

To: Hamilton City Council
Re: Biking and Micro-mobility Programme

Subject: Biking and Micro-mobility Programme submission

29 November 2020

Tēnā koutou e Te Kaunihera o Kirikiriroa,

Thank you for your thoughtfulness and consideration in working to make Hamilton a better place for biking and micro-mobility. We want to acknowledge the energy and expertise you have put into this programme, as well as your invitation to us to comment and collaborate with you as it moves forward.

We want Hamilton to be the best city in our country for biking and micro-mobility. A place where:

- People are eager to get out on their bike, e-scooter or e-skateboard because they have safe, enjoyable, convenient, and consistent experiences no matter where they live in our city, and no matter where they need to go;
- Motorists, active transport users, and pedestrians have positive relationships with each other because each has their own space in our transport network and don't view each other as potential hazards;
- We have successfully reduced our transport carbon emissions due to a modal shift away from private vehicle ownership, and an uptake in active transport, micro-mobility, and public transport use;
- We have less transport inequalities - transport is not a barrier to education, employment, healthcare, or community in our city; and
- Our loved ones always make it home safely, with no serious injuries or deaths caused by our transport system.

This vision is the framework for how we have evaluated the four themes presented in the Biking and Micro-mobility Programme. They align with Hamilton City Council's own objectives for the programme, which are:

- improved safety of biking and micro-mobility users (by reducing deaths and serious injuries and improving perception of safety);
- increased accessibility of biking and micro-mobility users (by improving mode share and improving access to key destinations); and

- improved health and environmental outcomes (by improving physical health and reducing CO² emissions).¹

Theme 1: Supporting behaviour change

Everyday, tens of thousands of people in Hamilton make decisions about their transport and the majority choose cars - 86% of trips in Hamilton are undertaken by private vehicle². People make this choice because travelling by car is easy, reliable, efficient and safer than other transport options. Our transport network is the thing which incentivises car use - not incentives from Council or other government agencies.

Despite our strong habits of car use, people in Hamilton are not against biking - if anything, the opposite: a 2018 survey showed 78% respondents from Hamilton are supportive of biking. It's not for lack of awareness of biking, but our lack of safe infrastructure which causes less than 4% of trips in our city to be completed by bike. The major barrier to biking for people in Hamilton identified by the survey was feeling unsafe because of how people drive, and they were more likely to consider improved routes as a reason for biking³.

The work that Hamilton City Council already does with education programmes, especially in schools, implementing slower speeds on the road and encouraging people to get on a bike (or an e-scooter) is appreciated and does make a degree of difference. However, last year, research showed that one year after taking a short adult bicycle course, there were no changes in biking for work, errands or leisure. The study recommended that without changes to physical environments, courses may be insufficient to overcome barriers to biking intake⁴.

There are also already adult bike education programs run by Go Eco and The Settlement Centre. If Hamilton City Council was to pursue this, they should be further resourcing these community organisations who have already been doing this work. It is critical for Hamilton City Council to focus on the needs which cannot be met by the community - infrastructure - which will also help to improve the effectiveness of the existing education programmes, both in schools and adult programmes.

Vision Zero - the strategy where no death or serious injuries is acceptable on our roads - was adopted by Hamilton City Council in June 2017, and sits alongside NZTA's current road safety

¹ Infrastructure Operations Committee 27 August 2020
<https://www.hamilton.govt.nz/AgendasAndMinutes/Infrastructure%20Operations%20Committee%20Open%20Agenda%20-%202027%20August%202020.pdf>

² Keeping Cities Moving <https://www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/resources/keeping-cities-moving/Keeping-cities-moving.pdf>

³ Understanding attitudes and perceptions of Cycling & Walking
<https://www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/resources/understanding-attitudes-and-perceptions-of-cycling-and-walking/NZTA-Attitudes-to-cycling-and-walking-final-report-2018.pdf>

⁴ Effectiveness of a bicycle skills training intervention on increasing bicycling and confidence: A longitudinal quasi-experimental study <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S2214140519300684>

strategy, Road to Zero. Vision Zero acknowledges that there are limits to the amount of force which is survivable - for a pedestrian, wheeled pedestrian, bike user or motorcyclist hit by a car, it's around 30km/h⁵. Lowering urban speed limits is a priority - as it ensures that when mistakes happen within our transport network, they are mistakes that should be survivable for all parties involved.

We disagree that supporting behavioural change as described in the theme is a strategic choice to encourage more people to bike, e-scooter, or e-skateboard.

- **We do support urban streets with lower speed limits, as they are critical to decreasing our road deaths under Vision Zero.**
- **We do agree that education is a critical part of the overall mode-shift, but do not believe it should be prioritised over infrastructure changes.**

Theme 2: Best use of the existing network

Reallocating road space without making significant physical changes does not reduce the perceived risk of biking on Hamilton's roads. Painted lanes and sharrows do not provide the physical protection necessary to prevent the constant close-passes and near misses which make biking around our city so frightening.

The addition of painted lanes with no protection will not be enough to support a significant modal shift in the way people travel around the city, more significant changes are required. We know this because the perceived danger of biking is not due to the number of actual deaths - there is only approximately one bike user death for every two million hours biked in New Zealand⁶ - but the high number of near misses with vehicles that bike users face, which constantly remind people of how high the stakes are⁷.

This is corroborated by trends away from non-segregated painted lanes overseas. In 2019, Britain's cycling and walking commissioners stated that the British government has wasted hundreds of millions of pounds painting pointless white lines on busy roads and calling them cycle lanes, describing painted cycle lanes as a "gesture", and that they do nothing to make people feel safer on a bike⁸.

Connecting the bike network to open space paths is a good idea in principle, however the network leading to the open spaces needs to provide a safe, comfortable and ideally separated

⁵ Road to Zero New Zealand's Road Safety Strategy 2020-2030
https://www.transport.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/Report/Road-to-Zero-strategy_final.pdf

⁶ Safer Journeys for people who cycle: Cycling safety panel draft report and recommendations
<https://www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/consultation/cycling-safety-panel/docs/cycling-safety-panel-consultation-draft-sept-2014.pdf>

⁷ Perceived traffic risk for cyclists: The impact of near miss and collision experiences
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0001457514003261>

⁸ Painted bike lanes are waste of money, say cycling commissioners
<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/jun/17/painted-bike-lanes-waste-money-cycling-commissioners>

riding experience, and many open spaces will require upgrades to allow people on bikes to ride in harmony with other users. It is critical that we don't antagonise the relationship between pedestrians and bike users, in our attempt at improving the relationship between motorists and bike users.

In some cases it may be possible to provide separated bike lanes without reconstructing long stretches of kerbs and berms by reallocating existing road space (e.g. car parks and flush medians), using the space gained to install separators and painted bikeways. This would provide a level of protection which would encourage more people to bike more regularly, however it is essential that this protection is extended through high-risk areas such as intersections and roundabouts.

It is important to note that the general principle of bike user segregation is the higher the speed and volume of the adjacent motor traffic, the greater the level of physical separation required⁹. Implementing this theme in areas which require segregation due to the road speed, and kerb shifts to create the appropriate space on the road, makes this theme inappropriate to many places in the existing network. A 2014 study on improving the passing experiences of bike users in non-separated conditions recommended wider cross-sections and lower speed limits. Unfortunately, widening the road is not on offer under this theme, and in many cases not practicable. Lower speed limits are offered under the first theme and should be implemented more often to provide safety benefits for bike users and equity across transport modes.

Hamilton City Council's commitment to Vision Zero is also critical to keep in mind when evaluating this theme. Cleas Tingvall, who developed Sweden's Vision Zero programme in the 1990s, said that in every situation that a person might make mistakes, the transport system should not¹⁰. Physical changes to the network are necessary in order to create a forgiving environment for bike users, as well as the motorists who bear both the legal and psychological cost of fatal outcomes for bike users.

If you believe that a dollar figure can be put on a human life, the social cost per road fatality is estimated to be \$4.34 million¹¹, making the cost of the injuries and fatalities in Hamilton from July this year \$13.78 million¹². The ethical and moral responsibility to achieve Vision Zero should be reason enough, however, the economical toll on our city is also significant and painted lines are an insignificant investment in addressing the loss of life.

⁹ What are the three basic types of infrastructure for cycling?
<https://www.cyclinguk.org/article/what-are-three-basic-types-infrastructure-cycling>

¹⁰ Vision Zero: At a glance <https://at.govt.nz/media/1980875/vision-zero-at-a-glance.pdf>

¹¹ Social cost of road crashes and injuries
<https://www.transport.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/Report/Social-cost-of-road-crashes-and-injuries-2018-update.pdf>

¹² Infrastructure Operations Committee 19 November 2020
<https://www.hamilton.govt.nz/AgendasAndMinutes/Infrastructure%20Operations%20Committee%20-%20Open%20Agenda%20%20-%2019%20November%202020.PDF>

Another consideration towards this theme is that micro-mobility devices like e-scooters and e-skateboards also cannot be ridden in on-road cycle lanes¹³, so for this infrastructure to be inclusive of micro-mobility, a law change at the central government level will need to be enacted.

"Providing a consistent standard of connections" cannot mean extending the network at its current standards - a step-change is needed to provide a safe and enjoyable riding experience across the network which will truly encourage people onto their bikes more regularly.

We disagree that supporting the best use of the existing network as described in the theme is a strategic choice to encourage more people to bike, e-scooter, or e-skateboard.

- **We do support implementing more light segregation across the existing network where it is appropriate.**
- **We do support Vision Zero in allowing for people to make mistakes, but creating a system that protects them when they do.**

Theme 3: Cross-city bikeways

Providing the "highest quality bike and e-scooter facilities" is the kind of infrastructure that Hamilton City Council should be implementing to combat the perception that it is unsafe to bike. "Wide, separated cross-city bikeways between high demand destinations" is what will significantly change perceptions of the safety of biking as they move people out of car-centric spaces and into their own place in the city's infrastructure.

The average New Zealand household spends \$216/week on transport costs and low-income households, children, solo-parents, tertiary students, elderly people, and people with disabilities experience more transport poverty. Having wide, separated, cross-city bikeways between high-demand destinations gives people safe options for getting to key places of employment, education, healthcare, and community.

The prioritisation of people on bikes and e-scooters over cars will be significant in creating the desired mode shift by rewarding those users. Biking and micro-mobility improves physical and mental health outcomes, reduces air, noise and vibration pollution, improves social, cultural, economic well being, and reduces greenhouse gas emissions. These are all things which we should be rewarding. This is also supported by Hamilton City Council's own documents:

"The best local streets are more than roads for moving vehicles, they are social spaces [...] Letting those using or passing through the area know, by the look and feel, what the

¹³ New electric scooters allowed on footpath and road, but not cycle lanes
<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/107572115/new-electric-scooters-allowed-on-footpath-and-road-but-not-cycle-lanes>

appropriate transport choice or behaviour is. A clear and actively promoted road user hierarchy is an important part of this.”¹⁴

By addressing a critical barrier to biking and micro-mobility, this theme will also support Hamilton City Council to meet internal goals, such as the 2028 goal outlined within the Access Hamilton strategy of 29% of trips to be by active or public transport¹⁵ and the Long Term Plan goal of 3,140 bike users entering the central city each day by 2027/2028¹⁶. The United Nations advocates against transport systems which put more cars on the road and recommends that at least 20% of transport funds are set aside for walking and biking programmes¹⁷. We would welcome the opportunity to meet with Elected Members and Council staff to discuss initiatives in these areas further to ensure that appropriate funding is in place for the next 10 years.

Many of Hamilton City Council’s strategies acknowledge the need to accommodate growth, and we also need to be prepared for growth within the number of people biking in our city. Creating infrastructure which has the necessary capacity for a city where 29% of trips are taken by active or public transport (as the 2028 Access Hamilton strategy goal), means we’re continuing to create positive experiences for bike users as the number of users grows - as one of the key performance indicators of the Hamilton Biking Plan is that 80% of users are satisfied with the biking network¹⁸.

We strongly agree that supporting cross-city bikeways as described in the theme is a strategic choice to encourage more people to bike, e-scooter, or e-skateboard.

- **This theme presents the opportunity to reduce the main barrier to biking in the city, create a significant mode-shift while also addressing transport inequality within the city.**
- **This theme will also be crucial for Hamilton City Council to meet their own goals within the Hamilton Access strategy, the Long Term Plan, and the Biking Plan.**
- **We also support increased funding for the Biking and Micro-mobility Programme, and any other biking, micro-mobility, public transport, or pedestrian strategies in the Long Term Plan.**

¹⁴ Access Hamilton Strategy <https://hamilton.govt.nz/our-services/transport/Documents/Access%20Hamilton%20Strategy.pdf>

¹⁵ Infrastructure Operations Committee 27 August 2020
<https://www.hamilton.govt.nz/AgendasAndMinutes/Infrastructure%20Operations%20Committee%20Open%20Agenda%20-%2027%20August%202020.pdf>

¹⁶ 2018-28 10-Year Plan Volume 1
<https://www.hamilton.govt.nz/our-council/10-year-plan/Final%2010Year%20Plan%20Documents/2018-28%2010-Year%20Plan%20FINAL%20for%20WEB.pdf>

¹⁷ UN Environment report: Put people, not cars first in transport systems
<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2016/10/un-environment-report-put-people-not-cars-first-in-transport-systems/>

¹⁸ Hamilton Biking Plan 2015-2045
<https://www.hamilton.govt.nz/our-services/transport/bike-hamilton/Documents/Hamilton%20Bike%20Plan.pdf>

Theme 4: Connected neighbourhoods

There needs to be a focus on everyday streets that are safe for people to walk, bike and live. That means safe vehicle speeds so children can visit friends, get to school and the playground. The focus should not just be limited to schools and neighbourhood centres.

Connected neighbourhoods start with the spaces within our neighbourhoods, making sure they are safe for us to live in. While we support the development of separated bikeways to provide safe transport options for people who choose to leave the car at home, there needs to be a way for them to safely leave home and connect to biking infrastructure suitable for their trip.

Also as stated earlier, pathways in open spaces need to have safe access, but also be suitable for all users and not increase the risk of injury for those who are more vulnerable.

This theme also ties into the existing work that Hamilton City Council does in the education space. Education for children is complicated by parents and caregivers attitudes to biking. A 2019 survey in New Zealand showed parents and caregivers are the gatekeepers to their children's independent mobility and highlighted that parents and caregivers' assessments for safer traffic environments were accurate in terms of the objective assessment of their neighbourhood¹⁹. For children to see the benefits of any biking education, they need safer infrastructure in their neighbourhoods and their parents and caregivers to have confidence in that infrastructure. This is how we can cement a modal-shift - by creating a culture of biking in our young people which is supported by their parents and caregivers, and continues through to their adult lives.

This theme will also allow the cross-city bikeways, as suggested in theme three, to be sufficiently linked to smaller, neighbourhood destinations - making the cross-city bikeways more effective. Otherwise, the network will continue to have gaps which are barriers to increased usage. The number of people who will live next to cross-city bikeways will be outnumbered by the number of people who don't, and those who live away from the cross-city bikeways will need to be able to get to them safely.

While it was not mentioned in this theme, improvements for public transport users - including being able to take bikes on buses, as we are able to do within the Waikato outside Hamilton, but not within Hamilton - would also facilitate more connected neighbourhoods. Other cities who successfully integrate bikes into their public transport system, like Auckland, as well as many overseas cities, are proof this is possible and help facilitate a stronger public transport network. Biking and micro-mobility working together with the public transport system is the key to offering a wide range of accessible transport choices regardless of the route, weather, battery range, or fitness levels.

We agree that supporting connected neighbourhoods as described in the theme is a strategic choice to encourage more people to bike, e-scooter, or e-skateboard.

¹⁹ Children's Transport Built Environments: A Mixed Methods Study of Associations between Perceived and Objective Measures and Relationships with Parent Licence for Independent Mobility in Auckland, New Zealand
<https://www.mdpi.com/1660-4601/16/8/1361/html>

- **This theme presents the opportunity to reduce the main barrier to biking in the city, create a significant mode-shift while also addressing transport inequality within the city.**
- **This theme also allows us to create a cultural shift within our young people, which reinforces Council's existing work in the school education space.**
- **We also support increased integration with the public transport system - mainly, allowing bikes onto buses with the city.**

Conclusion

Under the status quo, bike users are 15 times more likely to suffer a death or serious injury on Hamilton's roads than motorists per km travelled²⁰. Under the status quo, 64% of Hamilton's emissions are from transportation²¹. Under the status quo, Hamilton's congestion is already equal to Auckland's over the whole day and worse around midday²².

We believe there is no reason why Hamilton should not be the best city in Aotearoa New Zealand for biking. We believe that we have a future where we have a carbon zero transport system, where it's safe, convenient, easy, and efficient to get on your bike, e-scooter, or e-skateboard, where our pedestrians also feel safe in our city, and where we are happier, more connected and a more equal society.

The status quo cannot continue to be our future, and we have the power to change it.

Ngā mihi nui,

Bike Waikato

Richard Porter, Chairperson

Louise Hutt, Communications and Engagement Coordinator

This submission is also supported by Go Eco, the Waikato Environment Centre

Robert Moore, Chairperson

²⁰ Biking and Micro-Mobility Programme: Project Overview
<https://www.hamilton.govt.nz/our-city/city-development/transport/Documents/Biking%20and%20%20Micro-Mobility%20Programme-%20Project%20Overview.pdf>

²¹ Waikato Region Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory
<https://www.waikatoregion.govt.nz/assets/WRC/WRC-2019/Waikato-Region-GHG-Inventory-18-19.pdf>

²² Hamilton City Council (2018) Access Hamilton 2018 Programme Business Case, Version 2.0, September 2018