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28 April 2020

Your Honour the Mayor Helen Worboys
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Dear Mayor Helen Worboys

Walking and Cycling Strategy 2020

Thank you for the opportunity to for this “last chance” to submit on the draft Manawatu District Walking and Cycling Strategy 2020.

Having safe walking and cycling infrastructure is important to the wellbeing of the Community.

I applaud the Council for developing the draft Walking and Cycling Strategy and sharing its vision and plan for further public consultation. Below are my specific comments on the Strategy.

Consultation

Despite being a “last chance to have a say”, I was disappointed to note that nothing in the consultation document indicates that the Strategy is still a draft. In fact, the document is written as if consultation has already been undertaken, and states: “Adopted July 2020”. It is questionable then if the Council under Section 82 (e) of the Local Government Act 2002 is “keeping an open mind and giving public consultation due consideration.

Prioritising walking

The Strategy appears to be weighted more towards cycling infrastructure, facilities, and education than towards walking and running. People who don’t drive or bike will walk to work, school, a shop, or a bus. The majority of people regardless of age or socio-economic status walk (or use a mobility device). Walking doesn’t require additional equipment (unless the person has a disability). According to the Ministry of Transport 49% of households (not people) in the Manawatu-Wanganui region have a bicycle in working order¹. Even less people will have E-bikes. Based on the mode share of trips in the Manawatu/ Wanganui region 2010/2014, pedestrians outweigh the number of cyclists 13 to 1². A minority of people chose to cycle and there is an even smaller minority of people who choose to BMX or mountain bike. Walking should take priority over cycling, particularly as a starting focus for building infrastructure where there is demonstratable demand and the community can afford it.

BMX and mountain biking tracks are for a small minority of people and should be funded by those people interested in these sports. BMX and mountain biking clubs are able to attract sponsorship or fundraise for the purchase of infrastructure and should do this where

¹ Ministry of Transport Household Travel Survey 2010/2014

² Ministry of Transport Household Travel Survey 2010/2014

