
WALKING POLICY

1. Purpose of report

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

2. Executive summary

The draft Walking 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 walking environment in Wellington City.

The draft Walking Policy seeks to promote 'walking for a purpose', either as a method of commuting or as a substitute for short trips taken by car.

The adoption of the policy will allow the Council to seek supportive funding from funding 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 Walking 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 Walking Policy prior to approval by Council.*

4. *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 Walking 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.

Wellington is a great city for walking. In particular, the compact nature of the central city means that residents and visitors alike are able to access most activities relatively easily without the need to make a vehicle trip. The Council's efforts to facilitate walking as a commuting choice result in the following positive outcomes:

- Improved health and recreation outcomes
- Reduced congestion, which helps improve productivity and economic activity
- Reduced transport related greenhouse gas emissions
- Reduced transport related particulate emissions (relates to air quality).

For most people, walking is an enjoyable, free and accessible activity and a necessary part of their everyday journeys, whether it is getting to work or for recreation. Wellington experiences a high level of pedestrian activity for both the journey to work and also for movement within the city. Wellington has the highest number of commuter walking trips by population in New Zealand¹ and at nearly 20 per cent of all commuter trips, is one of the highest in the developed world.

The draft Walking Policy seeks to establish a framework for initiatives to improve the walking 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 Walking Policy to go out for community consultation. In August/September the draft policy was released for comment along with the draft Cycling Policy and the draft Track and Recreation Activities Policy. In total, 74 submissions were received on the draft Walking Policy and a number of submitters presented their submission to Committee in October.

¹ Statistics New Zealand, Journey to work mode share 2006

5. Discussion

What will the draft Walking Policy do?

The draft policy seeks to promote 'walking for a purpose', such as the trip to work, and to encourage walking trips that would otherwise be taken by car. It seeks to increase the number of short trips made by people who walk to work or study, either as a single journey, or as part of a journey. This includes increasing walking activity in suburban centres by encouraging people to walk to their local services rather than taking the car.

It is aimed at all walkers, whether they have special mobility requirements, have limited experience (eg children) or are utility walkers (eg commuters). The draft policy seeks to ensure that all walkers have a safe and pleasant walking experience, and aims to actively encourage walking as the foremost mode of transportation in the city.

The draft policy also seeks to encourage walking to help ease pressure on the city's transport system and to identify a prioritised network of pedestrian connections in the city and suburbs for protection and enhancement. It promotes connectivity between roads and the open space access network.

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

1. To promote the benefits of walking and encourage more people to walk
2. To improve pedestrian safety throughout the city
3. To improve the experience of those walking through or about the central area
4. To improve the experience of those walking to and from public transport stops
5. To increase the number of commuter trips taken by foot to and from the central area
6. To increase the number of short walking trips to and from suburban centres
7. To increase the number of short walking trips to and from educational centres.

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

What is the key focus for the draft Walking Policy?

Wellington is already a walking city, yet work is required to understand the 'pedestrian profile' and improve safety. By establishing and implementing measures to encourage more walking, the draft policy will help to strategically target groups who are both willing and able to change their travel habits to include walking in their everyday trips.

One of the key areas of the draft policy is road safety and the potential conflict between vehicles and pedestrians. The draft policy considers pedestrian

priority at traffic signals, while recognising that the signals need to provide for all road users. The tools to enhance pedestrian safety include: safe crossing locations in combination with slow speed environments, crossing facilities, traffic-calming and speed limits less than 50km/h.

The draft Walking Policy also considers:

- Physical barriers
Insufficient or inadequate crossings, cluttered street furniture, litter and limited pedestrian capacity related to footpath width.
- Personal safety
Well maintained and lit streets to facilitate pedestrian confidence.
- Education
Financial benefits of walking (reduced petrol and parking costs), environmental benefits of walking, journey planner, school walking plans and health benefits of walking.

6. Links to other policies

The development of a Walking 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 walking has been identified as an important action in the recently released Government Policy Statement on transport.

The Walking Policy takes an overarching view of Wellington's walking environment and looks at how Council can make this environment safer and more convenient. Because walking also plays a very important recreational role in the lives of many Wellingtonians, the policy has significant cross-over with a number of other Council policies and programmes. These include:

- Cycling Policy
- The Urban Development Strategy
- The Open Spaces Access Plan
- Draft Track Recreation Activity 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 Walking 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.

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

- New wording for the aim of the policy
- Reference to linkages to external strategies.
- Action 2.2 strengthened so that a hierarchy of users is created for all streets at various times of day, this will allow network operators to prioritise signal settings.
- A new action to advocate for increased funding assistance rates for walking projects.
- A new action to advocate for installation of red light cameras to help address intersection crash rates.
- A new action to include pedestrian signage on “no exit” streets where a pedestrian exit exists.

8. Implementation of the Walking Policy

The implementation programme for the Walking 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 walking from the existing LTCCP. The current net cost for walking development is approximately \$400,000. however, current LTCCP allocations are largely unsubsidised. If this funding is combined in a package approach under the Walking Policy, it becomes eligible for NZTA subsidy. This should enable us to deliver approximately \$800,000 annual benefits at the same net cost to Council of \$400,000.

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 Walking Policy which are total costs before subsidy. Actions have been prioritised into the following order:

Priority	Rationale
A	Most likely to have an effect on reducing vehicle trips. Best value for money, most likely to get general public acceptance
B	Some effect on reducing vehicle trips but improves safety and convenience for those currently using the network
C	Likely to have an effect on reducing vehicle trips but expensive or difficult to action
D	Marginal effect on reducing vehicle trips and some improvement to the network but expensive or difficult to action
E	Marginal effect on either reducing vehicle trips or improvements to safety or convenience, however difficult to gain community acceptance, expensive or difficult to action or implement

9. Conclusion

This report presents to Committee the proposed Walking 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 small 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 walking 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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Appendix 1 – Proposed Implementation Plan

	Walking 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		
1.1	Adopt Land Transport New Zealand's best practice pedestrian network and design guide												Operational
1.14	Advocate for continued public transportation services in Wellington and assist in ensuring services are convenient and reliable.												Operational
1.15	Promote , encourage and support education and training of school children relating to road safety												Operational
1.16	Adopt school travel planning programmes, 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	12500	12500	12500	12500	12500	12500	12500	12500	12500	12500	12500	125000
1.18	Promote , encourage and support the use safer routes to school programme, including walking school buses, walk to school week and school travel plans.												Operational
1.19	Adopt the International Charter for Walking signalling Councils commitment to the value of walking and the promotion of healthy, efficient and sustainable communities.												Operational
1.3	Require that new developments on key pedestrian routes do not exacerbate wind issues at street level												Operational
1.4	Adopt the CPTED guidelines and lighting standards in public realm developments and redevelopments												Operational
1.6	Promote the safe design of roads and pedestrian routes, including attention to planting, surveillance, fencing, lighting and												Operational

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.