



19 April 2021

Submission to the Matamata Piako District Council Draft Long Term Plan 2021-2031

Who we are

Bike Waikato is an incorporated society run by volunteers and funded by an active membership.

We believe providing safe and convenient cycle facilities means our cities, towns and villages can function efficiently and provide a catalyst for vibrant communities. We advocate on behalf of our members in the community to seek change.

Our goal is simple. To get more people on bikes, safely.

Why we are submitting on the Matamata Piako Long Term Plan

There has been a groundswell of support for cycling in 2020 and 2021 due to Covid-19 and the need for communities to maintain and improve their well-being. Communities realised that recreation opportunities were easily obtained by cycling when lockdowns provided an environment of low traffic.

With the increase of people on bikes, there is a dawning realisation that current transport infrastructure is inadequate for those that choose two wheels over four.

The Long Term Plan has a prime opportunity to signal to the community that traditional transport funding does not allow all members of a community to participate using their chosen form of transport.

For too long councils have provided insufficient funding, and in turn priority, to encourage cycling and active travel modes. Recent central government policy regarding climate change and greenhouse gas emissions now makes the identification of low-emissions transport a priority. There is now the demand for an increase in cycling infrastructure in our towns, villages and rural areas to provide for those that choose to ride bikes.

What we like

We acknowledge the good work that has gone into developing cycle trails across the region and support the plans to extend these further from Matamata to Piarere and Te Aroha to Morrinsville.



We support the walking and cycling improvements proposed in the Long Term Plan to enhance the accessibility and safety for active modes users. Many towns and cities around the world have shown that 'if you build it, they will come' when building cycling infrastructure.

We support the Te Aroha Mountain Bike Club's mountain bike skills park development. The mental and physical health benefits of cycling extends from commuting all the way through to mountain biking. By providing such a facility riders also get the opportunity to develop their own bike riding skills which in turn allows them to become safer and more confident riders on the road.

Where there could be improvements

Budget to widen footpaths benefits areas that have an increase of pedestrians. The Long Term Plan identifies that the 60 years and above age group is the fastest growing age group. While footpath widening will increase accessibility, there will be a decrease in safety for the more vulnerable users when pedestrians and cyclists are expected to mix. In high traffic, or high risk, areas it is ideal to provide dedicated facilities for each mode; walking, bikes, vehicles to reduce the risk for soft and vulnerable users.

Now is the best time to start providing safe infrastructure for people on bikes. As the existing transport network and town centres are maintained and redeveloped, bikes and multi-modal use should be at the forefront of all plans. Whether it be allocating space to encourage and facilitate safe bike riding or measures that reduce vehicle speeds to allow users of all ages and abilities to move around our transport networks. Starting to implement these infrastructure changes now makes the 2051 goal achievable.

Bike Waikato would like the opportunity to speak in support of our submission.