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Committee Regional Cycling Plan Hearing Subcommittee
Author Natasha Hayes, Senior Policy Advisor

Report on submissions to the Draft Regional Cycling Plan

1. Purpose

To provide the Subcommittee with an overview of the submissions received on the draft Regional Cycling Plan and officer comments on the significant issues raised by submitters.

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 existing Regional Cycling Plan was adopted by the Regional Land Transport Committee (RLTC) in February 2004. The plan was subsequently reformatted and published alongside the current Wellington Regional Land Transport Strategy (RLTS) in August 2007. The RLTS noted the need to review all implementation plans to ensure they are aligned with the strategic framework provided by the current RLTS. Review of the Regional Cycling Plan was signalled to take place in 2007/08.

The Regional Cycling Plan has been reviewed with the assistance of a technical/stakeholder group comprised of representatives from Greater Wellington, the region's Territorial Authorities (TAs), New Zealand Transport Agency, Ministry of Transport, Regional Public Health, Wellington Chamber of Commerce, Automobile Association, Sport Wellington, Accident Compensation Corporation, New Zealand Police and several cycling advocacy groups.

The review process has involved two stakeholder workshops to assist in development of a draft plan, followed by formal public consultation inviting submissions on the draft.

4. Consultation

The Regional Land Transport Committee, at its meeting on 13 August 2008, approved the draft Regional Cycling Plan for public consultation.

Consultation commenced on 23 August 2008. The draft plan was mailed to approximately 140 stakeholders including:

- Land Transport NZ
- Transit NZ
- NZ Police
- Ministry Of Transport
- All local councils in the region
- Historic Places Trust
- Accident Compensation Corporation
- All district health boards in the region
- Regional Public Health
- Disability Reference Groups
- Road Transport Forum New Zealand, Automobile Association, Heavy Haulage Association
- Toll New Zealand Ltd
- ONTRACK
- Public Transport Operators
- Walking advocate groups (eg. LSA)
- Cycling advocate groups (eg. CAW, BikeNZ)
- Iwi representatives
- Wellington Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Sport Wellington (for SPARC)
- Youth Council's and Forums
- Victoria and Massey University Student Associations
- Parents Centres NZ, Playcentre Association, Kindergarten Inc, Te Kohanga Reo Trust
- Grey Power Associations and Age Concern

A media release was prepared and public notices were placed in the Dominion Post and Wairarapa Times Age. The Council's website had a dedicated page with an electronic submission form.

Submissions closed on 19 September 2008.

5. Submissions

5.1 Overview

Thirty five submissions were received on the draft plan in total, including 19 via the website.

23 submissions were received from individual members of the public. Five submissions were received from territorial authorities (Kapiti Coast District Council, Porirua City Council, Upper Hutt City Council, Hutt City Council

and Wellington City Council). The remaining submissions were from other agencies/organisations (NZ Transport Agency, Regional Public Health, Rotary Club of Eastern Hutt) and advocacy groups (Kapiti Cycling Inc, Cycle Aware Wellington, Great Harbour Way Coalition).

Of these submitters, fourteen indicated a wish to be heard in support of their submission. A Hearings Subcommittee was established at the 31 October Regional Transport Committee meeting to hear these submitters.

Discussion about the key issues arising from submissions is set out below. A table of individual submitter points and officer responses is provided in **Attachment 1**. A full copy of all submissions is provided as **Attachment 3** (enclosed separately).

5.2 Submission analysis and response

The issues raised by submitters through their submissions ranged both in terms of topic and specificity. Submitters commented on high level strategic issues through to detailed operational issues.

In general, most submitters noted their support for the actions in the draft plan. Submitters also raised issues and suggestions as to how they believed the plan could be amended or improved.

The following sets out some of the common and more significant issues raised by submitters and the officer comments in response.

5.2.1 Improve cycling infrastructure

The most common theme raised through submissions relates to improving the cycling network. Many submitters suggested that progressing infrastructure improvements urgently to make cycling safe and easy should be the focus of the plan.

Submitters called for high quality, dedicated cycling lanes (opinions differed on whether these should be on-road or off-road), adequate sealed shoulder width, clear road markings, priority measures at signals, more signage and information for cyclists, and more cycle parking facilities.

Several submitters raised concern about safety issues associated with buses passing cyclists and need for sufficient road space to accommodate both users. One submitter suggested that cyclists should be banned from some routes such as the Golden Mile in Wellington City for safety reasons.

Submitters noted the need for more enforcement around vehicles parking in cycle lanes.

Comment

The above issues are detailed matters to be addressed by local councils and the NZTA under the first action area in the plan 'Improve the Cycling Network'. The best practice guide referred to under this action area (Cycle Network and

Route Planning Guide) includes advice on options and considerations for all of the infrastructure improvements sought by submitters.

We agree that there is an urgent need to progress improvements to the cycling network, which is currently far from adequate in many locations.

Greater Wellington will be encouraging local councils to develop cycling strategies (if they have not already done so), to carry out network reviews/audits to identify deficiencies, and to implement improvements as soon as possible. The first step around development of local strategies will enable identification of those routes that should be addressed first due to particularly poor existing facilities or with high existing or potential volumes of cyclists.

We note, however, that local councils are required to respond to their local community needs and willingness to pay, and that this will have some bearing on how quickly they can review and improve their local cycling networks.

5.2.2 Cycling safety

Another common theme identified by submitters was cyclist safety. This was identified as a key factor affecting the uptake of cycling in the region.

Submitters sought improved cycling infrastructure, as covered in 5.2.1 above, but also suggested better driver training and education, awareness campaigns, legislative changes (for example around the driver licence age) and reduced vehicle speeds.

Wellington City Council commented that it believes the plan focuses too much on increasing cyclist numbers and needs more emphasis on safety.

Comment

Safety improvements are woven throughout the plan under several action areas. Local cycling strategies developed under the first action area 'Improve the cycling network' should identify local safety issues for cyclists. Network reviews will consider the need for safe cycling facilities and identify infrastructure improvements in response. Local strategies can also include actions to reduce vehicle speeds. Progress towards provision of safe cycling infrastructure and reducing vehicle speeds is likely to have the greatest impact on cyclist safety.

The plan also includes actions to deliver the NZTA's Cyclist Skills Training Programme in our region, and to carry out education and awareness campaigns to improve cyclist safety. Encouraging more people to participate in cycling is also likely to have benefits in terms of safety in numbers.

Some of the interventions identified by the technical working group and submitters are the responsibility of central government and advocacy for changes to existing legislation will be required.

The Regional Cycling Plan is complemented by a Regional Road Safety Plan that provides a specific focus on road safety initiatives and action planning, and

a Regional Travel Demand Management Strategy that seeks to reduce traffic volumes and addresses safety issues as part of school and workplace travel plans. These plans are also to be reviewed over the next two years.

5.2.3 Strategic cycling network

Several submitters commented on the strategic cycling network. One submitter suggested additional routes be added to the network map such as Paekakariki Hill Road, Akatarawa Road and coastal route between Petone and Eastbourne. Another submitter suggested the addition of a route through to Island Bay in Wellington City.

Several submitters sought more progress in implementing improvements to the strategic cycling network and some felt that Greater Wellington should have a stronger role in ensuring its completion. Views varied about what that role should be from prioritising the network and engaging with key players through to funding and implementing infrastructure improvements.

Comment

The Regional (Strategic) Cycling Network map was developed by members of the Regional Cycling Forum and identifies the key cycle network connections linking centres within the region for the purpose of transport. The additional routes identified by the submitters form part of adjacent local networks, or are primarily recreational cycling routes and not the most direct link between centres.

Greater Wellington can assist and support implementing agencies where appropriate, but is not a road controlling authority or a funding agency and the responsibility for Greater Wellington in the plan reflects this. The plan identifies the strategic regional cycling network and Greater Wellington has distributed a report on the network which identifies deficiencies and recommends priorities for infrastructure improvements (Bullen Report 2004). Greater Wellington has been advocating to implementing agencies for some years to progress the recommended improvements. We understand that the NZTA are now planning to update the Bullen Report and put more energy into implementing the improvements in conjunction with local councils.

5.2.4 Great Harbour Way concept

A number of submitters made direct reference to the Great Harbour Way (GHW) concept and/or deficiencies in the cycle network between Wellington City and Petone. The aim of the concept is that there will be a continuous, safe, signposted walkway and cycleway around the whole perimeter of Te Whanganui-a-Tara (Wellington Harbour) from Fitzroy Bay in the west to Sinclair Head in the east.

The Great Harbour Way Coalition submitted that the Regional Cycling Plan should explicitly include the GHW. The Rotary Club of Eastern Hutt sought endorsement of the GHW concept, noted it would require a multi-body

partnership approach and outlined detail around what the concept would provide. Several other individual submitters supported the concept.

Comment

The Great Harbour Way concept is of relevance to a variety of sectors including tourism, recreation and transport. The focus of this plan is transport, while recognising the wider benefits of increased recreational cycling. A new action is recommended in the plan to highlight the need to address deficiencies in cycling network connectivity between Wellington and Hutt cities. A similar action has been included in the recently adopted Regional Walking Plan.

5.2.5 Cycling integration with public transport

Many submitters supported the actions in the plan around improving integration between cycling and public transport.

A number of submitters commended Greater Wellington and Tranz Metro for the move to allow cycles on trains for no charge. However, most of those same submitters noted that there was an ongoing issue with a lack of storage capacity on trains and a perceived tension between train guards and cyclists around how many cycles could or should be allowed on train carriages.

Many submitters strongly supported the action to investigate carriage of bikes on buses and recognised the potential to increase cyclist numbers particularly in the hilly areas of the region. In its submission Mana Coach Services raised concern about the likely cost implications of carrying bikes on buses which it estimated to be around \$40,000 for the Newlands fleet alone. It suggested that this additional cost would need to be funded by Greater Wellington.

Several submitters also raised the need for better management of cycle lockers at railway stations.

Comment

Greater Wellington officers will continue to work with rail operators to address issues around cycle carriage on trains.

Part of investigating the feasibility of bikes on buses in Wellington will be the consideration of the likely cost and funding implications of such an initiative.

Greater Wellington officers are currently considering various ways to better manage cycle lockers and facilities at railway stations.

5.2.6 Targets

Several submitters noted that the plan needs to take account of the policy framework and be consistent with targets signalled in the recently released New Zealand Transport Strategy (NZTS) and Government Policy Statement (GPS) on land transport funding.

Wellington City Council suggested that it would be helpful to set sub-regional targets for walking and cycling (in consultation with the relevant TAs) to focus attention and set individual accountabilities for achieving regional targets.

One submitter requested more clarity about how targets will be monitored and by whom. Another suggested the inclusion of system wide indicators for cycling in the plan.

Comment

The timing of the review meant the draft Plan was developed in the months prior to the release of the updated NTZS and GPS 2008. However, it was developed under the framework of the Wellington RLTS 2007 – 2016 which is considered to be well aligned with these national documents.

Initial work by NZTA and GW officers suggests that the RLTS active mode target based on journey to work census data is more ambitious than the GPS target for active modes over the same time period, however the use of different indicators and measures does make translation difficult. We will look to better align the targets in the RLTS during its review next year. In the meantime, officers recommend adding a new statement that clarifies the intention of the plan to target a steady increase in cycling for all trip purposes which will be consistent with the national target and measurable through the regionalised breakdown of the Ministry of Transport's New Zealand Household Travel Survey data.

The range of interventions identified in this strategic plan have the potential to get us to the ambitious regional and national targets, however this will be dependant on the commitment of all implementing agencies and the extent to which they are willing to progress those initiatives. It is recommended that the role of each agency in monitoring the plan is explicitly identified as per the amendments made to the Regional Walking Plan.

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 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.

5.2.7 Greater Wellington's coordination role

The New Zealand Transport Agency commented that Greater Wellington should strengthen its cycling facilitator role by empowering, encouraging, and where necessary supporting the region's implementing agencies to deliver the RLTS vision.

Comment

Greater Wellington will continue to play a coordination role by promoting and advocating for cycling in the region, coordinating a regional forum for active modes, progressing improvements to cycling and passenger transport integration, developing a regional active mode journey planner and supporting implementing agencies where possible. We hope that the proposed changes to the existing Regional Cycling Forum objectives and terms of reference will assist in strengthening regional coordination.

We also note that the NZTA has a vital part to play in assisting and supporting the region in achieving the RLTS, GPS and NZTS outcomes through both its funding role and its role as implementing agency for State Highways.

5.2.8 Funding issues

Several submitters supported the action around allocation of adequate funding for cycling. One submitter noted that safety and infrastructure should be the top priority for cycle funding.

Upper Hutt City Council suggested that development of a local cycling strategy and review programme would be more than 'administrative' as the plan suggested.

Porirua City Council stressed that it should not be assumed that additional rates funding would be available and suggested that cycling projects with high regional priorities should be funded from regional or national sources.

Comment

It is appropriate that Greater Wellington continue to advocate for adequate funding from central government, to allow local and regional authorities to carry out active mode improvements and initiatives that will contribute to achieving the ambitious targets signalled in the updated NZTS and GPS.

The financial assistance rate (FAR) for development of strategies is now 75%, so the local share should be relatively minor. Development of local cycling strategies in each TA is expected to improve the ability of TAs to obtain funding support for improving their cycling networks in two ways.

1. NZ Transport Agency advise that they are more likely to subsidise local projects identified in a local cycling strategy.
2. Identification of a particular project in a local strategy, with some explanation around why it is a priority will assist in any request for R or C1 funding through consideration and development of the Regional Land Transport Programme.

The Regional Land Transport Programme process is also the appropriate place to consider allocation of available funding between different modes and projects.

5.2.9 General support

General support was noted by submitters for many of the actions in the draft plan including awareness campaigns, provision for cyclists in land development, cyclist skills training, advocacy, information sharing, and continuation of a regional forum.

5.2.10 Minor matters

In addition to the significant issues and responses outlined above, a number of more minor matters were raised by submitters. Amendments have been made to the draft plan in response to these matters where appropriate.

6. Considerations for other processes

Several initiatives suggested by submitters are already being addressed or can be considered further under the Regional Travel Demand Management Strategy. A major component of that strategy is to progress a school, workplace and community travel plan programme throughout the region. Greater Wellington is the lead agency in coordinating this programme. Initiatives in the Regional Cycling Plan will support and complement the region's travel plan programme and vice versa.

7. Recommended amendments to Regional Cycling Plan

The key changes recommended to the plan as a result of the submissions are:

- A new first paragraph of the plan that sets out the compelling need to address cycling
- A new statement following the RLTS targets for cycling that sets out the intention to target an increase in all cycling trip purposes (not just journey to work) consistent with the GPS/NZTS 2008
- A new action to investigate high quality improvements to active mode facilities between Petone and Ngauranga that connect the adjacent local networks
- A number of minor changes to clarify responsibility, timing, funding and monitoring issues. These changes have been included in the recommended revised plan (**Attachment 2**).

8. Communication

The Hearings Subcommittee will report back on submissions to the full Regional Transport Committee in December 2008.

9. Recommendations

That the Subcommittee:

1. ***Receives the report.***
2. ***Notes the content of the report.***
3. ***Agrees to recommend the revised Regional Cycling Plan to the Regional Transport Committee for adoption.***

Report prepared by:

Report approved by:

Report approved by:

Natasha Hayes
Senior Policy Advisor

Joe Hewitt
Manager Transport Strategy
Development

Jane Davis
Divisional Manager Transport
Policy and Strategy

Attachment 1: Submission summary and response table

Attachment 2: Recommended revised Regional Cycling Plan

Attachment 3: Full copies of all submissions on the draft Regional Cycling Plan (enclosed separately).