corporate and individual sponsorship, bequests, funding of facilities used for commercial operations, etc.