

Submission on the Draft Canterbury Regional Land Transport Plan 2024-34

Introduction

Herenga ā Nuku Aotearoa, the Outdoor Access Commission is the Crown agent responsible for providing leadership on outdoor access issues.

Our role is to provide advice on free, certain, enduring, and practical access to the outdoors.

We administer a national strategy on outdoor access, including tracks and trails. We map outdoor access, provide information to the public, oversee a code of responsible conduct in the outdoors, help to resolve access issues and negotiate new access.

Herenga ā Nuku has a team in Wellington and a network of regional field advisors. An independent board governs our work. Our governing piece of legislation is the *Walking Access Act 2008*.

Much of our work focuses on active transport. We support the creation, maintenance, enhancement, and promotion of walking and cycling access, for recreation, for safety, health and wellbeing, for a shift to more sustainable travel, and including for commuting to local destinations such as schools, places of work and shops.

We note that the Regional Transport Committee is specifically seeking feedback on the direction of Canterbury's transport investment and the prioritisation of regionally significant activities. On the information provided in the draft plan we have found it difficult to provide this specific feedback but are happy to provide feedback on matters relating to active transport.

Support for the draft plan

We support Cycleways and active transport being identified as a key network contributor to the transport system in Canterbury (Transport systems P17).

We particularly support the priorities **Support and develop connected public transport and active transport networks** and **Implementing safer systems (Road to Zero)** (Ten-year transport priorities P29).

We support, in principle, the planned expenditure related to active transport identified in Tables 7-12.

Specific comments and recommendations on draft plan

P32 Strategic Context - Support and develop connected public transport and active transport networks

The Commission is concerned that the development of connected active transport networks does not appear to have been integrated into the draft plan. The Long-term Result/Measure of 'Increase in kilometres of active transport network (walking and cycling)' is the only tangible indication that this matter has been recognised.

Regional connectivity of active transport networks is becoming increasingly significant for local communities. Such networks can facilitate longer commutes, connect townships, and improve social connectivity. They can also facilitate potential growth in cycle tourism recreation, which can have economic benefits to local communities. Unformed legal roads can have a significant role in providing active transport options. The Commission has produced Guidelines for the Management of Unformed Legal Roads, as a practical way of bringing the law into focus for the range of people who deal with unformed legal roads.

There appears to be little recognition of the public health benefits of active transport. These benefits have been widely reported and accepted, including by Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency and Te Mana Ora Community & Public Health.

Herenga ā Nuku's Recommendation 1

The PRIMARY PROBLEM be reframed to include healthy choices e.g.

"Planning and investment do not always support sustainable or healthy transport choices....."

Herenga ā Nuku's Recommendation 2

PRIMARY BENEFIT be re-written to read positively and have a broader context i.e.

"Improvement in human health and well-being"

Herenga ā Nuku's Recommendation 3

THE CASE FOR INVESTMENT include a short paragraph focussed on the health and well-being benefits e.g.

"Active transport is a good way to get healthy levels of exercise, prevent disease, and manage chronic illness as we age. Switching from driving to cycling improves mental health - cyclists are the happiest commuters¹."

¹ Wild, K. 2023. *Cycling Proof Points*. Ver 1. Auckland: Waka Kotahi.

Herenga ā Nuku's Recommendation 4

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE include a short paragraph citing reports such as;

- Wild, K. 2023. *Cycling Proof Points*. Ver 1. Auckland: Waka Kotahi.
- Gatersleben B, Uzzell D. (2007) Affective Appraisals of the Daily Commute: Comparing Perceptions of Drivers, Cyclists, Walkers, and Users of Public Transport. *Environment and Behavior*. 39(3):416 - 31

P33 Strategic Context - Safer systems implemented (Road to Zero)

The Commission is concerned that the only references to active transport in this section are the example of cyclists and pedestrians being vulnerable users.

Herenga ā Nuku's Recommendation 5

PRIMARY BENEFIT be re-written to read positively i.e.

"Improvement in user safety".

Herenga ā Nuku's Recommendation 6

THE CASE FOR INVESTMENT include a short paragraph focussed on active transport, along the lines of;

An improvement in the safety of cyclists and pedestrians is required to encourage a greater use of active transport. People need to feel safe.

Herenga ā Nuku's Recommendation 7

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE. The first bullet point be split in two, to read;

- Crashes at intersections
- Accidents involving vulnerable users (such as cyclists), road safety issues

Herenga ā Nuku's Recommendation 8

LONG-TERM RESULTS/MEASURES. An additional bullet point be added to read;

- Decrease in annual accidents involving vulnerable users (such as cyclists).

P44-45 Programme and funding - Support and develop connected public transport and active transport networks

The associated text is very general and gives little indication of any regional direction for active transport. The costs identified in the table tend to reinforce this impression, with individual council specific projects making up the bulk of the projects. Without much more detail, and time, it is virtually impossible to assess the merits, and cost-effectiveness, of the

identified projects, let alone the active transport component of many, particularly those in tables 7 and 8.

Herenga ā Nuku's Recommendation 9

Consideration be given to separating the public transport and active transport components of the programmes identified in tables 7 to 9.

P46-47 Programme and funding – Implementing safer systems (Road to Zero)

The Commission is pleased to see the statement that there is targeted support for vulnerable road users and visitors in the plan. However, we cannot see where this targeted support is. It is not possible to identify what and where that targeted support is in most of the programmes identified in tables 10 to 12.

Herenga ā Nuku's Recommendation 10

That the targeted support for vulnerable users and visitors be clearly identified in the plan.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft plan.

In closing, we would like to re-iterate our general recommendations on the 2021 draft plan, that;

1. A greater emphasis is placed on the development of integrated networks of cycleways, cycle paths, shared paths and footpaths is required.
2. The development of cycleways, cycle paths, shared paths and footpaths needs to be an associated priority with roading development and improvement.