

## Objective 1

# To improve cycle safety throughout Wellington

## *How will we know we have succeeded?*

### Target 1

The Annual Land Transport Road Safety Report and Resident Satisfaction Survey show a reduction in the cycle crash rate and in the number of reported cycle crashes and an improvement is shown in the perception of cycle safety

## *What is the Council's position on cycle safety in the city?*

### Policy 1.1

Every opportunity to make the city as safe as possible for cyclists must be explored

### Policy 1.2

Cycle-friendly traffic-calming measures will be implemented as required to moderate motorists' speeds

## *How will the Council do this?*

Proposed actions	
1.1	<b>Adopt</b> best-practice guidelines for cycle network and route planning
1.2	<b>Regulate</b> for lower speed limits in local streets to provide alternatives to busy main roads where appropriate
1.3	<b>Deliver</b> road safety campaigns targeting both motorists and cyclists with a focus on reducing cycle injuries
1.4	<b>Deliver</b> awareness campaigns on the responsibilities of all parties for both shared cycle/footpaths and bus lanes
1.5	<b>Facilitate</b> a forum where industry and community representative can come together to discuss cycling issues. This group would assist in planning and delivering road safety and travel planning initiatives.
1.9	<b>Require</b> cycle safety assessments as part of resource consent applications for new developments (especially for multi-units and central area)
1.14	<b>Advocate</b> for increased funding assistance rates from Central Government for the provision and maintenance of cycling infrastructure.
1.15	<b>Advocate</b> that Central Government provide a comprehensive deployment of Red Light cameras to reduce the instances of failing to stop at traffic signals.
2.2	<b>Determine</b> a suitable methodology for assessing levels of service and assess all routes identified in Appendix 1

2.14	<b>investigate</b> the feasibility of setting up an 0800 Cycle Crash hotline to report cycle crashes to inform our work programme
3.1	<b>Provide</b> cycle-friendly sump-grates on the cycle network and cycle-friendly routes
3.4	<b>Provide</b> bus lanes on key commuter routes as set out in the Council's Bus Priority Plan and accommodate the needs of cyclists in the design and operations of bus lanes
3.6	<b>Provide</b> coloured designated cycle lanes (refer Appendix 1)

## RATIONALE

Cyclists pose little danger to other road users, though they are at risk from collisions with motor vehicles. Consultation reveals people generally do not feel safe cycling on Wellington roads. High vehicle numbers, vehicle fumes and lack of space for cyclists are common reasons for this. High volumes of motor vehicles and trucks, as well as vehicle speed and narrow road widths are also likely to influence the unsafe feeling on these roads. Intersections and roundabouts are often difficult and dangerous for cyclists to negotiate. Cycle treatments ending before and starting after intersections is a common safety complaint. Gravel on roads and poor surfaces are also common safety concerns as all of these can cause a cyclist to lose control.

There is general acceptance that by increasing the numbers of cyclists on the network we could expect to see a reduction in the crash rate for cyclists. This could be attributed by drivers seeing more cyclists more often and adjusting their behaviour to better accommodate cyclists. More research is needed to better understand this relationship.

The number of commutes made by cycling in Wellington city has increased steadily since 1986. Based on this growth trend, it is important the Council makes safety improvements to key cycling routes and the central area to help making cycling a safer option. This is especially important given that fuel prices are increasing and commuters may want to explore alternatives to using their car for commuting.

In 2006 more cycles than cars were imported into New Zealand. It is certainly noticeable in many areas across the country that there are more cyclists using the roads than in past years. Consequently the number of cyclist casualties has increased. Cyclist injuries are not spread evenly across all age distributions as shown in the chart below.

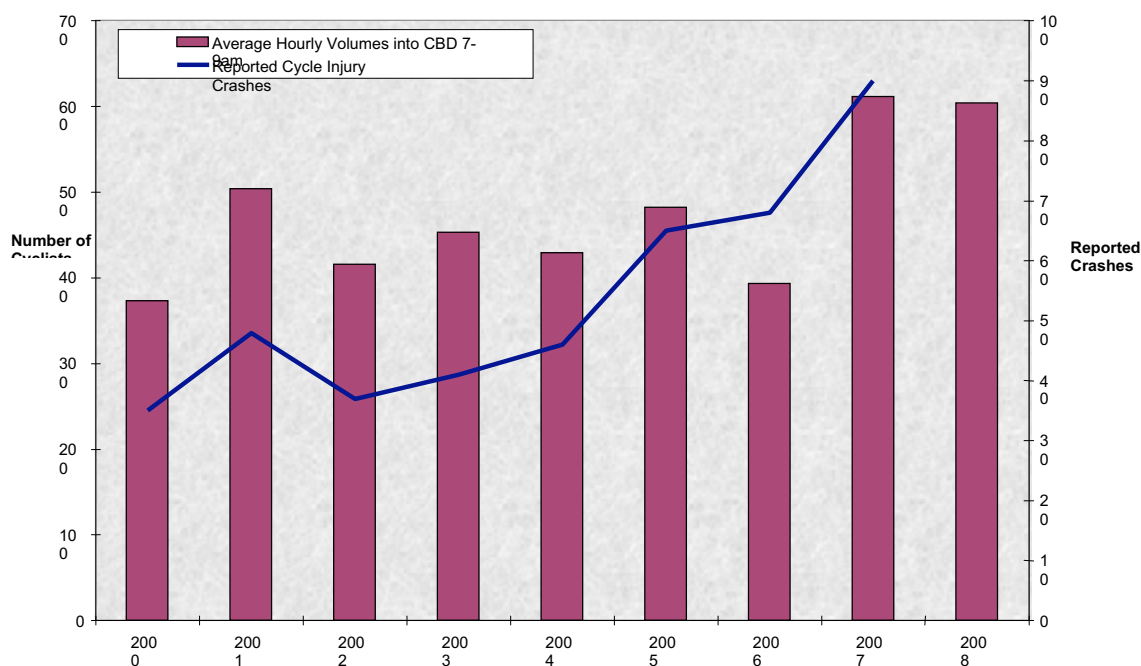


Approximately three quarters of all injured cyclists were between 20 and 45 years of age. Compared to similar authorities and all of New Zealand, Wellington has a unique injury reflecting its particular demographics. For example, there are fewer child cyclists which is reflected in the injury figures.

Further information regarding 2002-2006 cyclist crashes on local roads and state highways in Wellington are:

- One death, 47 serious injuries and 225 minor injuries
- The most common crash type was a crossing or turning movement
- 51 per cent of crashes take place at intersections
- 20 per cent of crashes take place at night
- 78 per cent of cyclists injured were male

The chart below shows the reported crash numbers for Wellington city over the last eight years and the average hourly commuter cycling numbers over that same time. From the graph it can be seen that reported injuries are increasing at a higher rate than the cycling numbers.



The Cycling Policy aims to provide a safer environment for cyclists and reduce the perception of road danger. This will be achieved by a variety of measures including; road improvements to increase cycle friendliness and programmes to make cyclists more conspicuous through education and training of road users including cyclists. In this regard there is often criticism that cyclists ignore the Road Code. The fact that cyclists are not required to demonstrate knowledge of the law or competence to ride their bikes means that cyclist education will have a high priority.

The Council uses a stormwater sump grate that runs parallel to the traffic lane and while there is no significant number of reported crashes resulting from cyclist falling into these sumps, cyclists perceive these as being unsafe and avoid routes that have locations where the road “squeezes” them into one of these sumps. Sumps that have parallel bars are used because of their hydraulic performance; their intake capacity is almost twice that of a sump that has perpendicular bars. It is proposed that on nominated cycle routes at locations that cyclists could expect to be cycling adjacent

to the kerb that sumps be altered to have “cycle friendly” grates installed, in some cases this will mean installing an additional sump and lead.

It is proposed to reduce motorists’ speeds in key locations to reduce the conflict between motorists and cyclists. This includes the central city, Golden Mile and residential suburban streets. To reduce motorists’ speeds, a combination of lower speed limits and traffic-calming measures are proposed. It is recognised that not all cyclists appreciate speed humps or platforms as they can sometimes be uncomfortable to negotiate. On busy cycle routes other less intrusive forms of traffic-calming will be used, however these are not as effective in reducing vehicle speeds so will not be used in all cases.

This policy proposes to place significant emphasis on an expanded bus priority network as a means of delivering a cycle network. In order for this to be safe, we must ensure the proposed bus lanes are wide enough so cyclists can safely be overtaken by a bus and cyclists can overtake a stationary bus loading passengers. It will also be important to ensure both bus drivers and cyclists are aware of each others’ responsibilities when using the bus lanes.

There are a limited number of existing dedicated cycle lanes in Wellington city. It does not appear that motorists are aware of the significance of these lanes as they are often driven and parked in. To address this, it is proposed to highlight these lanes by painting them and to increase enforcement efforts.

When undertaking any works or activities on or adjacent to the roading corridor, consideration must be given to the effects on cyclists and opportunities to improve the cycling environment must also be considered. Of all the activities in the corridor, cycling will be given priority after walking where appropriate.

It is proposed to adopt the Land Transport New Zealand *Cycle Network and Route Planning Guide* to assist in developing cycling facilities and to help determine current levels of service of all routes.