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## **CYCLING POLICY**

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### **1. Purpose of report**

This report seeks Committee agreement to recommend Council adopt the draft Cycling Policy. The policy provides a framework for the continued improvement of the cycling environment in Wellington City.

### **2. Executive summary**

The draft Cycling Policy is a primary element of the Travel Demand Management Plan developed as part of the 2006 Transport Strategy and is a key project to encourage physical activity under the Regional Recreation Strategy. It seeks to establish a framework for initiatives to improve the cycling environment in Wellington City.

The intent of the draft Cycling Policy is to provide a safer environment for cyclists and to reduce the perception of road danger.

The adoption of the policy will allow the Council to seek supportive funding from agencies such as the New Zealand Transport Agency. The policy will inform the infrastructure investment programme and other specific projects and initiatives.

### **3. Recommendations**

Officers recommend that the Committee:

- 1. Receive the information.*
- 2. Agree to recommend to Council that it adopts the draft Cycling Policy (attached as Appendix 2).*
- 3. Delegate to the Portfolio Leader for Urban Development and Transport the authority to approve minor editorial changes to the draft Cycling Policy prior to approval by Council.*

4. *Direct officers to investigate the conversion of Thorndon Quay to a peak hour, peak direction cycle lane, with consultation in early 2009 and report back before June 2009.*
5. *Note that the policy implementation plan (attached as Appendix 1) will be finalised with targets once funding is approved through the LTCCP and NLTP processes.*

## **4. Background**

The Wellington City Council Transport Strategy (2006) identified the development of a Travel Demand Management (TDM) plan as a key priority for the next three years. The Cycling Policy is a primary element of the TDM plan. In addition, this policy has been identified by Council as a primary project to promote physical activity under the Regional Recreation Strategy. The Regional Physical Activity Plan 'At the Heart' has also identified the need for partners to adopt active transport policies.

Cycling to work in Wellington City has increased steadily over the last 20 years. This is a result of the intensification of Wellington's inner city and surrounding suburbs with more people living closer to their work, making cycling a viable transport alternative.

Cycling is also a commuting choice which, like walking, is non-polluting, quiet and has minimal effect on the built and natural environment. It is an accessible, convenient and environmentally-friendly means of making journeys around the city.

The draft policy seeks to establish a framework for initiatives to improve the cycling environment in Wellington. The adoption of the policy will allow the Council to seek supportive funding from the New Zealand Transport Agency.

In June this year Committee gave approval for the draft Cycling Policy to go out for community consultation. In August/September the draft Cycling Policy was released for comment along with the draft Walking Policy and the draft Track and Recreation Activities Policy. In total, 157 submissions were received on the draft Cycling Policy and a number of submitters presented their submission to Committee in October.

## **5. Discussion**

### ***What will the draft Cycling Policy do?***

The primary focus of the draft Cycling Policy is to make cycling in Wellington a safe and convenient travel mode. The draft policy does not actively seek to increase cycling numbers until the cycling environment is improved. The focus is on areas where existing cycling provision is disjointed or does not allow access to key destinations.

It is considered that infrastructural improvements need to be made and/or traffic management measures introduced so that cyclists are safe on Wellington's roads and that crash numbers are reduced. The safety and convenience focus will improve the cycling environment over time.

The cycling environment needs to be safer and more convenient in Wellington. Cyclists are more likely to be involved in a road crash than a vehicle occupant, pedestrian or bus passenger. Wellington's cycling crash numbers are amongst the highest in the country with cyclists accounting for 14 per cent of all road casualties. The intent of the policy is to reduce cycling casualties by making cycling safer and more convenient. When the cycling environment is improved targets can be set to increase cyclist numbers.

The key objectives of the draft Cycling Policy are as follows:

1. To improve cycle safety throughout Wellington
2. To improve the convenience of cycling in Wellington
3. To improve the experience of cycle trips to and from the central area
4. To improve the experience of cycling trips made to and from suburban centres
6. To improve the experience of cycling trips made to and from educational centres
7. To improve the experience of cycling trips made for recreation.

The objectives will be measured via targets and actions set out in the draft Cycling Policy.

***What is the key focus for the draft Cycling Policy?***

The draft policy aims to provide a safer environment for cyclists and reduce the perception of road danger. This will be achieved by a variety of measures including: road improvements to increase cycle friendliness and make cyclists more conspicuous, education and training of road users.

One of the main challenges is to reduce motorists' speed in key locations to reduce the conflict between motorists and cyclists by using a combination of lower speed limits and traffic-calming in key areas - these include the central city, Golden Mile and residential suburban streets. Other areas where "cycle-friendly" improvements can be made are through the design and use of speed humps, platforms and cushions.

The draft policy seeks to provide good-quality, continuous, cycle-friendly routes along each of the main transport routes to the city, together with a network of links to each of the suburban centres and access to recreational spaces. Bus lanes and carriageway cycle lanes will be promoted as cycle routes.

Council is undertaking a significant programme of bus priority measures over the next 10 years. The design of new bus routes will cater for the needs of cyclists. This includes the progressive rollout of bus priority measures through

the Golden Mile, arterial routes and suburban centres (as proposed in the Draft Ngauranga to Airport Corridor Plan) and presents an opportunity to create an extensive network of shared bus/cycle lanes.

The draft Cycling Policy also considers:

- Catering for cyclists at intersections  
*Advanced stop boxes, head start special cycle signals.*
- Provision of secure bicycle parks  
*Lockers, showers and changing facilities at key destinations.*
- Education  
*Journey planner, cycle-friendly routes and links to recreational areas and promotion of environmental, financial and health benefits.*

## **6. Links to other policies**

The development of a Cycling Policy for Wellington has been identified as a task for the City Council to complete under the recently approved Ngauranga to Airport Corridor Plan. Modal change from private motor vehicles to sustainable transport including cycling has been identified as an important action in the recently released Government Policy Statement on transport.

The Cycling Policy takes an overarching view of Wellington's cycling environment and looks at how Council can make the environment safer and more convenient. The policy has significant cross-over with a number of other Council policies and programmes. These include:

- Walking Policy
- The Urban Development Strategy
- The Open Spaces Access Plan
- Draft Track Recreation Activity Policy
- Parking Policy
- SaferRoads/Neighbourhood Accessibility Plans
- Bus Priority Programme
- Footpath Management Plan
- Town Centre and Local Area Plans
- Central City Framework (to be developed)
- Climate Change Action Plan.

It is intended that the Cycling Policy will be supported by these plans and implemented through Council's infrastructure and facility investment programme.

## 7. Feedback from consultation

Appendix one summarises the consultation process and feedback received, it also provides officer comment and outlines proposed changes to the draft policy.

One of the major themes that emerged from oral submitters was opposition to the stated goal in the draft strategy to make cycling safe and convenient rather than attempting to increase cycling numbers. The view of officers was that given the poor safety record of cycling in the region, it was inappropriate to attempt to increase cycling numbers until the safety issues had been addressed.

Sadly, this view has been reinforced by the latest regional safety statistics released by Greater Wellington, of which Wellington city statistics form the major part. These showed that cyclist casualties increased to a total of 150 in 2007, reaching the highest number recorded since 1996. This number is driven by the increasing numbers of cyclist crossing the CBD cordon which have been growing strongly since 2006. The result also challenges the view held by many submitters that cycle safety will increase as numbers increase and cyclists become more visible. While true where a substantial proportion of road users are cyclists (such as in some European cities), moving from say 1.6% of journeys to work to say 2.5% does not provide the required degree of additional visibility or awareness.

Another theme from oral submitters was a desire to provide a greater degree of priority to cyclists in the roading network.

Given the restrictions on road space within the city and the practical and cost limitations on constructing more space, allocating more road space to cyclists can only come at the expense of other road uses. A practical application of this principle is to provide cycle lanes at the expense of car parking. Officers support the application of this principle in selected locations where the trade offs between parking and cycle safety provide clear benefits to cyclists.

It is therefore proposed that the cycle policy include the following new action:

*Investigate the feasibility of using clearways as a cycle lane on key commuter routes.*

It is also proposed to use Thorndon Quay as a demonstration project for this principle, which is a hot spot for cycle crashes (22 reported crashes 2003-2007). This will involve establishing clearways in the peak direction. Between 7.00am and 9.00am, angle parking will be replaced with a cycleway in the inbound direction, and between 4.00pm and 6.00pm, the same will occur for the outbound direction (80% of reported crashes occur in peak hours). Officers recommend that consultation on this proposal be commenced in the New Year and reported back for a final decision before June 2009. The planning and consultation can be achieved with existing resources.

A number of changes have been made to the draft Cycling Policy.

- Reference to linkages to external strategies.
- A new action to advocate for increased funding assistance rates for cycling projects.
- A new action to advocate for installation of red light cameras to help address intersection crash rates.
- A new action giving conceptual support to the Great Harbourway concept.
- A new action to investigate the feasibility of setting up an 0800 Cycle Crash hotline to report cycle crashes to inform our work programme.
- A new action to investigate the feasibility of using clearways on key commuter routes.

## **8. Implementation of the Cycling Policy**

The implementation programme for the Cycling Policy identifies specific projects and programmes (covering the full range of engineering, education, enforcement and encouragement activities) with cost estimates and timeframes.

The implementation programme will be included within the LTCCP and National Land Transport Programme and may be subject to change in accordance with technical, political and financial requirements. Once funding from each of these sources is approved, we will then be able to prepare a finalised list of actions with deliverable timeframes. The finalised list of projects will reflect the priority given to the actions shown below. In order for all actions to be completed over the next 10 years additional annual funding of approximately \$1.0M would be required. This is considered to be unaffordable in the current economic environment.

Officers recommend approval of the proposed implementation plan shown in appendix 1 which assumes that there is no increase for cycling from the existing LTCCP. The current net cost for cycling development is approximately \$35,000 per year.

The table in Appendix 1 shows the net cost to Council of each measure after NZTA subsidy which is currently payable at 53% for physical works or 75% for investigation proposals. The figures differ from those given in the draft Implementation Programme at the back of the Cycling Policy which were total costs before subsidy. Actions have been prioritised into the following order:

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
<b>A</b>	Improvement to a location with a known history of crashes involving cyclists or a course of action to address the high number of cyclist casualties
<b>B</b>	Most likely to have an effect on reducing vehicle trips and also improves safety and convenience for those currently using the network
<b>C</b>	Some effect on reducing vehicle trips but improves safety and convenience for those currently using the network
<b>D</b>	Marginal effect on reducing vehicle trips and some improvement to the network but expensive or difficult to action
<b>E</b>	Minimal effect on either reducing vehicle trips or improvements to safety or convenience, and difficult to gain community acceptance, expensive or difficult to action or implement

The implementation plan also shows additional cycling benefits that can be achieved through shared actions under the implementation of the walking policy. These benefits are mainly achieved by the introduction of comprehensive school travel planning programme and provide a further \$1.5M over 10 years.

## **9. Conclusion**

This report presents to Committee the proposed Cycling Policy for approval and recommendation to Council. The proposed policy has been through public consultation and the feedback received provides strong endorsement for the policies, objectives and actions proposed. A number of amendments have been made as a result of the feedback we received and are recommended to Councillors. Approval of the policy will enable Council to take a structured approach to the development and management of the cycling environment in Wellington and will also inform the infrastructure investment programme, District Plan, other specific projects and initiatives. It will also enable Council to seek subsidies through the National Land Transport Programme.

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Urban Development and Transport*







Cycling Policy Proposed Action		Net Annual Cost to Council										10 Years
		09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	
<b>Value of additional benefits from combining with Walking Policy Implementation</b>												
1.1	<i>Adopt school travel planning programme, rolled out in all schools across Wellington with the initial focus on primary schools but extended to include intermediate and secondary schools in the future</i>	12500	12500	12500	12500	12500	12500	12500	12500	12500	12500	\$ 125,000.00
1.12	<i>Promote, encourage and support the use of the Safer Routes to School programme and School Travel Plans</i>											Operational
2.1	<i>Undertake an audit of common routes to and from school to determine barriers and issues affecting cycling</i>	7500	7500	7500	7500	7500						\$ 37,500.00
2.11	<i>Undertake analysis to determine options to correct issues identified in audit including identifying likely costs. Prioritise works in a way that creates the potential to reduce car trips to and from school.</i>	15000	15000	15000	15000	15000						\$ 75,000.00
3.17	<i>Provide street improvements as identified to improve routes to and from school i.e. for safe crossing points and traffic calming as identified in the school travel plan</i>		130000	130000	130000	130000	150000	150000	150000	150000	150000	\$ 1,270,000.00
	<b>Total additional benefits</b>	<b>35000</b>	<b>165000</b>	<b>165000</b>	<b>165000</b>	<b>165000</b>	<b>162500</b>	<b>162500</b>	<b>162500</b>	<b>162500</b>	<b>162500</b>	<b>\$ 1,507,500.00</b>
	<b>Combined value of cycling actions and common elements with Walking Policy</b>	<b>69100</b>	<b>199950</b>	<b>199700</b>	<b>199950</b>	<b>200200</b>	<b>197000</b>	<b>197000</b>	<b>197500</b>	<b>197500</b>	<b>197500</b>	<b>\$ 347,900.00</b>

Note: Items in the shaded area will be funded from the Walking Policy implementation

## **Supporting Information**

### **1) Strategic Fit / Strategic Outcome**

The policy implements Council's strategic direction under the Transport Strategy 2006, the Social and Recreation Strategy 2006 and the Urban Development Strategy 2006. The policy also meets the strategic direction of the Regional Recreation Strategy's *'At the Heart'* Regional Physical Activity Plan.

### **2) LTCCP/Annual Plan reference and long term financial impact**

Approval of this policy will lead to an expectation that additional funding will be sought through the LTCCP.

### **3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations**

There are no specific Treaty of Waitangi implications.

### **4) Decision-Making**

This is not a significant decision under the Local Government Act.

### **5) Consultation**

#### **a) General Consultation**

Extensive consultation was undertaken with key stakeholders and the wider community.

#### **b) Consultation with Maori**

Maori were consulted as part of the consultation process.

### **6) Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications at this stage.

### **7) Consistency with existing policy**

This report is consistent with other Council policy including the Open Spaces Access Plan, the Draft Track Recreation Activity Policy, SaferRoads/Neighbourhood Accessibility Plans, the Bus Priority Programme, the Footpath Management Plan, the Central City Framework (to be developed) and the Climate Change Action Plan.