

STAFF REPORT

TO: Chairman & Members, Engineering Services Committee

FROM: Steve Elkington Road Asset Engineer

REFERENCE:

DATE: 26 May 2005

SUBJECT: Tasman Walking & Cycling Strategy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to table the final strategy document entitled "Tasman Walking & Cycling Strategy" and to recommend to this committee that it supports the strategy being presented for adoption.

BACKGROUND

The strategy was developed in late 2003 and early 2004. Public open days were held in Richmond, Motueka and Takaka to allow the public to have their input also, Interest groups were approached directly to canvas their thoughts.

The draft strategy was then put out for public consultation in late August 2004, with submissions closing initially in late September however due to demand the deadline was extended out to mid October 2004.

Approximately 149 submissions were received with 95 of these coming from Golden Bay, in all 41 submitters wished to be heard. A good number of those submissions received from Golden Bay were of a generic format developed by *Bicycle Lanes in Paradise* (BLIP). Based on the number of submissions it was decided to hold hearings in both Richmond and Takaka.

A working group was setup comprising staff, councillors and a Transit NZ representative. The Councillors were Richard Kempthorne (Chair), Pat O'Shea, and Trevor Norriss.

Earlier this year the final meetings were held to discuss the submissions and what changes the working group felt should be included in the final strategy.

There were many changes recommended of which some of the main ones have been outlined below:

- Several images on the front cover of the document will be changed due to them showing cyclists on the footpath and without a helmet;

- Under the heading of “Promote Cycling & Walking for Short Trips” a further statement was included to encourage integration with public transport - “achieved by focusing on the short trips and integrating into public transport options (eg bike racks at bus stops, taking bikes on buses)”;
- The Working Group agreed that the designation of cycle lanes on State Highways should be encouraged wherever possible, by a general statement that a clear demarcation is provided in trouble spots such as Birds Hill, using techniques like vibra-line and cats eyes;
- The objective on page 3 referring to a reduction in cycle crashes was challenged and made more progressive by aiming for “zero accidents”;
- It was suggested there should be incentives to encourage children to ride to and from school regularly. The Working Group agreed to amend the strategy under subsection 3.1 “Education Initiatives” to include the statement that “the Council will work with schools regarding safer routes and travel plans”;
- A separate index page preceding the cycle and walking maps to be included. This page would also include a footer comment in the way of a disclaimer, stating that there may be omissions in sections of routes identified on the maps and, that the maps are not to scale;
- A revision of the definitions to describe the proposed facilities was brought into line with those used in the LTSA recently published document “ Cycle Network and Route Planning Guide”;
- To include a statement regarding promoting safer cycling and walking through road safety campaigns, aiming to raise awareness of safe cycling and walking practises by these commuter groups but also aiming the message at drivers to accommodate safely these other vulnerable road user groups;
- The working group agreed to include a statement encouraging the inclusion by developers and subdividers of combined walking and cycling facilities for both amenity and connectivity, to provide a pleasant and safe place to be thus encouraging walking and cycling;
- The Working Group recommended that Council supports the employment of a Regional Cycle/Walking Safety Officer to work across all three Roding Control Authorities being Tasman, Nelson and Transit NZ. This role would be about coordinating cycling issues across the region, providing a more consistent and standardised response. Coordination between different council departments (such as engineering, community services and planning) on projects effecting cyclists could also be monitored by such an officer. This role would also advocate on behalf of vulnerable road users (pedestrians, cyclists etc) to ensure roading projects including public facilities across are built with cyclists and pedestrians in mind;

- To include in the strategy, the submission sent to Transit NZ regarding its State Highway 10 Year Plan, recommending a list of priority roading projects to upgrade sections of State Highway 60 making it safer for and encouraging cycling;
- Several submissions raised concern about public walkways being developed next to farms causing both security and safety issues. The Working Group recognised these concerns stating in the document that consultation with the neighbouring landowners would occur before any proposal went ahead;
- The maps showing cycle and pedestrian routes separately will now be combined together in the relevant area maps. As a result some of the colours used in the key will be changed.
- A separate page preceding the maps will be included to clarify terminology around cycle and walking facilities, include an index of maps and provide a legend/key.
- The document has had a number of changes made to it to create a more consistent and readable document.

COMMENT

The document is now at a stage whereby the Working Group feels confident that a well balanced strategy has been developed which hopefully with sufficient funding and commitment will deliver the outcomes expected. The maps showing proposed routes are a basis on which to plan and develop a network of on road and off road walking and cycling facilities.

The Strategy will be reviewed in years to come therefore this first attempt will provide a sound basis for future revised strategies.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Engineering Services Committee adopts the Tasman Walking & Cycling Strategy.

Steve Elkington
Road Asset Engineer