



25 June 2021

Tēnā koe me koutou mā

**Hīkina te Kohupara Kia mauri ora ai to iwi**

Healthy Families NZ is a large-scale prevention initiative funded by the Ministry of Health. It brings community leadership together in a united effort for better health and wellbeing in the places where we live, learn, work and play.

Transport choice is one of the many factors that influence the health and wellbeing of our communities. The transition to a low carbon transport system is an opportunity to shift to a system that provides healthier options and considers the diverse needs of our communities.

The following submission is joint feedback from three Healthy Families NZ localities - Invercargill, Waitākere and Hutt Valley. It focuses on the need to consider transport equity and the opportunity for co-benefits of improved health and wellbeing in the transition to a zero carbon future.

We are happy to provide further input and clarification on any of the points raised and would welcome the opportunity to be involved further.

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Ngā mihi nui

Healthy Families Invercargill, Waitākere and Hutt Valley

## Introduction

Transport choice has significant impacts on more than just our climate. It impacts the health and wellbeing of our communities. The transition to a low carbon transport system is a once in a generation opportunity to also address health and transport inequities in our society.

Streets designed for cars without focusing on other means of moving around our cities and neighbourhoods make it unattractive to use active modes of transport, even over short distances. Being active has been designed out of our day to day life. Consequently, walking and cycling make up only a small amount of mode share with most trips being taken by private vehicle.

One of the key contributors to poor health and wellbeing is the lack of physical activity in our daily lives. A World Health Organisation report ranked New Zealand as the fourteenth most inactive country out of 168 countries worldwide. An increase in physical inactivity over the decades has led to a rise in chronic diseases including obesity and diabetes which are preventable and where physical activity has an important role to play. There is also a large body of evidence that shows that physical activity reduces depression and anxiety and positively contributes to mental wellbeing. This health burden disproportionately affects our Māori and Pasifika peoples.

We therefore support the approach of Hīkina te Kohupara to focus on a **fair, equitable and inclusive** transition that addresses the immediate need to reduce emissions while improving the health and wellbeing of our communities.

### **Consultation question 1 - Do you support the principles in Hīkina te Kohupara? Are there any other considerations that should be reflected in the principles?**

Overall we support the principles set out in Hīkina te Kohupara. We have provided comments on specific principles below.

*Principle 1. The transport sector will play a lead role in meeting our 2050 net zero carbon target*

We support this principle and appreciate the opportunity this will provide to re-shape the transport system which currently does not serve all of our people equitably.

*Principle 2. We need to focus on moving to a zero carbon transport system, rather than offsetting emissions*

We support this principle and appreciate the opportunity this will provide to re-shape the transport system which currently does not serve all of our people equitably.

*Principle 3. We need to take a strategic approach to reducing transport emissions*

We support the government taking a strategic approach and prioritisation of initiatives that will have the largest impact on reducing emissions while delivering value for society through co-benefits.

Beyond strategic planning, we support and actively encourage taking a systems thinking approach. Systems thinking aims to understand the interconnected conditions that hold the status quo in place. This allows for a deeper understanding of the issues and how the system enables these to prevail. It also allows for greater appreciation and understanding of the interconnected co-benefits or unintended consequences of changes to the transport system.

Healthy Families NZ localities are currently using systems thinking approaches to enable healthy city design and active transport options and can demonstrate the value of this approach.

*Principle 4. Co-ordinated action is required across the transport system to avoid and reduce emissions*

We agree that co-ordinated action is required from the government with iwi, community, businesses and Councils to reduce transport emissions, as outlined in principle 4.

This transition provides an opportunity for agencies to strengthen the ways of working together in the transport system. The Healthy Families NZ approach and Waka Kotahi's Innovating Streets for People Programme are good examples of how different levels of government and community can work together in a co-ordinated, collaborative way for effective outcomes.

An opportunity that should be explored for greater collaboration and co-ordination to achieve active transport outcomes is through a Regional Community of Practice alongside central government (Waka Kotahi) playing a facilitating role. A Regional Community of Practice would allow for sharing of learnings, best practice, peer support and capability development across multiple sectors and agencies as we transition our transport system.

*Principle 5. To ensure a Just Transition we need to manage the impacts and maximise the opportunities brought about by changes to the transport system*

A Just Transition is a once in a lifetime opportunity to address the decreasing liveability of our cities and towns and address transport inequity.

An equitable transport system ensures everyone has a choice on how they travel and everyone can participate fully in those choices without barriers. Moving towards an equitable transport system requires existing inequities to be better understood, addressed and improved for those who are currently disadvantaged by the system.

Communities experiencing the highest levels of deprivation would benefit the most from greater transport choices. Transport expenditure and design that takes into consideration where the greatest need is will create the most impact. We strongly suggest making transport equity a key decision making principle for new micro-mobility projects which will support us to reach a fairer, equitable and inclusive transport system. Infrastructure spend could be prioritised where the highest levels of preventable chronic disease are in our communities.

Another imperative to a Just Transition is to ensure policies and infrastructure are designed to consider the diverse needs of our communities. For example, infrastructure that supports walking and cycling and micro-mobility modes should be suitable for women, children and those with limited mobility.

While we acknowledge that electric vehicles will be a critical part of the transition to a net zero carbon emissions transport system, these will not be accessible for those who are already experiencing transport inequity. Micro-mobility or public transport initiatives that reduce transport costs for those that need it most are important tools to address transport inequity while improving health and wellbeing outcomes.

*Principle 6. We need to forge a path to zero transport emissions by 2050, while recognising that there is not one way to get there*

An adaptable response is critical to achieving an effective and efficient transition. To increase adaptability there will need to be system changes that enable more flexibility.

There are many ways that the government can forge a path to zero transport emissions. The path taken should be the one that enables our communities to thrive in the coming generations. The co-benefits in health, wellbeing and improving equity need to be adequately considered to enable informed decisions. This may require a change to the way cost/benefit ratios are undertaken with emphasis placed on comprehensive analysis of the health benefits.

Active transport delivers significantly higher co-benefits over zero emissions vehicles including to mental health. The benefits to mental health of prioritising active modes of transport should be adequately quantified and reported. This approach, if communicated effectively, will help communities to understand the benefits of the changes required.

*Principle 7. Innovation and technologies will play an important role in reducing emissions, but people are the key to our future*

Changes in technology will shape the future of the transport system. A relatively new technology that is rapidly evolving is e-bikes and micro-mobility technology. E-bike sales, for example, are on the rise globally and may compete with new car sales.

Micro-mobility technology could result in this form of transport playing a more significant role in the transition to a zero carbon transport system that is forecasted by the Climate Change Commissions' report '*Ināia tonu nei: a low emissions future for Aotearoa*'.

There is a need to consider how we can make micro-mobility choices available to more people and systematically remove the barriers to choosing these healthier transport options for trips that are not walkable.

**Consultation question 2 - Is the government's role in reducing transport emissions clear? Are there other levers the government could use to reduce transport emissions?**

We support a co-ordinated, collaborative approach with the government showing leadership and working alongside local government, iwi, communities and businesses. This could include the government taking a more active role in understanding the barriers to change in individual localities and communities.

Under-resourcing in active transport capability and capacity at local government level is a barrier that is evident in some areas. Government should seek to understand Councils capability and capacity to deliver on the changes required and support them to address this. This may involve government funded roles in local government, similar to Eco Design Adviser roles funded by the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority.

Transport costs are a barrier to some whānau participating fully in social and economic opportunities and we support the Ministry of Transport working with the Ministries of Social Development and Health to realise the co-benefits of a healthier, more equitable transport system.

Sport New Zealand is another agency which could support the Ministry of Transport in the goal to increase active transport modes.

**Consultation question 3 - What more should Government do to encourage and support transport innovation?**

Urban form, placemaking and infrastructure design will all be key areas where innovation is important to support a low carbon, healthy and equitable transport system.

Waka Kotahi's Innovating Streets for People Programme has demonstrated how the government can support Councils and communities to innovate in street design and placemaking. Further Innovating Streets for People Programmes, or other similar initiatives, will enable greater innovation in transport infrastructure and set the scene for the changes that will need to be made within urban environments for the future of urban mobility.

Technological advances that are supported by government funding should be implemented and designed so that they are inclusive and do not exacerbate existing transport inequities.

**Consultation question 4 - Do you think we have listed the most important actions the government could take to better integrate transport, land use and urban development to reduce transport emissions? Which of these possible actions do you think should be prioritised?**

At the heart of integrating transport, land use and urban development is liveability. Local Councils should be required and supported by government to deliver more liveable urban environments including low traffic neighbourhoods, placemaking and innovative street design changes.

Making streets attractive places to walk, wheel and play requires designing with communities, as has been done by Councils alongside Waka Kotahi in the Innovating Streets for People Programme. In this transition, strong leadership and a clear collective vision at central and local government is important to bring communities along on the journey.

Storytelling and communications are important tools and local Councils should be supported and adequately funded to ensure these functions are well executed in placemaking and Innovating Streets for People initiatives. This is an important part of getting buy-in and bringing communities along on the journey in the transition.

We agree that re-shaping streets to support public transport, active transport and placemaking could be done swiftly and cost-effectively provided learnings from the Innovating Streets for People Programme are integrated into the next revision of Innovating Streets for People funding or any new initiatives designed for this purpose. These include changes to regulations to better enable tactical urbanism, a clear vision from central government and a government backed mandate for change, as outlined above.

Supporting and investing in active transport planning, placemaking and urban design capability and capacity within local government would have significant benefits.

**Consultation question 5 - Are there other travel options that should be considered to encourage people to use alternative modes of transport? If so, what?**

We agree that there is major untapped potential for walking and cycling to increase in mode share. We would like to see the government put out ambitious targets and increased funding for increasing vehicle kilometers travelled by these modes given the significant co-benefits for health.

A network of cycle infrastructure that caters for the diverse needs of riders, including women transporting children is important to realising the potential for cycling mode share to increase.

E-bikes can enable greater participation in cycling, particularly for women who may need to transport several children. Initiatives to support uptake of e-bikes in communities where upfront cost is a barrier would contribute towards transport equity. A mass roll out of secure cycle parking for e-bikes would also support the uptake of this technology.

Shared micro-mobility is another way to address transport equity as it could be subsidised by the government for low income earners. Alternatively, small scale micro-mobility sharing could occur in government-led urban developments, such as villages created by Kāinga Ora. Another form of shared micro-mobility that could be supported by the government is company fleets of e-bikes, which could be tax deductible.

Public transport is an area where subsidies are already provided to some users such as students and children. This could be expanded to those who would benefit most from access to low-cost public transport.

We agree that public education and behaviour change campaigns are required, and emphasise the need for leadership and vision setting by central government in this area.

**Consultation question 6 - Pricing is sometimes viewed as being controversial. However, international literature and experiences demonstrate it can play a role in changing behaviour. Do you have any views on the role demand management, and more specifically pricing, could play to help Aotearoa reach net zero by 2050?**

The impact of pricing mechanisms on low-income earners must be carefully considered in order to limit exacerbating existing transport inequities.

**Consultation question 7 - Improving our fleet and moving towards electric vehicles and the use of sustainable alternative fuels will be important for our transition. Are there other possible actions that could help Aotearoa transition its light and heavy fleets more quickly, and which actions should be prioritised?**

We do not have anything to add to this discussion.

**Consultation question 8 - Do you support these possible actions to decarbonise the public transport fleet? Do you think we should consider any other actions?**

We do not have anything to add to this discussion.

**Consultation question 9 - Do you support the possible actions to reduce domestic aviation emissions? Do you think there are other actions we should consider?**

We do not have anything to add to this discussion.

**Consultation question 10 - The freight supply chain is important to our domestic and international trade. Do you have any views on the feasibility of the possible actions in Aotearoa and which should be prioritised?**

We do not have anything to add to this discussion.

**Consultation question 11 - Decarbonising our freight modes and fuels will be essential for our net zero future. Are there any actions you consider we have not included in the key actions for freight modes and fuels?**

We do not have anything to add to this discussion.

**Consultation question 12 - A Just Transition for all of Aotearoa will be important as we transition to net zero. Are there other impacts that we have not identified?**

The transition to a low-carbon transport system is an opportunity to address transport equity and improve liveability in Aotearoa's towns and cities.

Providing transport choices for those who experience inequities can be facilitated through new infrastructure, improved public transport service and reducing the cost of public or active transport. We support subsidies for public transport and e-bikes for those on low incomes.

We also support locating social housing in areas where there is access to walking and cycling infrastructure and activities are within walking or cycling distance.

We support marae based advisory groups to inform future government policy on the role of Māori and specific support for Māori in the transition to a low-carbon future.

**Consultation question 13 - Given the four potential pathways identified in Hikina te Kohupara, each of which require many levers and policies to be achieved, which pathway do you think Aotearoa should follow to reduce transport emissions?**

Pathway 4 which involves the most significant reduction in light vehicle distances travelled through swiftly enabling quality compact urban environments, placemaking and high targets in increases in public transport, walking, cycling and shared mobility mode share.

**Consultation question 14 - Do you have any views on the policies that we propose should be considered for the first emissions budget?**

We support the wide-range of policies outlined in budget period 1 and commend the prioritisation of shaping towns and cities and providing better travel options in the first emissions budget.

Below are further policies we believe should be considered for the first emissions budget:

- Support Councils to provide for active transport through funding capability and capacity for active transport planners. Government funded active transport planners could form a network either regionally or nationally for greater collaboration.
- Create contestable funds for medium-large scale local micro-mobility initiatives that seek to reduce the barriers to participation in individual localities and communities.
- Fund a communication and behaviour change campaign that seeks to inform communities on the journey we'll collectively need to take towards safer, healthier streets including reallocating street space.
- Review how co-benefits are considered, alongside public health experts and systems change makers, to ensure the full benefit to health and wellbeing are being considered, quantified, reported and communicated to communities.
- Investigate policy levers to ensure transport equity is adequately considered in decision making on infrastructure spend for transport.
- Investigate shifting public transport to public ownership to ensure it can be delivered in a way that considers transport equity.
- Form an advisory group tasked with understanding the barriers to women taking up cycling and micro-mobility and the system changes needed to remove these barriers.

- Form an advisory group tasked with understanding any specific barriers to taking up cycling and micro-mobility for Māori and Pasifika and the system changes needed to remove these barriers.
- Inquire into changing tax settings for business to incentivise purchase of e-bike fleets for staff.
- Investigate government supported bike share schemes.
- Support the implementation of large scale network of secure cycle parking infrastructure suitable for e-bikes.

**“If you plan cities for cars and traffic, you get cars and traffic. If you plan for people and places, you get people and places” – Fred Kent**