

28 March 2021

Bike Waikato Submission on:
Climate Change Commission 2021 Draft Advice for Consultation

Bike Waikato would like to acknowledge the work the Commission has carried out to prepare this draft advice and the opportunity we have to provide this submission. Now is the time to act and start making a difference. We think the advice should be more ambitious by making cycling much more accessible to a larger part of Aotearoa. The Commission's focus on active transport in Auckland – with explicit support for increased investment in cycling infrastructure as part of integrated transport networks – is commendable. However, limiting recommendations to Auckland is missing an opportunity for long term investment in carbon zero/near-zero development throughout Aotearoa plus the multiple co-benefits that this emissions reduction method offers.

Historic investment in roads has led to an increase in private vehicle ownership. Increases in traffic volumes has also made people conscious of the safety implications when considering active transport options. Provision of separated cycling infrastructure is a large factor in safety perception; seventy six percent of people in Wellington over 18 years of age would consider cycling if such infrastructure was available¹ Further, increasing the number of cyclists on roads increases safety; the 'safety in numbers' principle².

Bike Waikato recommends the following for the Climate Change Commission advice:

- More ambitious targets for cycling travel
- Recommendations for dedicated investment in safe cycling infrastructure
- Fiscal incentives to help people switch from cars to e-bikes and e-cargo bikes

New Zealand Should Be More Ambitious

The **Change of Pace** outlined in the advice is not ambitious enough. Cycling-based opportunities exist now to expedite reduced vehicle use through transport mode shifts. Starting our transition early to reduce emissions will reduce the burden for **Future Generations** and encourage them to continue.

Cycling can be used to replace many everyday trips currently carried out with light vehicles. In Aotearoa nearly one third of car trips are less than 2 km in length, nearly two thirds of car trips are less than 5 km in length³. These trip lengths can be easily achieved using a bicycle for the majority of people.

¹ NZTA (2016): Benefits of investing in cycling in NZ communities
<https://www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/Walking-Cycling-and-Public-Transport/docs/benefits-of-investing-in-cycling/cyclelife-benefits-booklet.pdf>

² ibid

³ Turning the Tide - from Cars to Active Transport, Otago University,
<https://www.otago.ac.nz/active-living/otago710135.pdf>

While the advice looks to replace vehicles with internal combustion engines (ICE) with electric vehicles, there still remains a road safety element not addressed. Dedicated investment in safe cycle infrastructure across Aotearoa has the benefit of removing ICE vehicles from transport emissions early while still maintaining urban mobility with bicycles. A case study conducted by researchers at Victoria University of Wellington and the University of Otago revealed that the construction of urban active transport infrastructure is associated with reduced transport carbon dioxide emissions in a short space of time⁴.

A 95% increase to the cycling distance by 2030 is not ambitious when the current cycling distance for trips is so low. The Commission should recommend tangible mode shift targets to the Government that can be measured and reported on. We recommend targets of 4% trips by cycle by 2025 increasing to 8% trips by cycle in 2030. The ideal result will be meeting the target of 15% of trips by cycle as outlined in Turning the Tide.⁵

New Zealanders are willing to embrace a mode shift change and make the switch to cycling already. The main barrier is the lack of infrastructure and perception of safety. Let's encourage the country to Lock in Net Zero earlier than 2050, and promote positive behaviour changes. Providing incentives for people to leave the car at home and use a bicycle can lead to numerous benefits for health, wellbeing⁶ and reducing traffic congestion.

New Zealand Needs Investment Committed to Active Transport

Dedicated investment in safe cycle infrastructure will do more than encourage people to use alternative transport options, it will provide the solutions they have been asking for. Children who ride a bike to school have greater concentration than those who are driven.^{7,8}

Policy Priorities to Reduce Emissions are key to encouraging the people of Aotearoa to make positive changes to their daily lives.

Bike Waikato supports Necessary Action 2 with the cycling targets mentioned earlier and a dedicated investment scheme that can be used to encourage more people to walk and cycle.

⁴ Keall et al., (2018) Reductions in carbon dioxide emissions from an intervention to promote cycling and walking: a case study from New Zealand, Transport and Environment 65 pp687-696
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S136192091830419X>

⁵ Turning the Tide - from Cars to Active Transport, Otago University,
<https://www.otago.ac.nz/active-living/otago710135.pdf>

⁶ Gotschi, Garrard & Giles-Corti (2016) Cycling as a part of daily life: a review of health perspectives. Transport Reviews, 36:1 <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01441647.2015.1057877>

⁷ Back to School: Walking to schools helps body, brain and the planet
<https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/back-to-school-walking-to-schools-helps-body-brain-and-the-planet/XRN7E5WRZV6FMOQPTMCWGDZUPU/>

⁸ NZTA (2016): Benefits of investing in cycling in NZ communities
<https://www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/Walking-Cycling-and-Public-Transport/docs/benefits-of-investing-in-cycling/cyclelife-benefits-booklet.pdf>

The GPS on Land Transport 2021 has not improved the current funding shortfalls on active transport or public transport. In fact the GPS and its current financial implications show that the Government is putting more precedence on vehicles for transport than alternative modes. Road space allocation needs to be addressed with dedicated investment in infrastructure for people to safely walk and cycle which in turn will help reduce the reliance on driving.

The United Nations recommend a target of at least 20% of transport funds are set aside for walking and cycling programmes. Recommendations to central government to set a bold goal like this would provide rapid investment in walking and cycling improvements and enable fast uptake by users, benefiting multiple strategic priorities⁹.

Global Outlook on Walking and Cycling,

<https://www.unenvironment.org/resources/report/share-road-global-outlook-walking-and-cycling-october-2016>

Vehicle ownership can be a heavy financial burden on some people. The need to switch to a low emissions vehicle (EV) will place an even greater financial burden on many members of our communities. We recommend the advice includes a fee rebate or subsidy scheme to make electric vehicles more accessible and it should be extended to e-bikes at the same time, continuing the momentum built by the public sector e-bike scheme¹⁰. The cost of e-bikes is much lower than an EV and can deliver much the same benefits. Over their lifetime e-bikes generate less greenhouse gases than ICE cars and EV cars¹¹.

We are in support of Enabling Recommendation 1. Cross party support is crucial to making collective changes for the benefit of Aotearoa. Cross party support should also include the understanding that businesses have alternatives available to switch from current greenhouse generating activities.

We are in support of Enabling Recommendation 4, Central and Local Government working in partnership. Funding initiatives will be crucial to allow local governments to make changes that benefit low emissions activities, particularly around transport choice.

⁹ Global Outlook on Walking and Cycling,

<https://www.unenvironment.org/resources/report/share-road-global-outlook-walking-and-cycling-october-2016>

¹⁰ Waka Kotahi Public sector e-bike scheme

<https://www.nzta.govt.nz/walking-cycling-and-public-transport/cycling/public-sector-e-bike-scheme/>

¹¹ How good is cycling for the environment?

<https://www.bikeradar.com/features/long-reads/cycling-environmental-impact/>

New Zealand Needs Fiscal Incentives

Providing investment for an equitable transport system can encourage natural **Behaviour Changes**.

The advice calls for the majority of vehicles coming into New Zealand to be electric by 2035. The long vehicle fleet life in New Zealand means legacy ICE vehicles will remain for a long time after 2035. Fiscal incentives to replace ICE and EV vehicle trips with bicycles will provide immediate and significant emissions reductions¹² and increased life expectancy¹³. Funding assistance to enable Road Controlling Authorities to provide safe efficient walking and cycling transport networks will help increase the uptake of ultra low emissions travel without adverse effects on traffic that require vehicles to undertake their activities¹⁴.

Light vehicle logistics tasks can be easily adapted to bicycles or cargo bikes. Last kilometer logistics can carry a large portion of the logistics costs and emissions and contribute to increased urban traffic congestion.

We would like the advice to direct the Government to provide fiscal incentives to businesses to adopt alternative **Technologies** for logistics. E-cargo bikes are a competitive alternative to current last kilometer logistics and offer the benefits the advice is looking to achieve¹⁵.

In Conclusion

Bike Waikato supports the above proposals and advice put forward by the Commission which will alter the status quo for many New Zealanders. We believe many people in Aotearoa want to make a bigger impact of reducing the effects of climate change now, rather than wait. We support proposals by Central Government that don't deliver less than the following achievements:

- Set ambitious targets for mode shift to active transport. We recommend targets of 4% of travel distance by cycling in 2025 increasing to 8% by 2030 to achieve at least 15% of travel distance by cycling in 2050.
- Recommend a dedicated funding category for walking and cycling projects that reflects the mode share targets – 20% of the total transport spend should be for active transport priority projects.
- Recommend that any trade-in or subsidy scheme for electric private vehicles also extends to electric bicycles and other e-micromobility.

¹² How good is cycling for the environment?

<https://www.bikeradar.com/features/long-reads/cycling-environmental-impact/>

¹³ Do the Health benefits of cycling outweigh the risks?

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2920084/>

¹⁴ The Role of Walking and Cycling in Reducing Congestion

http://h2020-flow.eu/uploads/tx_news/FLOW_REPORT_-_Portfolio_of_Measures_v_06_web.pdf

¹⁵ A New Move for Business

<https://ecf.com/sites/ecf.com/files/A%20NEW%20MOVE%20FOR%20BUSINESS%20IN%20EU%20CITI%20ES.pdf>