

**Waka Kotahi**

**Aotearoa Urban Street  
Planning & Design Guide: He  
Whenua, He Tangata**

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## **Submitter details**

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 Waka Kotahi's *Aotearoa Urban Street Planning & Design Guide: He Whenua, He Tangata*.
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.

## **Specific Comments**

4. NMH welcomes this opportunity to comment on the *Aotearoa Urban Street Planning & Design Guide: He Whenua, He Tangata*. NMH commends Waka Kotahi for its guide that has a strong emphasis on a safe multi-modal transport system that is sustainable and health promoting with good urban access.

### *Introduction*

5. NMH supports the adoption of the Global Street Design Principles because these include Streets for Safety, Streets for Everyone and Streets for Health which enable the Design Guide to influence positive health outcomes.
6. NMH supports the use of the user hierarchy in the Global Street Design Guide (page 6) which is based on vulnerability of users but notes that micro-mobility (e.g. scooters, mobility scooters) is not included within the hierarchy. Emergent micro-mobility technologies produce their own set of challenges and it is important that these are recognised within the Design Guide. Whilst micro-mobility devices are ever evolving, there will still be a place for them within the street space, this needs to be acknowledged and also methods to reduce conflict between vulnerable users such as less mobile pedestrians and those on micro-mobility devices.

### *1.2 Policy and Direction Section (pgs. 11-14):*

7. NMH thanks Waka Kotahi for including a detailed list of the strategic documents guiding the Design Guide. Given that sustainability is a key focus, it would be beneficial to have Waka Kotahi's *Toitu Te Taiao: Sustainability Action Plan* highlighted. This is especially important as lowering emissions, and creating modal shift is a key driver behind the Design Guide.

8. NMH strongly supports the integration of the Road to Zero: Road Safety Strategy which adopts the Vision Zero approach where no death or serious injury from travelling on the roads is acceptable.
9. NMH is encouraged to see that the Accessible Streets package is imminent as this set of rule changes will provide further clarity about how people use footpaths and roads. NMH supports the inclusion of disability impact assessments on proposals.
10. NMH would like to note that the Safe System diagram on page 13 is not presented logically: increased walking and cycling does not lead to reduced vehicle speeds; it may lead to reduced vehicle use, and if done in concert with changes that restrict vehicle speed such as road design, speed limits, enforcement etc. may act to reduce speeds. This diagram also ignores other health effects of increased walking and cycling e.g. reduction in arthritis, obesity etc.

### *2.0 Design Principles:*

11. The He Whenua He Tangata Design Principles Diagram are very useful but they are not framed as outcomes. It would be useful to show the intended results for the end user: people feel safe to walk or cycle at night, road injuries reduce etc. NMH notes that additional wording has been added to the Global Street Design Guide Principles in relation to the "Streets are Multi-modal" section (pg. 18) that "*provides appropriate for the wholesale movement of goods in ways that are safe and appropriate for all modes*". NMH agrees with the intent of this paragraph but would like to see the word "wholesale" removed. "Wholesale" can be defined as whole and in an indiscriminate way (Oxford Dictionary). However in order to achieve the aims of the overall design principles, then freight cannot be placed indiscriminately on all streets. It will need to be constrained to appropriate roads on the network.
12. NMH supports the Design Principles of partnership and engagement, a living environment, places of value, inclusivity for everyone, healthy and safe environments and prosperity and vitality.

### *3.1 Planning and Design Process:*

13. NMH supports the focus on partnership and engagement. The Design Guide clearly articulates its inclusive approach including working with Maori.
14. The Design Guide has a section on identifying sector stakeholders (page 24). Public Health Units have a strong interest in the work of Waka Kotahi and its

impact on our local communities. NMH would like to be involved as a key stakeholder in assessing projects in terms of delivering positive physical, mental and environmental health benefits.

15. NMH is pleased to see that carbon calculators will also be used as part of assessment processes to ensure that carbon emissions are reduced where possible.

### *3.3 Shared Challenges & Building a Community of Practice:*

16. NMH agrees with the Share Challenges list presented on pages 35-6. One omission relates to changing demographics of towns. Many regions such as Nelson Marlborough have a growing ageing population and as such there may be different demands on how street space is allocated. This should be included as a Challenge under the allocation space for different functions and modes in constrained urban contexts and corridors. NMH notes that there is a focus on the present, rather than focusing on the future looking at potential options such as driverless car technology, new and improved options for mass transit.

### *4.1 Urban Context and Spatial Planning*

17. NMH supports the approach taken in the Urban Streets and Walkable Catchments section (pgs. 43-45) but notes that this section does not specifically comment on the need to understand local demographics in regards to walkable catchments. The population is ageing which may result in more people unable or unwilling to walk 800m to access service and amenities. It may be that for some areas with a higher number of older residents that 800m is lowered e.g. 600m. NMH recommends that mobility needs are clearly articulated throughout in this section.

### *4.2 Spectrum of Urban Catchments*

18. NMH strongly supports Urban Design Catchments as these show low emissions zones of 30km which have health benefits along with safety benefits. There is the inclusion of civic spaces, walking & cycling networks and public transport hubs. NMH would like to see "mobility parking located convenient to key destinations" be included on the Urban Centre and Town Centre pages. This is especially important with an ageing population because there will be growing demand for mobility parks over time.
19. NMH notes that the diagrams on Page 47 seem to imply walking occurs in the periphery of towns, rather that walking can occur anywhere in the catchment areas. NMH recommends that the diagrams are reworked to show pedestrian access as a prominent feature.

#### 4.3 Dealing with Difference

20. NMH recommends that Waka Kotahi adopt “complete urban street” indicators such as the Healthy Street Indicators. Use of indicators would provide a consistent approach to evaluation transport options that can achieve positive multi model options (page 59).

#### 4.4 Urban Street Family Guidance

21. *Public Transport Streets pgs. 65-66*: NMH supports the design cross section as it provides for continuous cycleways, separate pedestrian paths, bus priority, street trees, seating, formal crossing points, 30k/m speeds.

NMH is pleased to see that mobility parking is included however NMH recommends that the term “disabled” is replaced with “mobility” through the whole document. This aligns with the wording used by CSS Disability Action who issues mobility permits. In addition, transport for people with limited mobility needs to be fully integrated into public transport that is fit for their needs e.g. on demand shuttles that link them with wheelchair and walker enabled buses, shared shuttles.

NMH notes that cycle and micro-mobility parking has not been specifically included in this section.

‘Age-friendly’ parking spaces (similar to parent and baby spaces) could also be included. These parks are wider than standard parks and have good access to public seating and toilets, and be well-lit and easily accessible. Normal parking rules would apply but the public are encouraged to leave ‘age friendly’ spaces free as a courtesy to older people in the community. The installation of ‘age-friendly’ parking spaces has worked successfully in Ireland with the number of spaces allocated increasing yearly.<sup>1</sup>

22. *Laneway Streets & Shared Spaces pgs. 67-68*: NMH supports the prioritisation of pedestrians in these in the laneway streets and shared spaces. NMH supports the inclusion for street trees, plantings, furniture and artworks. NMH supports the inclusion of cycling and scooting. This enables people, including children, to use different active modes which provides people with more choice. NMH is pleased to see that clear and accessible paths are provided to create a safe space for those with visually impaired people.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.dublincity.ie/sites/default/files/media/file-uploads/2018-07/AF\\_PublicRealm\\_online-1.pdf](https://www.dublincity.ie/sites/default/files/media/file-uploads/2018-07/AF_PublicRealm_online-1.pdf)

NMH notes that cycle and micro-mobility parking has not been specifically included in this section. Further education also needed on courtesy and etiquette in shared spaces

*23. Main Streets – Urban Centres pgs. 69-70:* NMH supports the prioritisation of pedestrians, the inclusion of bus priority measures, the inclusion of cycleways and pedestrian paths, 30km vehicle speeds, formal crossings, seating, street tree in this section.

*24. Main Streets – Town & Townships pgs. 71-72:* NMH supports the creation of safe walking environments and crossing opportunities for main streets. NMH supports giving priority to pedestrians over those exiting driveways. NMH supports 30km speeds, street trees, seating, formal crossings, cycle and micro-mobility.

NMH notes that this section has no mention of cycle lanes. If there are no cycle lanes provided, then it is advised that the design path explicitly states that cyclists & motorists share the same space.

*25. Urban Connector – Narrower pgs. 73-74:* NMH supports this section in regards to the inclusion of bi-directional cycleways, bus stops, raised zebra crossings, street trees, regular formal crossings.

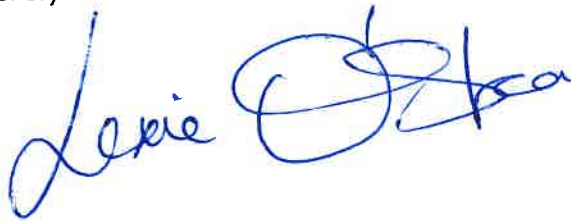
*26. Urban Connector – Wider pg. 75-76:* NMH supports this section in regards to the inclusion of uni-directional cycleways, street trees and furniture, cycle and micro mobility marking, regular crossings and bus stops.

*27. Local Streets – Suburban Residential Street pgs. 77-78:* NMH supports the inclusion of slow street design, street trees, safe footpaths, short block and pedestrian priority at side streets.

## Conclusion

1. NMH thanks the Waka Kotahi for the opportunity to comment on the *Aotearoa Urban Street Planning & Design Guide: He Whenua, He Tangata*.
2. NMH commends Waka Kotahi for the producing a thorough design document that is based on creating healthy safe streets, NMH strongly supports the focus of the guide is to create mode shift towards prioritising active modes and public transport.
3. As urban design can have a substantial effect on health, our Public Health Unit would like to be involved in the Community of Practice.

Yours sincerely



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