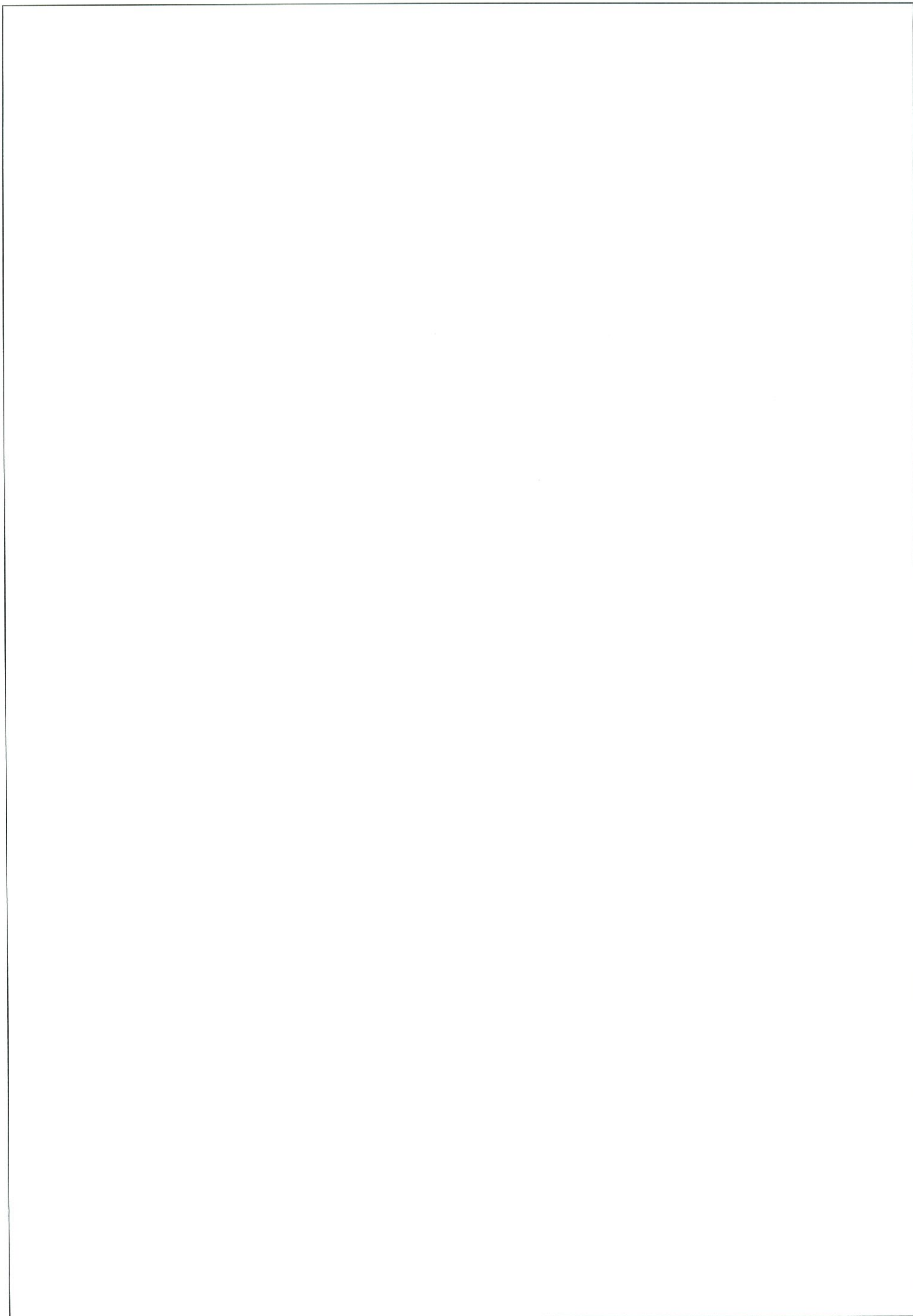# Submission on Nelson City Council's Draft Youth Strategy

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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 Nelson City Council's (NCC) Draft Youth 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, particularly in relation to the need for a specific action plan. It discusses areas that NMH supports and also provides recommendations where NMH believes changes to the draft Strategy will better meet the Strategy's goal to invest in young people's future wellbeing.

General Comments

4. NMH strongly supports the draft Youth Strategy. Youth strategies are a visible way for councils to recognise the important part young people play in the community and the unique contributions youth make to community life.[1] These contributions are an important aspect of young people's wellbeing; by contributing, youth can have an ability to influence decisions at all levels, as well as an opportunity to connect with others in the community. Underpinning this is the sense of being valued by community leaders and others in the community.[2]

5. NCC's Community Outcomes make the commitment to nurture young people so Nelson is a safe and healthy place for everyone to grow up and live.[3] Goal One of the Nelson 2060 strategy seeks to support and encourage leaders across the Nelson community, including young Nelsonians.[4] However the Draft Youth Strategy does not state how it explicitly links to these strategic outcomes. Linking the Strategy to related strategic documents would be beneficial because it would highlight the importance of the Strategy and therefore further enable NCC to meet the Strategy's goals. This approach was recommended in the Ministry of Youth Development's *Introduction and Context for the Development of Youth Policy*.

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[1] Ministry of Youth Development (n.d) *An Introduction and Context for the Development of Youth Policy*. Retrieved from http://www.myd.govt.nz/documents/policy-and-research/policy-document-final.pdf 13 June 2017

[2] Community and Public Health (2016) *Democratic Participation* Canterbury District Health Board. Retrieved from http://www.healthychristchurch.org.nz/media/33347/democraticparticipation.pdf 13 June 2017

[3] Nelson City Council (2015) *Community outcomes* . Retrieved from http://nelson.govt.nz/council/council-structure/community-goals-for-nelson-whakatu/community-outcomes-3/

[4] Nelson City Council (2013) *Nelson 2060*. Retrieved from http://nelson.govt.nz/assets/Our-council/Downloads/Nelson-2060-FINAL.pdf

6. The goals of the Strategy are very clearly outlined; however the Strategy lacks detail on how NCC will achieve these goals. Additional detail outlining the specific tasks NCC and its partners plan to achieve over a set time period would provide more transparency and understanding for the public. Furthermore such an action plan would strengthen NCC's commitment to achieving the Strategy's desired goals.

7. NCC interacts with young people in a variety of ways including liaising with the Youth Council. For background information in the Strategy, it is essential to understand what projects or initiatives are currently underway and this information could be used to inform an action plan.

Recommendations

8. That the Strategy states how it links to NCC's relevant community and strategic outcomes.

9. That the Strategy includes the following details:

    a. A list of specific actions

    b. A timeline for the actions

    c. Commitment to allocating the financial and human resources required to implement the Strategy

    d. An outline of roles and responsibilities

    e. Methods for implementing, monitoring and evaluating the actions.

10. That the Strategy includes background information about existing projects and partnerships

Specific Comments on the Strategy's goals

Goal 1 Positive youth development

11. NMH supports this goal especially in regards to NCC supporting initiatives and seeking partnerships which enhance young people's strengths, self worth, positive choices, resilience and positive mental health and wellbeing. Given that issues have been identified in the Strategy around tobacco use, alcohol and drugs, it is important that the Strategy includes some specific actions targeting these areas.

Recommendation

12. That the final Strategy sets out an action plan, including specific actions targeting tobacco use, alcohol and drugs.

Goal 2 Quality relationships, connections and pathways

13. NMH supports the proposed goal that will enable young people to be connected to their community.

Goal 3 Physical environment and services

14. The title of Goal 3 relates to the Physical Environment and Services but the bullet points only refer to the bus services but no other broader services. NMH recognises that NCC undertakes a range of activities for youth and has a team that works with young people. To complement this, it is important that NCC works in partnership with other community groups or organisations who undertake similar activities. The strategy could be strengthened by NCC taking a role in encouraging and supporting other organisations to deliver youth-friendly facilities and activities.

15. It is noted that one of the key issues identified for young people relates to housing including cost, availability and adequacy. However Goal 3 does not specifically target housing. Access to safe and healthy accommodation is one of the most basic human needs.[5] Where warm, dry, housing is unavailable or unaffordable, people are more likely to experience poor health. NMH considers Goal 3 should be expanded to address the housing issues faced by youth.

16. NMH supports the inclusion of a goal that invests in public transport networks. As many young people are unable to drive, public transport and active transport (walking and cycling) are particularly important as transport modes. Walking and cycling are low cost, low-impact forms of exercise in which almost everyone can participate, thus contributing to increased physical fitness, lower levels of obesity and increased mental wellbeing.[6] Therefore, investment in both active and public transport is needed to support young people's movement around the district.

17. Investment may need to be made into transport infrastructure such as cycle parking and bus shelters. It is important that young people have easy access to secure cycle parking facilities, and that they are able to wait safely and comfortably in good quality bus shelters.[7] Therefore the goals of the strategy need to consider both the transport network and associated cycle and bus infrastructure.

18. NMH supports NCC's intention to consider the needs of young people in the design and provision of public facilities and spaces; and incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles. As an example of this being implemented, Youth Voice Canterbury and the Christchurch City Council extended this notion by

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[5] Human Rights Commission (2010). *Human Rights in New Zealand 2010 – Nga Tika Tangata O Aotearoa 2010 Section 3 Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: Rights to Housing. Retrieved from* https://www.hrc.co.nz/files/9214/2388/0508/HRNZ_10_right_to_housing.pdf *21 June 2017*

[6] Bauman, A., Rissel, C., Garrard, J., Ker, I., Speidel, R., Fishman, E. 2008. Cycling: getting Australia moving. Barriers, facilitators and interventions to get more Australians physically active through cycling. Melbourne, Cycling Promotion Fund. http://www.cyclingpromotion.com.au/images/stories/downloads/CPFHlthRpr08V3prf1.pdf

[7] NZTA (2014) Guidelines for Public Transport Infrastructure. Retrieved from https://www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/About-us/docs/Consultations/2014/guidelines-pt-infrastructure-draft.pdf

developing a Youth Relevant Design approach based on CPTED principles. Youth Relevant Design[8] is the process of assessing spaces to see if they are

    a.   safe,

    b.   appealing for young people,

    c.   accessible,

    d.   youth friendly

    e.   resourced.

19. Youth leaders are trained and supported to undertake the design audits. This has worked successfully in Christchurch for the likes of the New Brighton Mall, Margaret Mahy Playground, Central City Library rebuild, Victoria Square redesign and the Youth Unit at Christchurch Men's Prison. This type of approach may be something that NCC may wish to consider.

Recommendation

20. That Goal 3 includes an additional bullet point: Works with other groups who also deliver or (could deliver) services for young people.

21. That Goal 3 is expanded to addresses the housing issues faced by youth including cost, availability and adequacy.

22. That Goal 3 is amended as follows: Council <u>actively engages with youth when considering</u> the needs of young people in the design and provision of public facilities and spaces.

23. That Goal 3, bullet point 3 is amended as follows: Invest in <u>active (e.g. walking and cycling) and</u> public transport networks <u>and infrastructure</u> that support young people's movements around the district.

Goal 4 Active youth citizenship

24. NMH supports the inclusion of a goal on Active youth citizenship. Effective youth participation is about creating opportunities for young people to be involved in influencing, shaping, designing and contributing to policy and the development of services and programmes. These opportunities are created through developing a range of formal and informal mechanisms for youth participation from youth advisory groups to focus groups, and ensuring opportunities for on-going consultation work for supporting youth led projects.[9]

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[8]Youth Relevant Design
http://www.youthvoicecanterbury.org.nz/uploads/2/9/9/1/29919545/check_card__email_version_.pdf
[9] Youth Voice Canterbury, 2016 Christchurch Youth Action Plan retrieved from
https://www.scribd.com/document/342653168/draft-consult-christchurch-youth-action-plan?secret_password=z3ocmQIOhKGbdEiHLFiJ#fullscreen&from_embed retrieved 26 June 2017

Recommendation

25. That Goal 4, bullet point 1 is amended as follows: Provide <u>formal and informal</u> mechanisms for you people to engage with Council, local planning and wider community decision making processes.

26. That following specific actions are included within the Strategy:

    a.   increasing civics education for youth

    b.   the adoption of parallel youth planning groups or youth advisory panels

    c.   inform young people about what resources, funding and support are available for community groups

Conclusion

27. NMH is strongly supportive of NCC creating a Draft Youth Strategy. However, the draft strategy currently does not provide a clear framework for action. NMH believes that the inclusion of an action plan would enable NCC to achieve the goals of the Strategy.

28. NMH thanks NCC for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Youth Strategy.

Yours sincerely

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