

Objective 3

To improve the experience of cycle trips to and from the central area

How will we know that we have succeeded?

Target 3

The Annual Land Transport Road Safety Report and the Resident Satisfaction Survey shows greater satisfaction with the central area cycling environment, a reduction in the number of reported cycle crashes in the central area and a reduction in crashes for commuting cyclists

What is the Council's position on cycling to and from the central area?

Policy 3.1

On main corridors, cyclists will have an option of riding free of general traffic by using dedicated cycle facilities where practical or by using dedicated bus lanes

Policy 3.2

Every opportunity must be taken to make improvements to the cycle network (refer Appendix 1) to make the routes safer and more convenient

Policy 3.3

Those who choose to cycle will have provision for securing their cycle near their destination in the central area

How will the Council do this?

Proposed actions	
1.4	Deliver awareness campaigns on the responsibilities of all parties for both shared cycle/footpaths and bus lanes
1.6	Facilitate the creation of an internet-based regional journey planner which will enable people to personalise individual journey maps
1.16	Provide conceptual support for the great harbour way concept

2.1	Develop cycle parking requirements for central area buildings
2.3	Undertake an ongoing review of signalised intersections to understand where advanced stop boxes could assist
2.4	Undertake a study to identify the gaps in cycling routes to central area including difficult and dangerous intersections
2.5	Identify opportunities to provide cycle routes on the main corridors on quieter parallel routes to the main trafficked roads
2.8	Undertake a feasibility study for the provision of public cycle lockers
2.9	Undertake a review of signalised intersections to understand where marked diamonds highlighting signal loops could assist
2.15	Investigate the feasibility of using clearways as a cycle lane on key commuter routes.
3.4	Provide 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 operation of bus lanes
3.13	Provide where possible a suitable road surface on key cycling routes as identified in the key cycle routes map
Proposed actions that depend on the outcome of the investigation	
3.5	Provide advanced stop boxes at signalised intersections where required
3.7	Provide improvements to the road network to remedy gaps in the cycling network and address difficult and dangerous intersections
3.8	Provide alternatives to main trafficked routes on quieter alternative routes
3.9	Provide additional cycle parking facilities in key identified areas
3.10	Provide public cycle lockers, showers and changing facilities at key locations where feasible
3.12	Provide painted diamonds at intersections to highlight signal loops and promote how to use them

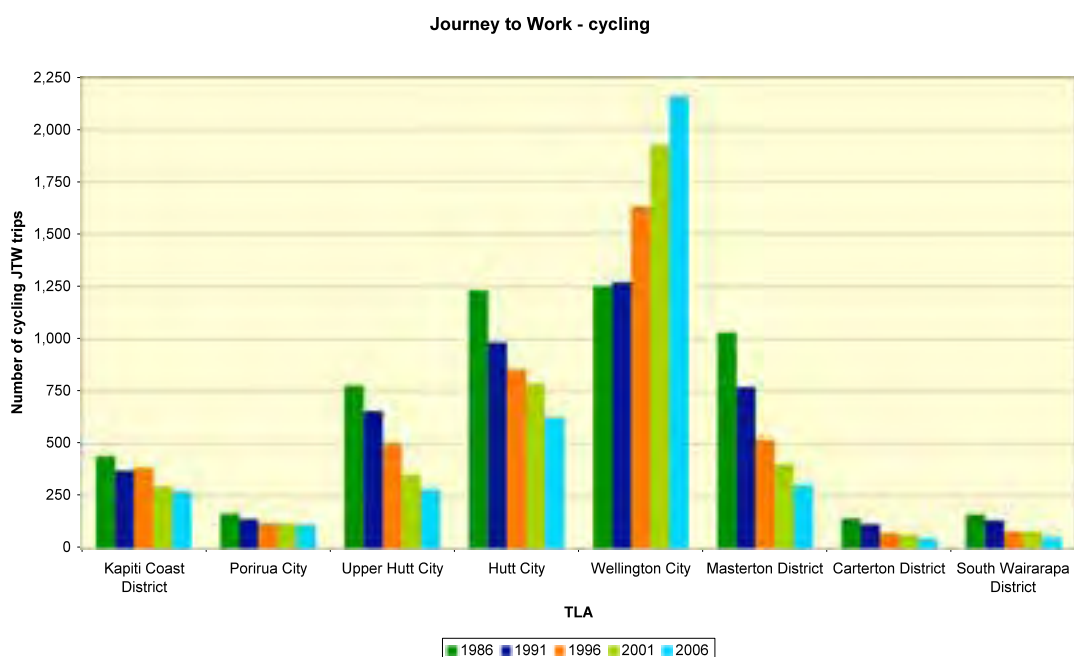
RATIONALE

At 2.5 per cent of all journey to work trips, Wellington's rate of cycling is just slightly above the average (2.4 per cent) for New Zealand as a whole. The cities with significantly higher cycling rates than Wellington (such as Nelson, Christchurch, Palmerston North, Napier and Hamilton) have flat topography and wide streets. Wellington's compactness and relatively good public transport network means journeys that in other cities might be taken by bicycle are likely to be made on foot or by public transport. When it comes to the total of bus, train, walking and cycling trips,

Wellington at 40.4 per cent is far ahead of any of the main cycling cities (Nelson is the best of those, at 17.1 per cent).

Cycle commuting is focused on central area destinations. While 60 per cent of all commuting trips within Wellington city end in the central area, for cycling this figure is 72 per cent. Therefore it makes good sense to concentrate on journeys between the suburbs and central area, rather than between suburbs. Appendices 2 and 3 provide useful maps showing the hourly cycle-volumes and distances in and around the central area.

The journey to work trip recorded in the national census over the last 20 years shows that of all the cities in the greater Wellington region, Wellington City is the only one to show an increase in the number of trips to work taken by bicycle. This increase can be attributed to Wellington's compactness and the number of residents choosing to live close to their place of work, as well as a significant increase in resident population.



This policy proposes to use the proposed bus priority programme to accommodate a network of bus/cycle lanes on key corridors into and out of the city. For these lanes to be useful to cyclists, they must be of sufficient width to safely accommodate both a cyclist and a bus. As the bus network alone will not always accommodate the needs for cyclists, it is proposed to identify and where possible remedy gaps in cycle routes to the central area and to identify and remedy dangerous intersections on the routes to and from the central area.

In Wellington there are bus lanes and 'bus only' areas. It should be noted that cyclists are currently able to use bus lanes as stipulated in the road code. However, lanes or areas marked 'buses only' are considered unsafe for other road users.

'Bus only' areas are considered unsafe because they are designated for bus operational purposes or used as contra flow bus lanes. Contra flow bus lanes are only a single lane running in the opposite direction to the general traffic stream. To pass a stationary vehicle in the lane means the other vehicle must pull out in front of oncoming traffic. This practice is extremely unsafe particularly for cyclists. Also buses

passing cyclists in the lane would have the potential to knock or squeeze the cyclist out of the lane. As a result all other vehicles including cyclists are prohibited from using contra flow bus lanes which are appropriately marked as “Buses Only.”

There are currently three ‘bus only’ lanes in Wellington city: Lambton Quay southbound from Panama Street to Hunter Street, southbound on Willis Street and the southbound central lane at the southern end of Thorndon Quay. Thorndon Quay is restricted because any vehicle travelling in this lane must continue through to the Lambton bus interchange. This is a bus operating area and for safety reasons all traffic other than buses are excluded. Other bus lanes are usable by cyclists.

Safe and efficient functioning of shared facilities, such as cycle/footpaths and bus/cycle lanes, requires a sound understanding of rights and responsibilities on the part of all users. It is proposed to emphasise cycle awareness in bus driver training, work with cycling groups to promote appropriate use of shared lanes and include shared facility awareness in future cycling safety campaigns.

There are a number of locations in the city where cyclists could benefit from the installation of advanced stop boxes. These boxes are marked at traffic signals and allow cyclists to go ahead of the vehicle queue to get a head start on vehicle traffic when the lights turn green. This can improve safety for the cyclist as it allows them to clear the intersection before turning and before other traffic comes at them. It is proposed to work with cycling groups and individuals to understand where these could be installed and to prioritise their installation.

To create a demand at a traffic signal a vehicle only needs to stop at the limit line, where the subsurface detector loop’s magnetic field recognises the mass of metal of a vehicle and sets the demand. However, cycles don’t have enough mass to always register the loop. At locations that only get a demand when triggered, this means cyclists may have to wait until a car approaches or cross against the lights. It is proposed to mark on the road a small cycle symbol followed by a series of small diamonds, thus highlighting where cyclists should position themselves to maximise the effect on the signal loop. This has been used successfully at a number of locations in the city but it is not widely used and not all cyclists understand its meaning. It is proposed to work with cycling groups to determine where else this could be used. It is also proposed to promote where and how the marked loops are and can be used.

This policy also proposes a number of cycle- friendly routes that do not have the same status as a cycle route or bus/cycle route but recognise there are a number of cyclists who use them. It is proposed to make incremental improvements to these routes but, at present, it is not proposed to dedicate lanes to cycles exclusively.

The draft policy nominates two recreation routes: the coastal route including Happy Valley Road and the route through Makara and Ohariu Valley, which are used regularly at weekends for recreational riding. These areas are important for recreational cyclists and this policy will ensure their needs are considered when planning and undertaking work along these routes.

Another recreation cycle route is the promenade along Oriental Parade and through Lambton Harbour. This route is a facility shared with pedestrians and other recreational users such as skateboarders and crocodile bikes. While cyclists are legitimate users of this space, it must be recognised that because, of the mixed use, the area is not suitable for fast cycling.

In addition, there are a number of opportunities to provide dedicated parallel routes to the existing cycle lanes or proposed bus/cycle lanes, such as Tory Street, Hanson-King Streets, Dover to Rintoul Streets and Tawa Porirua stream trail. It is proposed the feasibility of such routes be investigated.

Appendix 1 shows key cycle routes in Wellington. The existing dedicated cycle routes are shown as being along Hutt Road, Evans Bay Parade and Cobham Drive and Buckle Street and Karo Drive. There are also a small number of bus lanes that provide opportunities for cyclists to ride separately from general traffic. The lanes are not marked with a cycle symbol to allow flexibility in lane choice.

It is proposed to use the regional online journey planner being developed by Greater Wellington. This tool will enable users to select an origin and destination for their trip and include the type of route they would like to take. It is essential for this tool to be effective the City Council takes a proactive lead in providing sufficient resources and data for the information to be useful. Once collected and stored in the system, the information will be available for individuals and groups to produce individualised maps of routes and areas showing preferred cycle routes and routes with bottlenecks and barriers for cyclists.

The policy recognises there is a demand for cycle parking in the central city. It is proposed to install additional bike racks and investigate the provision of cycle lockers. Cycle parking and access should also be encouraged in private developments in the central area.

For a number of years cyclists and pedestrians have advocated for a high quality connection between Petone and Ngauranga. This has been the subject of a number of studies involving both the Wellington and Hutt City Councils, the Regional Council and NZ Transport Agency (formerly Transit). Some minor work was undertaken by Wellington City Council in 1999 to establish a southbound only cycle facility between our northern boundary near Horokiwi Road through to Ngauranga. More recently the call for a complete two way facility has been made, from this has grown the Great Harbour Way concept for a high quality commuting/recreational facility from Pencarrow on the eastern harbour entrance around the harbour to Red Rocks in Owhiro Bay.

Wellington City Council supports the concept of the Great Harbour Way as an important regional connection, while noting that its development would be challenging and expensive. There is also support for other similar regional connections such as from the Porirua basin to Wellington CBD.

All these desirable connections should be seen as regional projects and responsibility for their development lying with all the national and regional authorities rather than just Wellington City Council.