



# **Kawerau District Council**

## **Walking & Cycling Strategy 2008**



**Adopted on 28 October 2008**

# Contents

---

Page

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Vision.....</b>	<b>1</b>
2.1	Population.....	1
2.2	Need for Walking & Cycling.....	1
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Why Walking &amp; Cycling Are Important.....</b>	<b>2</b>
3.1	Recreation.....	2
3.2	Health & Well Being.....	2
3.3	Environment .....	2
3.4	Social Equity.....	2
3.5	Urban Accessibility.....	2
3.6	Efficient and Inexpensive.....	2
3.7	School.....	3
3.8	Tourism.....	3
<b>4.0</b>	<b>National &amp; Regional Support.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Current Position Strategy Summary .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Strategy Statement .....</b>	<b>4</b>
6.1	Objectives	4
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Implementation Plan.....</b>	<b>5 - 7</b>

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Centrally located in the heart of the Bay of Plenty and surrounded by an abundance of natural resources, the Kawerau District offers a unique lifestyle environment. This Walking and Cycling Strategy geographically covers the Kawerau Township urban area and immediate surrounds.

Kawerau is renowned for its friendliness, great sense of community, wonderful climate and its strong Maori Heritage. It also has the distinction of being one of the youngest towns in New Zealand. Founded in 1953, the township has been well planned with plenty of parks and reserves, wide tree-lined streets and a leisurely pace of life.

Kawerau is within easy reach of lakes, beaches, forests, major cities and thermal areas and with the Tarawera River right on the doorstep is the first choice as the outdoor and adventure playground of the Eastern Bay of Plenty. Walking and cycling opportunities currently exist for the Kawerau Community. However, by having a strategy to identify and prioritise these active modes of transport, these opportunities will be enhanced and maximised.

## **2.0 VISION**

Council's vision for walking and cycling is to have Kawerau residents actively and safely participating in walking and cycling as modes of transport and for recreational and competitive exercise to benefit the health and wellbeing of residents.

### **2.1 Population**

The Township of Kawerau has a population of approximately 7000 residents. The cultural flavour of Kawerau is enhanced by a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds. The Tangata Whenua has been joined by Pakeha and Maori from around the country, as well as immigrants from Finland, the Netherlands, Great Britain, North America and Australia, who came to work in the forestry industry.

### **2.2 Need for Walking/Cycling**

Kawerau Township is the centre point of activity in the District and boasts a flat topography suited to walking and cycling. The town is easily accessible on foot and by bike. Increased participation in walking and cycling will result in health and financial benefits to the Community.

### **3. WHY WALKING AND CYCLING ARE IMPORTANT**

Walking and cycling are important for a number of reasons. These have been extensively documented, especially in the health sector. The following list provides a summary of those reasons:

#### **3.1 Recreation**

Both walking and cycling are popular and accessible leisure activities, as documented in research by SPARC and the National Walk & Cycle Strategy 'Getting there - on foot, by cycle' (Land Transport, 2005).

#### **3.2 Health and well-being**

Walking and cycling are effective forms of cardiovascular exercise. A healthier Community has measurable benefits to the whole Community.

#### **3.3 Environment**

There are many environmental benefits from people choosing to walk and cycle rather than using a motor vehicle, including reduced vehicle emissions, greenhouse gases and traffic congestion.

#### **3.4 Social equity**

For many people, particularly younger people, walking and cycling provide independent modes of transport, giving them access to activities and services.

#### **3.5 Urban accessibility**

Cycling in particular extends the geographical range of trips usually made on foot, and provides a low cost transport alternative for short to medium length trips usually made by motor vehicle. This is particularly important in Kawerau, given the small urban area and limited growth, which means that people are living close to main areas of employment, schools and service areas. For people without access to private motor vehicles, bikes provide a feasible alternative means of transport.

#### **3.6 Efficient and inexpensive means of travel**

Walking and cycling are efficient and inexpensive modes of travel and do not consume non-renewable fossil fuels.

#### **3.7 School trips**

Walking and cycling have traditionally been very popular ways for children to get to school. Trends over recent years indicate a reduction in the number of children walking and cycling to school, with more children being dropped off by motor vehicle. This results in increasing traffic numbers around school access points. This can be hazardous to young children, who are generally not as 'road safety conscious' as most adults.

### 3.8 Tourism

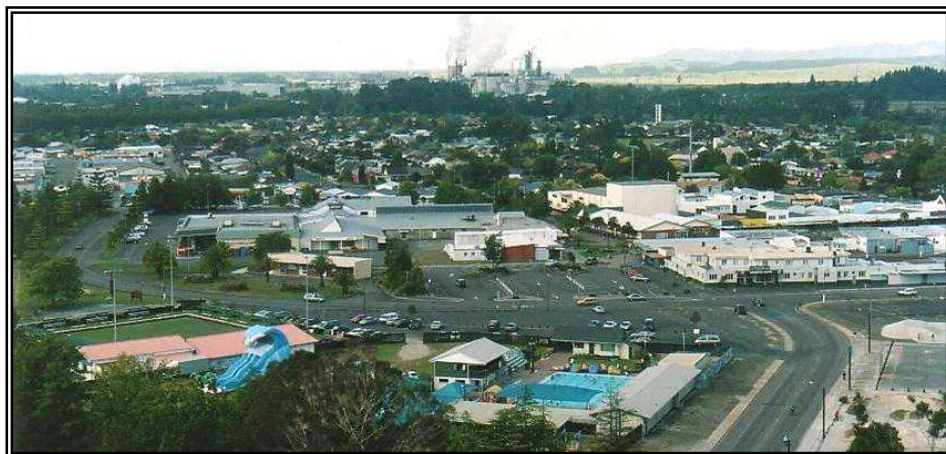
Walking and cycling are popular leisure activities and the provision of attractive walking and cycling routes can only enhance the Council's drive in tourism.

## 4. NATIONAL AND REGIONAL SUPPORT

There are a number of National and Regional policies, strategies and initiatives that this strategy takes into account. Not only does this provide consistency among these documents, but enables Council to seek funding from outside agencies.

These are:

- Update to the New Zealand Transport Strategy - August 2008
- New Zealand Land Transport Management Act 2003 and subsequent amendment Bill - August 2008
- Government Policy Statement on Transport – August 2008
- National Walking and Cycling strategy "Getting there - on foot, by cycle" - February 2005 Strategy to advance walking and cycling in NZ
- National Energy and Efficiency and Conservation Strategy (EECA) - September 2001 Action plan: Transport programme
- National Health Strategy
- Land Transport Safety Authority's Road Safety 2010 Strategy
- NZ Walkways Act 1990
- Bay of Plenty Regional Walks & Guiding Strategy (2008)
- Environment Bay of Plenty Walking and Cycling Strategy – currently under development



## 5. CURRENT POSITION STRATEGY SUMMARY

Much of the walking and cycling network already exists through the current footpath and road network. Key routes would need to be evaluated to ensure adequacy of the existing infrastructure. Currently Council's Long Term Community Plan (LTCCP) has a footpath renewal programme. This could be adjusted and priorities changed to meet strategy needs, to consider new footpath needs and crossing points on key routes. A key consideration when evaluating footpath needs will be assessing the opportunity for people to travel to and from school and daytime interschool travel.

This Plan Does Not:

- Encompass the rural areas of the District, but does refer to recreational tracks and paths as provided for by other agencies such as Department of Conservation (DOC).
- Incorporate any DOC walking or cycling tracks.
- Propose any links to DOC tracks in the foreseeable future.

## 6. STRATEGY STATEMENT

The purpose of this strategy is to increase participation in walking and cycling in the Kawerau District.

### 6.1 Objectives

- Increase the percentage of people who cycle or walk to work, cycle or walk to shop and the number of children walking or cycling to school.
- Increase the number of walking and cycling trips made for recreation/leisure.
- Increase the understanding of cyclists' and pedestrians' needs.
- Make routes safer for use by walkers and cyclists.

A by-product of this will be a reduction in the negative impacts of motor vehicle use.



## 7.0 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Council's investment in walking and cycling in the designated areas will be designed to achieve objectives covering planning, engineering, education, enforcement and encouragement. The following outlines the implementation plan for this strategy.

1. Inclusion of Walking & Cycling in Council's planning documents, including funding streams to support Walking & Cycling and the establishment of an expenditure programme.
2. Provision of a network of cycling and walking pathways that offers the following:
  - Safe, pleasant and convenient walking and cycling facilities.
  - Walking and cycling opportunities to the Community that connect work places, schools, and places of interest.
  - An integrated and connected network.
  - Consideration of walking and cycling facilities in all new development and planning processes.
  - Suitable supporting infrastructure where there is demand e.g. cycle racks.
3. Walking and cycling promotions and education to cover the following:
  - Dealing with perceptions of safety.
  - Walking/cycling planning maps.
  - Promoting health benefits.
  - Supporting other agencies' advertising.
  - Investigating if facilities have suppressed demand.
  - Reducing suppressed demand of walking/cycling.
  - Cycle safety training.
  - Workplace and school travel planning including walking school buses.
4. To continue improving pedestrian and cycle safety
  - Continue to provide appropriate funding levels for new footpaths, cycleways' facilities and walkways – and for maintenance of the network provided.
  - Ensure public facilities are served by safe and high quality walking and cycling infrastructure.
  - Design streets, roads, footpaths and cycle routes with full regard for the users, especially the elderly and those with restricted mobility.

- Design cycleways and walkways to enhance safety and amenity values on and around the route.
5. Complete a walking/cycling network planning map that shows desirable walking and cycling routes as identified by the Community.
- Undertake a feasibility study of the full proposed network and users of the routes.
  - Define on road, on road reserve and off road routes so that they can be clearly understood by the Community.
  - Consider all school access and any major employment areas that will benefit from the provision of walking/cycling facilities.
  - Create a timeline to improve the network, with emphasis on a staged programme to meet Council, NZ Transport Agency and community funding.
6. To continue providing and promoting safe, pleasant, connected and convenient walking and cycling options
- Reduce traffic in selected areas:
- Apply traffic calming.
  - Intersection treatment and management.
  - Better use of road reserve and river bank reserve to accommodate a more efficient walking and cycling environment.
7. To provide amenity routes linking key destinations and places of interest
- Provide high quality paths with interesting features, safe road crossing points, adequate lighting where appropriate.
  - Work with adjacent property owners to extract greatest value from investment.
  - Design routes such that they can be extended as demand grows.
8. To continue supporting walking and cycling for leisure and health
- To invest and co-ordinate investment in infrastructure to support access for commuters, school children and the public to places of leisure (eg parks).
9. To increase walking and cycling promotion and education
- Promotion of walking and cycling as transport options to travel to work and school, utility trips and leisure activities.
  - Promote health benefits.
  - Facilities are clearly signposted to enhance awareness.

- Provide full information on cycle and walk network routes, showing route options and travel times.
- Work with Eastern Bay Road Safety Committee (EBRSC), NZTA and NZ Police Education to undertake education and awareness campaigns, not only for pedestrians and cyclists, but also for motor vehicle drivers.
- Work with schools to ensure that appropriate agencies are undertaking education programmes with their pupils.

