



# **Submission on Tasman District Council's Walking and Cycling Strategy 2022-2052**

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## **Introduction**

1. Nelson Marlborough Health (Nelson Marlborough District Health Board) (NMH) is a key organisation involved in the health and wellbeing of the people within Te Tau Ihu. NMH appreciates the opportunity to comment from a public health perspective on the Tasman District Council's (TDC) Marlborough Walking and Cycling Strategy.
2. NMH makes this submission in recognition of its responsibilities to improve, promote and protect the health of people and communities under the New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000 and the Health Act 1956.
3. This submission sets out particular matters of interest and concern to NMH around pedestrian and cycle safety and has a number of recommendations for consideration which would further improve health outcomes for the community.

## **General comments**

4. NMH commends TDC for its draft Tasman Walking and Cycling Strategy. Walking and cycling have a wide range of positive benefits for individuals that include improved mental and physical health, increased independence for children, convenience and affordability. In addition, there are numerous community benefits through greater social connectedness, crime prevention through "more eyes on the street", along with economic and environmental benefits.
5. NMH is pleased to see that TDC has taken a broad approach to the Strategy by including walking and cycling facilities for both main centres and small townships. This will mean that the standard of the active transport network will increase district wide enabling a greater number of people to walk and cycle.
6. NMH congratulates TDC for focusing on schools as a priority because this sets up a travel habits for life. Walking and cycling can make children calmer and happier which can improve their concentration making it easier to focus in school. Walking and cycling also promotes children's independence and freedom. The number of school children walking and cycling has fallen considerably over the past thirty years. Investment in walking and cycling infrastructure around schools along with behaviour change promotion will be beneficial to increasing the numbers of children engaging in active transport.
7. Streets should be able to be used by people of all ages and abilities. This is important given that the population is ageing, that walking and cycling are activities that easily accessible for everyone. Encouraging higher rates of cycling in our older population can lead to significant health benefits; a study by King's College London

on a group of cyclists aged 55 to 79 found these cyclists had levels of physiological function that are comparable to people much younger<sup>1</sup>.

### **Specific Comments**

8. NMH would like to congratulate TDC on the way it has clearly articulated its vision for the Strategy through the Engagement information. It is very informative in the way its sets out the challenges and opportunities.
9. NMH notes that the Strategy does not have a section on critical strategic documents and how they interlink with the Strategy. It would be useful for the relationships between the likes of the Future Development Strategy, the Regional Land Transport Plan, the Richmond and Motueka Town Parking Strategy, the Speed Limits Bylaw, Waka Kotahi's Sustainability Action Plan to be shown in the Strategy

*Recommendation:* that a section on interlinking Strategic documents is included in the Strategy.

10. NMH endorsed the goals that have been set out especially in regards to "Looking after our environment", "Healthy communities", "Vibrant urban environments" (page 3). NMH continues to support the Government's goals to reduce all greenhouse gases to net zero by 2050. These goals will help to improve people's physical and mental wellbeing.
11. NMH is pleased to see that the creation of safe and pleasant urban environments is at the forefront (page 4). Safety has been raised as a key concern for residents with 87% of people stating in a resident's survey that being able to walk and cycle safely was extremely or very important, and it is great to see that Council are addressing these concerns.
12. NMH supports the TDC's recommendation that providing additional capacity on urban modes will be done via active modes (page 6). As stated above, active modes have many positive health benefits. It is fantastic to see further investment in improving safety for all road users.
13. NMH supports the Desirable Target of 60% of active transport by 2050 (page 7). Greater investment in active transport infrastructure will provide people with a broader range of safe and accessible transport options. The provision of such a network will enable more people to engage in physical activity on a regular basis.

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<sup>1</sup> Pollock, R.D. et al. (2015). An investigation into the relationship between age and physiological function in highly active older adults. *The Journal of Physiology*. 593 (1).

14. NMH supports the five key actions identified on pages 11-12: A safe network, speed management, urban design, better cycling facilities and behaviour change.
15. NMH supports the Principles listed on page 18 but recommends that they strengthened.
  - a. Principle One states that it will "enhance safety...", NMH would like the wording to be more explicit and state that "Improve safety..."
  - b. Principle Three states that it will "support improvements to the active transport network", however given that the majority of the active transport infrastructure falls under the remit of Council, it would be more appropriate for the Council to "Make improvements...". The proposed wording implies that the Council has merely a supporting role whereas it is the key provider for active transport infrastructure.
16. The same rationale can be applied for the Proposed Policy One where the Council must be driving actions rather than only supporting them. NMH would like to see Proposed Policy 1 strengthened.

*Recommendation:* That Policy One wording is altered as follows: "Council will prioritise ~~supporting~~ safe and connected active and public transport routes..."

17. NMH supports the improvements to the cycle network, including the creation of protected cycleways on key cycle routes, the creation of secondary cycle routes which will become slow zones, separated cycle routes and shared paths.
18. NMH supports the seven policies which are outlined on Page 19-22.
19. NMH also supports the intention of Policy Two: "*Council will take into account the perspective of those who have an impairment that limits their ability to safely use the transport system*", but notes that this seems to be more of a principle than a policy.
20. NMH would like to see Policy 6 strengthened. It currently states that "*Council will work towards ensuring that all urban streets have either an effective 30 km/hour speed or a protected or separated cycleway*". If TDC wants to achieve the targets it has set out, it is important that all the policies strongly support the target so the wording needs to be altered from merely intention to actual actions.

*Recommendation:* The wording is changed to "Council will ~~work towards ensuring~~ ensure that all urban streets have..."

21. NMH notes that the policies have made no mention of integrating public transport to active transport. In order to use public transport, a large proportion of people walk at the start or the end of their journeys therefore it is important that the active transport paths are well connected to the bus network. This supports mode shift.

*Recommendation:* That an additional policy is added that states the following:  
"Council will integrate public transport infrastructure into the upgrades of active transport infrastructure."

22. **Speed Management (page 21):** NMH supports the introduction of slower speeds in areas where there will be high numbers of people walking and cycling. NMH supports additional safe crossings for children, additional traffic calming treatments and speed humps.

23. **Supporting Facilities (page 20):** NMH supports the creation of more secure bike parking which caters for a range of bikes and micro-mobility devices. NMH notes that the Strategy states that it will "encourage" bikes, scooters and mobility device parking. Consideration should be given to strengthening the language used, "encouraged" should be replaced with "required".

*Recommendation:* That this Strategy and the Tasman Environment Plan include additional requirements for the provision of cycling infrastructure.

24. NMH supports the increasing the amount of public seating in the district to assist people with their journeys. In addition, consideration could be given to the provision of public toilets and water fountains. Easy access to water and toilets would make people's journeys more comfortable and attractive. Access to water is especially important in the summer months.

*Recommendation:* That an audit is undertaken of the number of toilets and water fountains in relation to key active transport routes and upgrades are planned for.

25. **Better Urban Design (page 21):** NMH supports the creation of "20-minute towns" where people can walk to and back from all their main destinations in 20 minutes. The idea of the 20-minute neighbourhood presents multiple benefits including boosting local economies, improving people's health and wellbeing, increasing social connections in communities, and reducing carbon emissions<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> [The 20-minute neighbourhood | Town and Country Planning Association \(tcpa.org.uk\)](https://www.tcpa.org.uk)

26. NMH supports Proposed Policy 7 to replace some car parking spaces with green spaces, places for people to cross the road more safely and park their bikes and socialise.
27. **Changing Habits (page 22):** NMH supports the school and workplace travel plans that include the likes of incentive programmes to assist schools and workplaces to walk and cycle.
28. **Maps:** NMH would like to congratulate the Council for clearly showing its intended plan for Tasman townships on its maps. It would be useful to have the key crossing points shown on the maps because it is often the intersections where there is the greatest risk to active transport users.

*Recommendation:* that the Maps show the key active transport crossing points and proposed intersection upgrades.

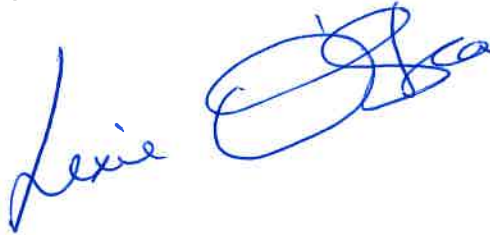
### **Recommendations**

- a. that a section on interlinking Strategic documents is included in the Strategy.
- b. Principle One wording changes from "enhance safety..." to "Improve safety..."
- c. Principle Three changes from "support improvements to the active transport network" to "Improves the active transport network..."
- d. Policy 1 wording is altered as follows: "Council will prioritise ~~supporting~~ safe and connected active and public transport routes..."
- e. Policy 6: The wording is changed to "Council will ~~work towards ensuring~~ ensure that all urban streets have..."
- f. That an additional policy is added that states the following: "Council will integrate public transport infrastructure into the upgrades of active transport infrastructure."
- g. That this Strategy and the Tasman Environment Plan include additional requirements for the provision of cycling infrastructure.
- h. That an audit is undertaken of the number of toilets and water fountains in relation to key active transport routes and upgrades are planned for.
- i. That the Maps show the key active transport crossing points and proposed intersection upgrades.

## Conclusion

29. NMH thanks TDC for the opportunity to comment on the Tasman's Walking and Cycling Strategy.
30. Should there be a hearing to discuss this Strategy, NMH would like to be heard.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Lexie O'Shea', is written in a cursive style.

Lexie O'Shea  
**Chief Executive**  
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