

2009 - 2015

# Regional Walking and Cycling Strategy for the Waikato region



# Acknowledgements

*This strategy has been developed in consultation with the Regional Walking and Cycling Steering Group. Environment Waikato would like to thank the following representatives and organisations on the steering group.*

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*Other agencies not on the steering group but have a role in progressing the strategy:*

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# Contents

Chairman's foreword	3
Glossary of terms	4
Executive summary	5
1 Introduction	6
1.1 Purpose of the strategy	6
1.2 Benefits of walking and cycling	7
1.3 Types of walkers and cyclists	7
1.4 Roles and responsibilities	7
1.5 Tangata whenua	8
1.6 Strategy structure	9
1.7 Strategy preparation process	9
1.8 Strategy legislative context	12
1.9 National policy context	12
1.10 Regional policy context	13
2 Walking and cycling in the region	16
2.1 Current position	16
2.2 Of national importance	18
2.3 Of regional importance	19
2.4 Of sub-regional importance	21
3 Trends	28
3.1 Journey to work	28
3.2 New Zealand Household Travel Survey	28
3.3 Cyclist and pedestrian crash statistics	28
3.4 Travel to school	30
3.5 Travel to work	30
3.6 Other initiatives	30
4 Issues for this strategy to address	31
4.1 Infrastructure	31
4.2 Integrated transport and land use	31
4.3 Safety and personal security	31
4.4 Advocacy and promotion	32
4.5 Coordination	32
4.6 Funding	32
5 Vision, policies, implementation actions and outcomes	34
5.1 Visions, policies, actions	34
6 Monitoring, reporting and targets	44
7 Funding	46
7.1 Funding roles in strategy	46

References	47
Appendix A: Key roles and responsibilities for the strategy	50
Appendix B: Maps	52
Appendix C: Other key legislation, strategies and plans	60
Appendix C Table 1: Waikato region community outcomes	61
Appendix D: Status of territorial local authority walking and cycling strategies	62
Appendix D Table 1: Status of walking and cycling strategies in the Waikato region	62
Appendix E: Land transport funding for walking and cycling	63
Appendix E Table 1: Facilities on buses, trains and ferries	64
<b>List of tables</b>	
Table 1: Types of walkers and cyclists	7
Table 2: 'Getting there – on foot, by cycle' actions on ten priorities, across four focus areas	13
Table 3: DOC reserves located near urban settlements in the Waikato	21
Table 4: Economic development implementation actions	35
Table 5: Safety and personal security implementation actions	36
Table 6: Access and mobility implementation actions	37
Table 7: Public health implementation actions	38
Table 8: Environmental sustainability implementation actions	39
Table 9: Integration implementation actions	40
Table 10: Responsiveness implementation actions	41
Table 11: Energy efficiency implementation actions	42
Table 12: Funding implementation actions	43
Table 13: Targets	44
Table 14: NLTP funding allocation for walking and cycling for the Waikato region 2009/12	46
<b>List of figures</b>	
Figure 1: Roles and responsibilities for regional walking and cycling planning and implementation	8
Figure 2: Strategy preparation process	10
Figure 3: Key policies and strategies	11
Figure 4: Number of regional school travel plans and walking school buses	16
Figure 5: Waikato sub-regions and 12 local authorities	17
Figure 6: Main means of travel to work: cycling and walking in the Waikato region 1996-2006.	28
Figure 7: Number of pedestrian/cyclist crashes in the Waikato region 1999-2008.	29

# Chairman's foreword

The Waikato region is an expansive and diverse region that offers many wonderful opportunities for walking and cycling. There are many different settlement patterns in the region from highly urbanised centres to remote rural villages each with their own walking and cycling requirements. In addition there are many significant walks in the region that are just coming of age including the Hauraki Rail Trail and the Waikato River Trails.

In February 2009, the Government announced its support for the development of a New Zealand Cycle Trail, with a \$50 million dollar budget over three years. Seven cycleway routes were subsequently identified for the country as 'quick start' projects with a \$9 million dollar budget. Two of the 7 cycleways are located in the Waikato region – The Hauraki Plains Trail (which takes in the Hauraki Rail Trail) and the Waikato River Trails. These trails will accommodate walkers and cyclists. This is exciting news for the Waikato region offering many kilometres of off-road cycling with economic and health benefits.



Norm Barker  
Chairman  
Regional Transport Committee

Walking and cycling means many things to many people. For some, cycling and walking is their main form of transport while for others it is a recreational, sports or commuting activity. Walking and cycling plays a very important role in keeping our citizens healthy and we need to promote the benefits of active transport at every opportunity. In addition, walking and cycling are important sustainable transport modes.

This strategy is an expression of the walking and cycling objectives of our Regional Land Transport Strategy. It puts in place the foundations for further development and enhancement of walking and cycling across the region. This strategy will also assist approved organisations by providing supporting information for important regional walking and cycling projects. As the population of our region grows we need to ensure that walking and cycling facilities are available to keep pace with demand.

I would like to thank members of the Regional Transport Committee and the many organisations on the working group who have assisted in preparing this Regional Walking and Cycling Strategy. I am confident the wide-ranging views of all of our stakeholders have been captured in this document.

I commend this strategy to you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Norm Barker". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Norm Barker  
Chairman  
Regional Transport Committee

# Glossary of terms

AA	New Zealand Automobile Association
CAN	Cycle Advocates Network
CAW	Cycle Action Waikato
CPTED	Crime Prevention through Environmental Design
DHB	District Health Board
DOC	Department of Conservation
FARs	Funding assistance rates
GPS	Government Policy Statement on Land Transport Funding 2009/10–2018/19
HCC	Hamilton City Council
LGA	Local Government Act 2002
LTCCP	Long Term Council Community Plan
LTMA	Land Transport Management Act 2003
MoT	Ministry of Transport
NLTF	National Land Transport Fund
NLTP	National Land Transport Programme
NZTA	New Zealand Transport Agency
NZTS	New Zealand Transport Strategy
RCA	Road Controlling Authority (including territorial authorities, the NZTA and DOC)
RLTP	Regional Land Transport Programme
RLTS	Regional Land Transport Strategy
RMA	Resource Management Act 1991
RPS	Regional Policy Statement
RRSSG	Regional Road Safety Steering Group
RSAP	Road Safety Action Plan
RTC	Regional Transport Committee
RTF	Road Transport Forum
RWCSG	Regional Walking and Cycling Steering Group
SPARC	Sport and Recreation New Zealand
TOR	Terms of reference
TMIF	Transport Monitoring Indicator Framework

# Executive summary

Walking and cycling have many well documented benefits, where not only the individual profits, but so do communities, with a flow on effect of reducing congestion and vehicle emissions, increasing community accessibility, improving social cohesion and public health.

New Zealand prides itself as being a nation of people who enjoy the outdoors and being active. In order to ensure that this enjoyment continues and grows, it is important to provide sound and accessible infrastructure, guidance and support so New Zealanders can continue to be active. To achieve this, planning that incorporates good urban design and traffic engineering along with involvement of pedestrians, cyclists and those requiring disability access is essential.



Walking on the Karangahake Gorge Track.

Environment Waikato's role is to develop and implement the Regional Land Transport Strategy, the Regional Land Transport Programme (including walking and cycling activities), the Regional Passenger Transport Plan, the Regional Road Safety Strategy and the Waikato Regional Walking and Cycling Strategy. Environment Waikato's role includes the promotion, support and coordination of walking and cycling initiatives across the region. The development, maintenance and funding of walking and cycling infrastructure is the role of the NZ Transport Agency and territorial authorities.

Data gathering for this strategy began in 2004 with a series of sub-regional focus groups. A further series of focus group meetings was held throughout the region in 2008 to capture any new Waikato issues. A steering group of walking and cycling stakeholders was established and a further series of meetings were held to assist with shaping the strategy.

The strategy's vision was agreed by the steering group – *“Walking and cycling are safe, integrated and accessible activities in the Waikato region.”* The vision is accompanied by 13 policies and 34 actions.

This strategy identifies a number of outcomes including ensuring walking and cycling networks are well connected and linked to key destinations such as workplaces, educational institutions, recreational areas and tourism destinations. It is important to monitor the number of people walking and cycling as a benchmark for future measurement. It is expected that numbers of pedestrians and cyclists will increase if further infrastructure is built or retrofitted. Good urban infrastructure design, alongside enforcement and education should reduce the number and severity of crashes involving pedestrians and cyclists.

Changing travel behaviour relies on a number of factors taking place. For example, the provision of off-road shared paths, especially adjacent to schools, encourages school students to bike or walk to school.

With more school and workplace travel plans and 'walking school buses' in place there will be more walking or cycling to school, tertiary institutions and workplaces.

The New Zealand Government has named seven 'quick start' cycleway projects for the country, two of which are located in the Waikato region – The Hauraki Plains Trail and the Waikato River Trails. Further information on the New Zealand Cycle Trail is included in Section 2.2.2.

For local authorities to obtain financial assistance from the National Land Transport Fund for any walking and cycling project, they are required to have a walking and cycling strategy.

The audience for this strategy includes decision makers, planners, managers, transport engineers, health professionals, police, sporting trusts, and advocacy groups particularly at the regional and local level. Members of the public with an interest in walking and cycling will also find this strategy useful.

Implementing this strategy will require a shared commitment at national, regional and local levels to ensure walking and cycling are taken seriously as alternative transport modes.

# 1 Introduction

The Regional Land Transport Strategy (RLTS) 2006-2016 sets a framework for moving towards a more sustainable, integrated and multi-modal transport system for the Waikato region by promoting a range of alternative transport options. Walking and cycling are key transport modes that will help deliver on this goal.

The RLTS sets the policy framework for walking and cycling in the region. The RLTS was developed under the guidance of the New Zealand Transport Strategy (NZTS) and the national walking and cycling strategy, 'Getting there – on foot, by cycle'. The RLTS requires Environment Waikato to develop and implement a Waikato Regional Walking and Cycling Strategy in conjunction with territorial authorities and other key stakeholders. Accordingly, this is the first walking and cycling strategy for the Waikato region and it has been developed by a steering group made up of a wide range of stakeholder representatives.

Walking and cycling is undertaken for both commuting and recreational purposes across the region. Given the many benefits of walking and cycling, there is considerable potential to increase the uptake of these active transport modes. Since the RLTS became operative, an updated NZTS 2008 has been released which contains further impetus for increasing walking and cycling modes by setting an overall target 'to increase walking, cycling and other active modes to 30 per cent of total trips in urban areas by 2040'. The Government Policy Statement (GPS) on Land Transport Funding 2009/10 – 2018/19 has been updated in May 2009 and includes a range of anticipated 'impact statements' for the land transport system to support economic growth and productivity. The provision of walking and cycling will contribute to reducing energy consumption from the transport sector and will ensure the region's principal population centres are well connected to an integrated transport network. The Regional Road Safety Strategy 2009-2012 contains pedestrian and cycling safety targets.

The success of this, and the ability of the region to meet targets for walking and cycling, will rely on a multi-faceted approach that is outlined in this strategy including ensuring integrated land use and transport planning and engineering, a focus on influencing travel behaviour change, integrated network planning improvements, good urban design and ensuring pedestrian and cyclist safety.

## 1.1 Purpose of the strategy

The primary purpose of the Waikato Regional Walking and Cycling Strategy ('the strategy') is to support the walking and cycling components of the RLTS and the national transport objectives of the NZTS and GPS. Other key aims of the strategy are:

- to provide a detailed policy framework and actions, to guide, support and coordinate walking and cycling initiatives in the region
- to encourage and promote, through a range of methods, the uptake of walking and cycling in the region
- to coordinate the development of an integrated, region-wide walking and cycling network and sub-regional walking and cycling activities where appropriate
- to provide information for funding agencies to take account of when assessing funding applications for walking and cycling projects
- to support and coordinate with other strategies and plans that focus on walking and cycling outcomes
- to provide a monitoring framework which measures progress against identified targets and timeframes
- to inform the review of the RLTS and RLTP.

The strategy combines both walking and cycling into one document to ensure integration and coordination of both modes. In the future it is intended to review the strategy in tandem with the RLTS to ensure consistency of policy documents.



Taking children to school – Coromandel Area School.

## 1.2 Benefits of walking and cycling

Walking has the benefit of being an important 'linking' mode of transport, as it is often the first and last mode used in a journey. It is an inexpensive mode of transport, is suitable for many short journeys, and can provide consequential health benefits. For people with impairments that restrict mobility (such as those dependent on wheelchairs, walking frames, sticks and mobility scooters), blind and visually impaired people; a well designed and integrated multi-modal transport system means improved access and use of footpaths, pedestrian facilities, car-parking and public transport centres.

Walking to and from school has been a traditional means of transport, and must continue this way. Behaviour change begins with early school experiences which can be reinforced with walking school buses. Workplace travel plans are another avenue to reinforce the benefits of walking and cycling.

Cycling has the potential to replace a large percentage of car journeys, as around two-thirds of car trips are less than 6km. As with walking, cycling can also form an important component of multi-modal journeys and short trips (such as to local dairy), and when appropriate facilities are provided in conjunction with public transport, cyclists are able to travel much further.

The development and promotion of walking and cycling can contribute to the wellbeing of the community in many ways, including:

- improved physical activity
- reduced chronic health conditions (such as heart disease), hospitalisations and socio-economic costs
- improved physical, psychological and mental wellbeing
- reduced congestion on roads, especially for short trips
- reduced demand for car parking space
- environmental sustainability to minimise the adverse effects on the environment
- the creation of vibrant and safe streets
- the creation of opportunities for social interaction
- social inclusion and accessibility for everyone
- tourism, leisure and outdoor experiences
- an alternative mode of transport
- low user costs and value for money.

## 1.3 Types of walkers and cyclists

The strategy identifies a number of types of walkers and cyclists in the Waikato. These are outlined in Table 1.

**Table 1: Types of walkers and cyclists**

Walking types	Cycling types
Commuter/school	Commuter/school
Organised (such as clubs, walking school buses)	Organised (such as clubs)
Short trips (such as to the dairy)	Recreational
Tramping	Mountain biking
Events, usually connected to running event.	BMX
Leisure/fitness/recreational	Events

## 1.4 Roles and responsibilities

A large number of organisations are involved in the planning, management and delivery of walking and cycling activities in the Waikato region. Most of the territorial authorities in the region have developed, or are in the process of developing walking and cycling strategies. In addition, there are also a number of other agencies involved in promoting walking and cycling through a range of strategies and plans including the NZ Transport Agency (NZTA), Sport Waikato, the Department of Conservation (DOC), NZ Police and the Waikato District Health Board (WDHB). Cycle and pedestrian advocacy groups also play a role in developing walking and cycling policy in the region. Figure 1 provides a more detailed description of agencies responsible for walking and cycling implementation.

The Local Government Act 2002 (LGA) and the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) provide the legislative framework to enable regional councils to make decisions on issues throughout their region. In terms of this strategy, Environment Waikato's role is one of providing guidance and support to territorial authorities and stakeholder groups to promote and implement walking and cycling initiatives. The role of building and maintaining walking and cycling infrastructure is that of the road controlling authorities.

Under the Land Transport Management Act 2003 (LTMA) (which was amended in 2008), Environment Waikato coordinates, on behalf of the Regional Transport Committee (RTC), the process of preparing a Regional Land Transport Programme (RLTP). The RLTP includes walking and cycling projects. The specific roles for Environment Waikato are outlined in the implementation plan in Section 5.

Due to the more local nature of walking and cycling modes, it is the territorial authorities through their walking and cycling strategies and other policy plans (such as their long term council community plans and district plans) that have the most direct influence on walking and cycling modes. They are responsible for the detailed planning and implementation of walking and cycling infrastructure and networks, and to provide local share funding through rates.

The role of Environment Waikato is to implement the RLTS, develop the RLTP (including walking and cycling activities) and to oversee the implementation of this strategy.

Organisations that will have a role in the strategy are outlined in Figure 1. A more detailed description of each organisation and their roles can be seen in Appendix A.

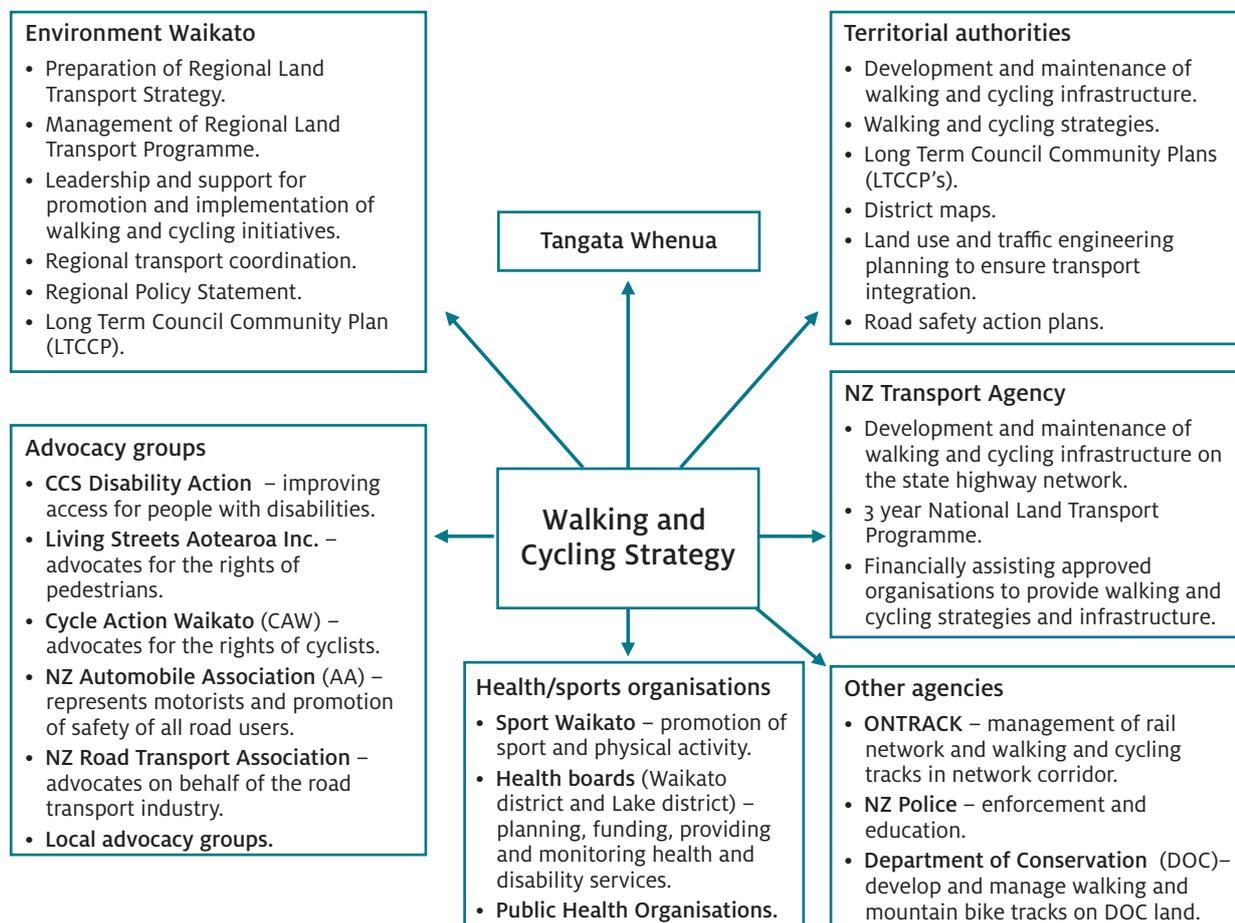
## 1.5 Tangata whenua

The NZTS references the Treaty of Waitangi noting: *“The government is committed to upholding the principles of the Treaty. Central to the Treaty principles is that Maori have a special relationship with their ancestral lands, water, sites, wahi tapu and other taonga. Transport planning and decision making needs to take account of that relationship as well as the more general needs of Maori communities. Therefore the government is committed to ensuring that Maori are involved in making decisions about transport that affect their cultural, economic, environmental and social wellbeing.”*

*“The Land Transport Management Act 2003, provides specific opportunities for Maori to participate in decision making processes about land transport and for approved organisations to foster the development of Maori capacity to contribute to these processes.”*

The overriding vision of the Treaty of Waitangi is that of – Mahi tahi – working together in partnership.

It is the intention of this strategy to effectively engage with Tangata Whenua to identify opportunities for walking and cycling aligning with their own tribal strategic documents. The outcome of the engagement with Tangata Whenua will be to enable iwi to contribute to decision making on walking and cycling planning exercises.



**Figure 1: Roles and responsibilities for regional walking and cycling planning and implementation**

## 1.6 Strategy structure

Sections one to six outline the key components of this strategy. These include the purpose of the strategy, policy context, the current position in the Waikato, the vision, objectives and actions for walking and cycling, and how these will be achieved through a set of targets and monitoring indicators. Section seven outlines the funding for cycling and walking. The sections in the appendices provide background information for the strategy.

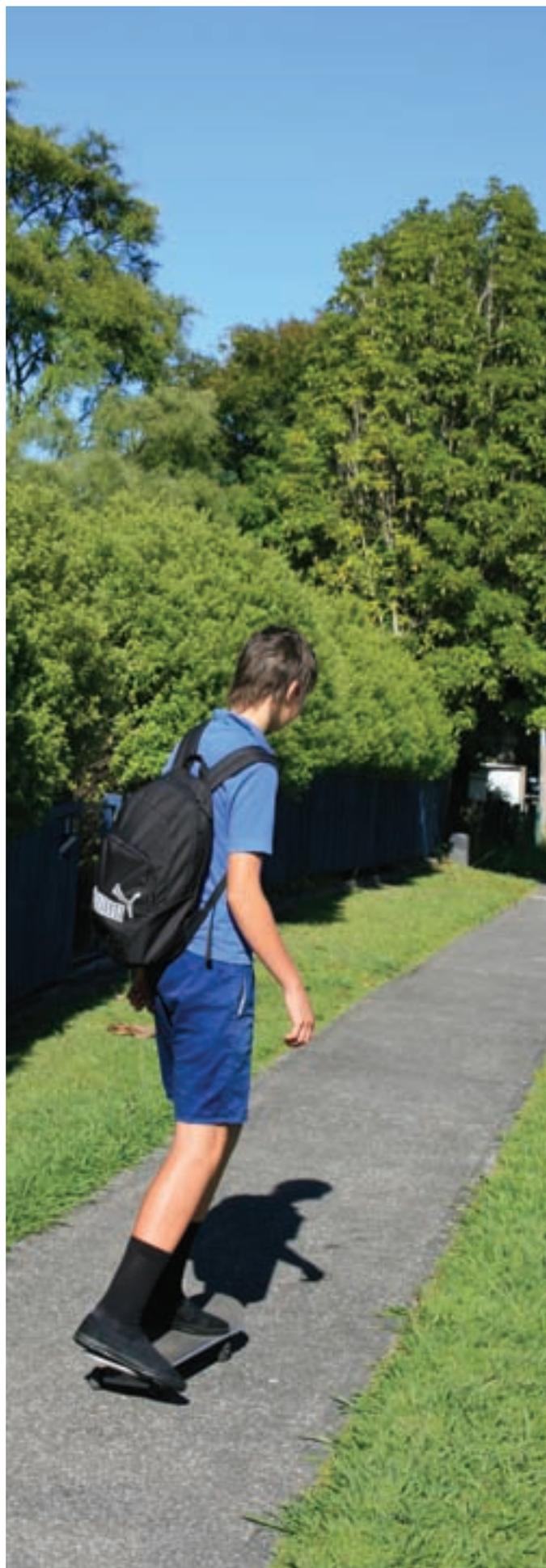
## 1.7 Strategy preparation process

In April 2004 a series of workshops were held across the region with key stakeholders and interest groups to identify key issues in relation to walking and cycling.

The outcomes of these regional workshops helped to inform the development of the RLTS and identify key issues for the Regional Walking and Cycling Strategy.

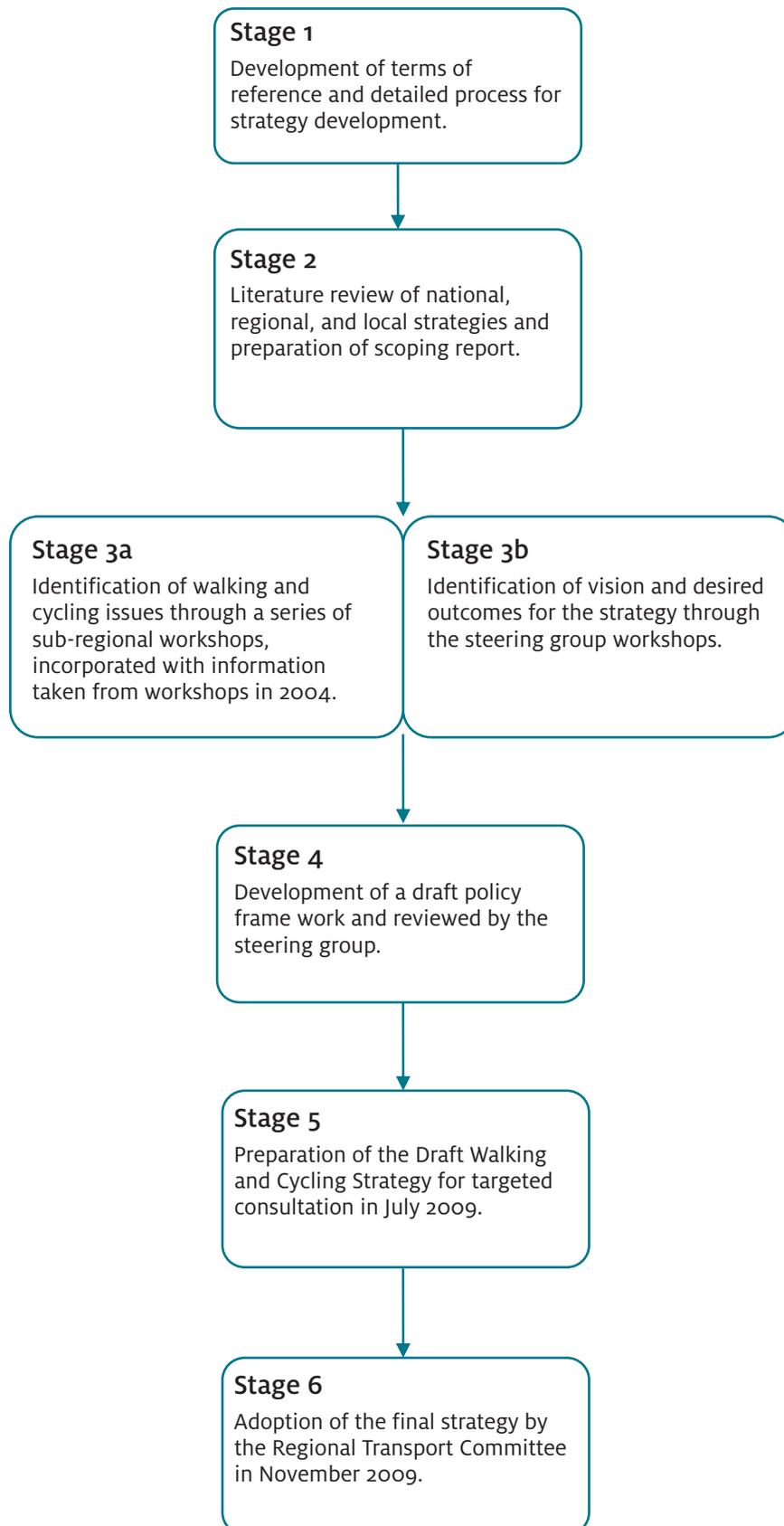
A further series of sub-regional workshops were held in 2008 to ensure that local and region wide issues recorded in 2004 were still relevant, plus capture any new issues.

A Walking and Cycling Steering Group was formed to assist with the strategy development. While all local authorities were informed about the strategy, for logistical reasons one representative from each sub-region was invited to participate on the steering group, with the responsibility to disseminate information to neighbouring local authorities. The steering group representatives are identified in the 'acknowledgements' section of this strategy. Figure 2 shows the strategy development process.



Skating to school.

## Strategy preparation process



**Figure 2: Strategy preparation process**

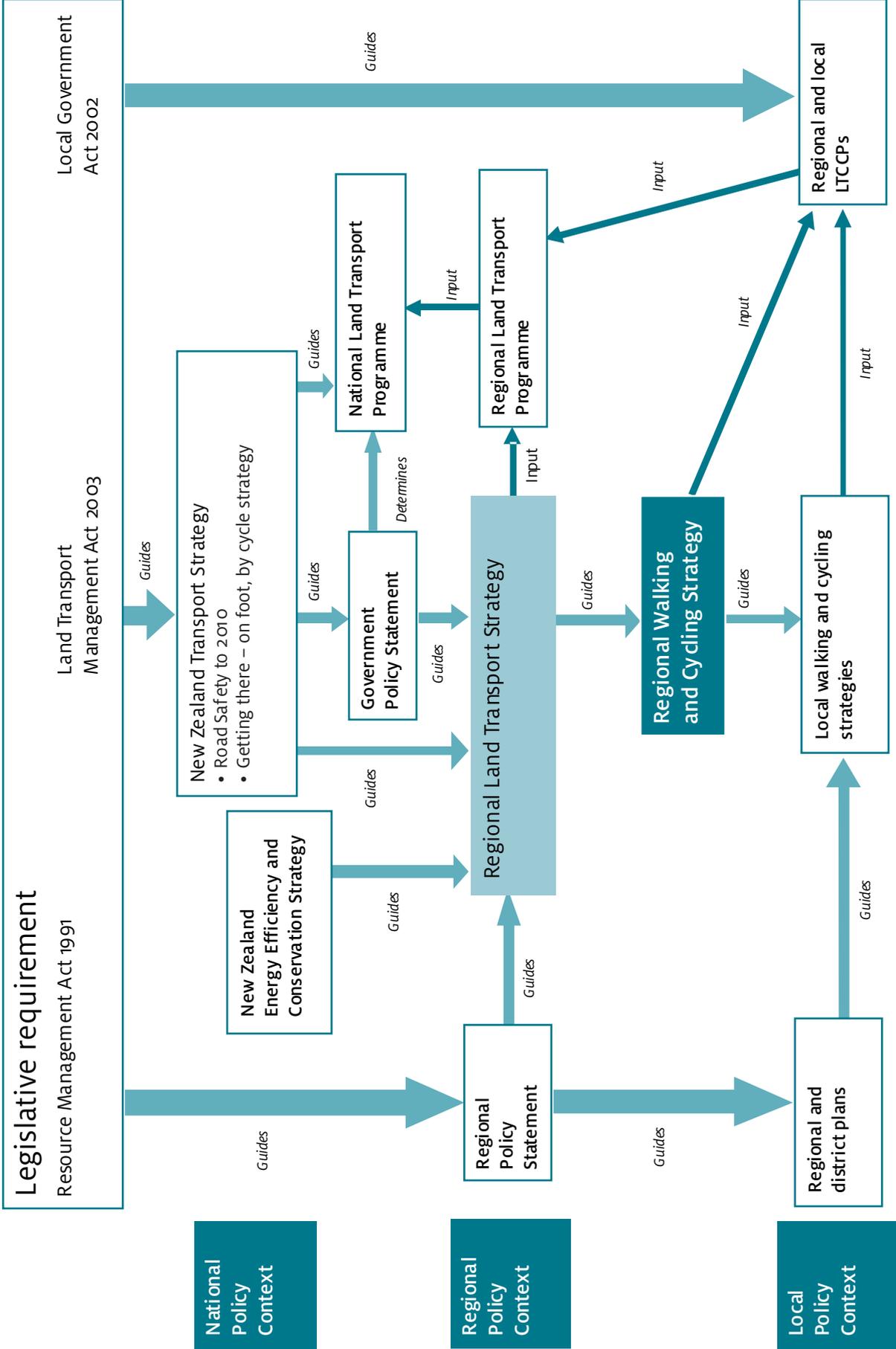


Figure 3: Key policies and strategies

## 1.8 Strategy legislative context

There are key national and regional policy drivers that provide the framework for the regional cycling and walking strategy. The relationship is shown in Figure 3.

### 1.8.1 Land Transport Management Act 2003

The purpose of the LTMA is to contribute to the aim of achieving an affordable, integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable land transport system.

### 1.8.2 Resource Management Act 1991

The RMA is New Zealand's overriding environmental legislation. Its purpose and principles are defined under Section 5 of the Act. Its principal objective is to 'promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources'. The responsibility of implementing the RMA falls largely on New Zealand's regional and territorial authorities. It is for this reason that all council strategies need to be written in a way which ensures all activities within regional and territorial authority boundaries are carried out in accordance with the Act's primary purpose and principles. This includes all walking and cycling strategies.

### 1.8.3 Local Government Act 2002

The LGA outlines what needs to be included within council's Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP). LTCCP's provide a broad overview of what a community wishes to achieve within a 10 year time-frame and how councils intend to respond and achieve these outcomes. LTCCP's are the instrument by which councils allocate funding to implement their community strategies. Included in these strategies are those for walking and cycling.

## 1.9 National policy context

### 1.9.1 New Zealand Transport Strategy 2008

The NZTS is a government strategy that looks forward to 2040 and sets out a plan for the whole transport sector. The NZTS replaces the original 2002 NZTS and differs from this previous strategy in that it is target-led. The NZTS is not a statutory document, but is given statutory weight in other documents.

The NZTS sets a vision for 2040, which is: *'People and freight in New Zealand have access to an affordable, integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable transport system'*. The following specific objectives are identified:

- ensuring environmental sustainability
- assisting economic development

- assisting safety and personal security
- improving access and mobility
- protecting and promoting public health.

Seven areas of action or interventions are also outlined which will be an important area of focus in order to achieve the targets. These are:

- integrated planning
- making best use of existing networks and infrastructure
- investing in critical infrastructure and the transport sector workforce
- increasing the availability and use of public transport, cycling, walking and other shared and active modes
- considering options for charging that will generate revenue for investment in transport infrastructure and services
- using new technologies and fuels
- maintaining and improving international links.

A target in the NZTS 2008 is to 'increase walking, cycling and other active modes to 30 per cent of total trips in urban areas by 2040'.

### 1.9.2 Road Safety 2020

Road Safety 2020 is a national strategy which aims to reduce road casualties to no more than 300 deaths and 4,500 hospitalisations a year by 2010 through engineering, education and enforcement actions. This strategy is being updated in 2009/10. The 2020 Road Safety Strategy 'Safer Journeys' was launched March 2010.

### 1.9.3 National Walking and Cycling Strategy – getting there – by foot, on cycle

'Getting there – on foot, by cycle', sets out a national strategy to advance walking and cycling in New Zealand. The strategy is integral to achieving the objectives of the NZTS and articulates the Government's vision of a New Zealand where people from all sectors of the community cycle and walk for transport and enjoyment.



Lunch time walking.

The vision is supported by three goals:

- community environments and transport systems that support walking and cycling
- more people choosing to walk and cycle, more often
- improved safety for pedestrian and cyclists.

“Getting there – on foot, by cycle” has 10 priorities for action across four focus areas as outlined in Table 2 below.

**Table 2: ‘Getting there – on foot, by cycle’ actions on ten priorities, across four focus areas**

Focus	Priorities for action
Strengthening foundations for effective action.	Encourage action for walking and cycling within an integrated, sustainable approach to land transport.
	Expand our knowledge and skill base to address walking and cycling.
	Encourage collaboration and coordination of efforts for walking and cycling.
Providing supportive environments and systems.	Encourage land use, planning and design that supports walking and cycling.
	Provide supportive environments for walking and cycling in existing communities.
	Improve networks for long-distance cycling.
Influencing individual travel choices.	Encourage positive attitudes towards and perceptions of walking and cycling as modes of transport.
	Encourage and support individuals in changing their travel choices.
Improving safety and security.	Improve road safety for pedestrians and cyclists.
	Address crime and personal security around walking and cycling.

### 1.9.4 Government Policy Statement May 2009

The GPS on Land Transport Funding was released in May 2009, and supports the NZTS by providing direction on the allocation of land transport funding for the next six years, and projected funding for a further four years. The GPS describes how much funding will be provided to the sector, what areas of transport will be funded and how the funding will be raised. The GPS contains seven impact statements the Government wishes to achieve. These are:

- improvements in the provision of infrastructure and services that enhance transport efficiency and lower the cost of transportation through:

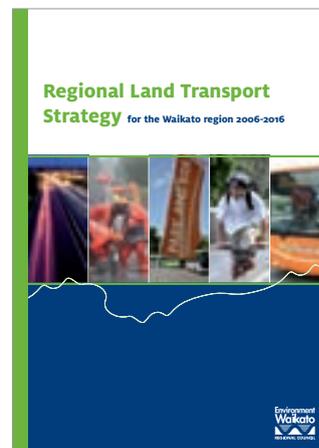
- improvements in journey time reliability
- easing of severe congestion
- more efficient freight supply chains
- better use of existing transport capacity
- better access to markets, employment and areas that contribute to economic growth
- a secure and resilient transport network
- reductions in deaths and serious injuries as a result of road crashes
- more transport choices, particularly for those with limited access to a car where appropriate
- reductions in adverse environmental effects from land transport
- contributions to positive health outcomes.

## 1.10 Regional policy context

### 1.10.1 Regional Land Transport Strategy

The RLTS provides the regional framework for the development of this strategy. The RLTS sets the direction for the promotion and advancement of walking and cycling as transport modes in the region. The strategy recognises the benefits that these modes can offer now and in the future and has set regional policies and actions to promote walking and cycling in a number of the nine outcome areas discussed in Section 5 of this strategy. The outcomes particularly relevant to walking and cycling are:

- safety and personal security (including development of safety initiatives and road safety programmes for pedestrians and cyclists)
- access and mobility (a focus on ensuring there are a range of mode choices available)
- public health (including promotion of cycling and walking, through the development and implementation of regional and local strategies and inter-agency collaborative projects)
- integration (key focus on integrating transport and land use planning to achieve a mode shift, including more people walking and cycling)
- energy efficiency (including encouraging modal shift and developing more energy efficient transport options in the region, such as walking and cycling)
- environmental sustainability to minimise the adverse effects on the environment.



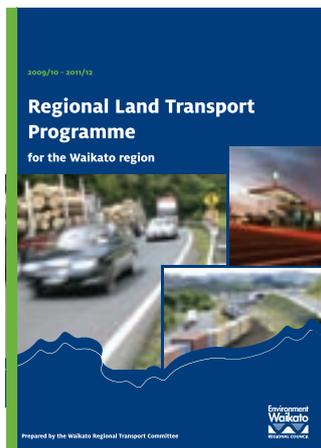
## 1.10.2 Regional Land Transport Programme

The RLTP is a statutory document prepared under the LTMA 2003. The purpose of this document is to prioritise all of the land transport activities in the Waikato for submission to the NZTA for funding. The RLTP for the Waikato region is prepared for the Waikato region by the RTC for approval by the regional council.

The RLTP is then submitted to NZTA for inclusion in the National Land Transport Programme (NLTP). The NLTP identifies government funding for transport activities. If an activity is not included in the RLTP it is ineligible for government financial assistance.

Combining the land transport activities for the region into a single programme allows the region to address known transport issues in a comprehensive way and also allows comparison to be made against national and regional targets for the transport sector. Development of the RLTP requires a collaborative effort between the territorial authorities of the region, the NZTA and the regional council and is prepared every three years.

Environment Waikato consulted on the draft Regional Land Transport Programme 2009-2012 in May 2009. The final RLTP was adopted by the RTC in June 2009. The implementation methods and actions from the Regional Walking and Cycling Strategy will be reflected in the next RLTP review which is scheduled in 2012.

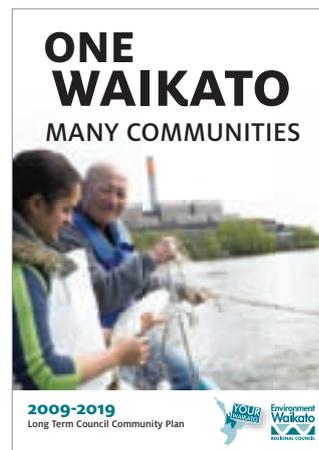


## 1.10.3 Long Term Council Community Plan

The LTCCP is prepared by the regional council every three years under the LGA, and contains planning and financial information for the next ten years. The LTCCP describes how the council will deliver the outcomes agreed to by the community in respect to social, economic and environmental well being, and the council's intended contribution towards those outcomes. Of particular relevance to walking and cycling are the following community outcomes:

- 'we have reliable, efficient and well planned infrastructure and services, including transport that is safe, interconnected, and easy to get and use'
- 'we can participate in recreation and leisure activities that meet our diverse needs and we have opportunities to enjoy the Waikato region's natural places and open spaces in responsible ways'.

Other key legislation, strategies and plans are included in Appendix C.



A separated walkway/cycleway located on the Eastern Taupo Arterial route, opening late 2010.