



# Trends and issues

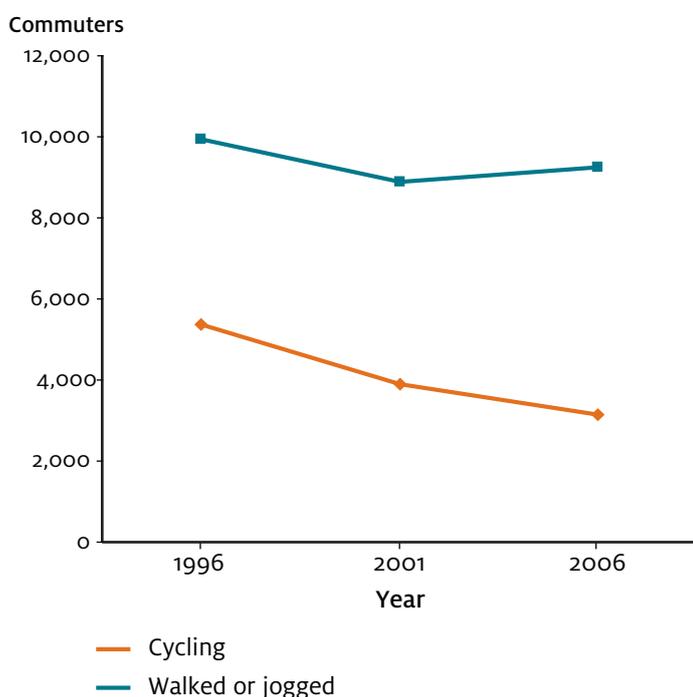
Lake Te Koutu walkway, Cambridge

# 3 Trends

## 3.1 Journey to work

Over the past two to three decades there has been a significant increase in private vehicle ownership and usage and a corresponding decrease in walking and cycling trips in the Waikato region. The census 'journey to work' figures show that cycling trips comprise 2 per cent of trips, and walking/jogging trips comprise 5 per cent (Statistics New Zealand).

Between 1996 and 2006 there has been a 41 per cent decline in cycling with the exception of Thames-Coromandel district which has shown a slight increase since 2001. Hamilton city is the main urban centre and whilst it has the largest number of cyclists has shown a decrease in people cycling to work, from 2841 cyclists in 1996 to 1716 in 2006 (40 per cent decrease). This is also reflected in Hamilton City Council's annual cycle cordon count, which shows that the number of school cyclists entering the central area has declined overall since 1980 by around 80 per cent. Both the number of school children entering the CBD and the number observed in suburban areas has declined since 2006.



**Figure 6: Main means of travel to work: cycling and walking in the Waikato region 1996-2006.**

Walking as a means of transport to work has also declined overall between 1996 and 2006 by 7 per cent (see Figure 6). However, walking trips did have a slight increase from 8892 people in 2001 to 9264 people in 2006, despite the overall decline.

## 3.2 New Zealand Household Travel Survey

The former Land Transport Safety Authority undertook surveys on New Zealand travel patterns in 1989/90 and 1997/98. The Ministry of Transport (MoT) now conducts a similar ongoing survey, which gets updated as new results come in. The most recent results include 2008. The survey data reveals a number of trends for travel patterns in New Zealand:

- data from 1989/90, 1997/98 and 2005-2008 reveals an increase in the average weekly time spent driving (car/van) per person, and a decrease in the average weekly time spent cycling and walking
- the time spent driving a car has increased 30 per cent between 1989/90 and then a further 19 per cent between 1997/98 and 2003-2006
- the Waikato region has the highest average distance travelled per person (2004-2008) as a car/van driver, at 8840kms per year
- the number of kilometres cycled per person per year in the Waikato is 36, compared to a national average of 74, and the number of kilometres walked per person per year in the Waikato is 160 compared to a national average of 230
- the weekly time spent cycling per person per week in the Waikato is 0.1 hours
- the weekly time spent walking in the Waikato has remained steady, at 44 minutes in the 2003-2007 survey period and 43 minutes in the 2004-2008 survey period.

## 3.3 Cyclist and pedestrian crash statistics

Figure 7 shows NZTA Crash Analysis Data (CAS data) on the number of pedestrian and cyclist injuries (fatal, serious or minor) in the Waikato region between 1999 and 2008.

The number of pedestrians injured remained reasonably constant between 1999 and 2002, before increasing significantly in 2003. Following a drop in injury numbers in 2004, pedestrian injuries have since been increasing. There were 84 pedestrian injuries recorded in 2008.

The number of pedestrian fatalities has remained reasonably constant over the past 10 year period, with between two and nine per year. Serious injuries have shown a slight decrease, and minor injuries have shown a slight increase.

Between 1999 and 2008, the number of cyclists injured has increased 61 per cent. There has been a particularly sharp

increase between 2005 and 2008, of 43 per cent, with 76 cyclist injuries recorded in 2008.

The number of fatal cyclist injuries has remained low over the past ten years (at between one and three per year), however the number of serious injuries increased significantly from seven in 2007 to 24 in 2008.

Over the past five years (2004-2008), the most common age groups of pedestrians injured are 5-9, 10-14 and 15-19. The most common vehicle/driver factor was poor observation (a factor in 23 per cent of injury crashes). Almost 90 per cent of pedestrian crashes occurred on urban roads, with only 11 per cent occurring on open roads. In 2008, there were three fatal, 23 serious and 58 minor injuries sustained by pedestrians. In comparison, over the past five years (2004-2008), the most common age groups of cyclists injured are 10-14, 15-19 and 40-44. The most common vehicle/driver factor in crashes involving a cyclist was poor observation, which contributed to 66 per cent of crashes. Cyclist crashes also commonly occurred in urban areas, with only 15 per cent occurring in an open road environment. In 2008, there was one fatal, 24 serious and 51 minor injuries to cyclists.



Cyclist handrail.

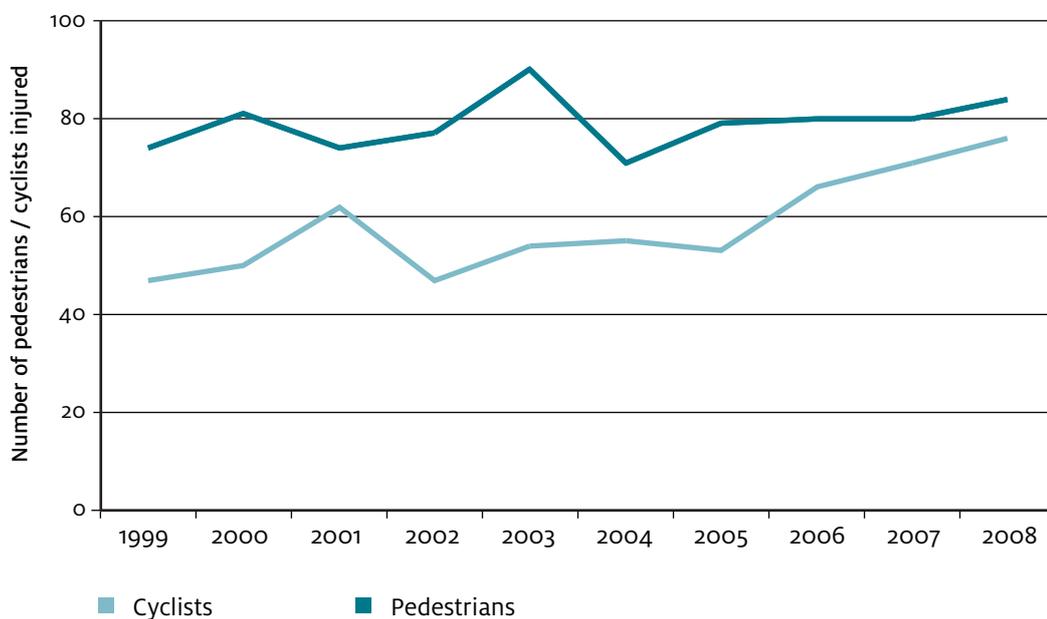


Figure 7: Number of pedestrian/cyclist crashes in the Waikato region 1999-2008.

### 3.4 Travel to school

There have been a number of initiatives to promote walking and cycling to school aged children, including walking school buses and school travel plans. Currently the Waikato region has 20 school travel plans, (18 of which are in a pilot stage with Hamilton City Council), and 28 walking school buses. The region's school children have also participated in a number of health related campaigns such as Project Energise.

As more schools, tertiary institutions and workplaces incorporate travel plans, alternative transport modes such as walking, cycling and public transport will increase, as has been the case in the Auckland region.

Ruben the Road Safety Bear visits schools and preschools throughout the region, educating children on key road safety messages through his stories, songs and fun interactive classroom sessions. Ruben also supports regional walking school bus initiatives and assists the Police and other key stakeholders groups to deliver at road safety events.

### 3.5 Travel to work

As part of an initiative to reduce single occupancy vehicles at commuting peak times, the concept of workplace travel plans has been introduced. A workplace travel plan sets out steps to encourage staff to travel to and from work by public transport, on foot, by bike or by car share, and to improve access for a particular workplace. A workplace needs to consider facilities such as showers and secure bike lock up/racks. A number of key organisations in the region have developed work place travel plans. Advice is available from Environment Waikato on where to find information on workplace travel plans.

### 3.6 Other initiatives

- Every year Bikewise takes place around the country where people are challenged to bike to work as an alternative transport mode. Hamilton City Council and the University of Waikato host a breakfast during Bikewise month. Each year numbers have steadily increased for the breakfasts. Many towns in the Waikato region organise their own bike events for Bikewise month.
- NZTA has introduced a cyclist skills training programme comprising three levels, and is one of the ten initiatives in the 'Getting there – on foot, by cycle' strategy and implementation plan. Trainees progress to the next level after they have shown competence, with a recommended ten hours of cycle training involved.



Matamata Primary School walking school bus, 2009.

# 4 Issues for this strategy to address

There are a number of issues that prevent people from walking and cycling in the Waikato. A number of these were identified in walking and cycling workshops undertaken by Environment Waikato in 2004 and the sub-regional focus group meetings held in 2008 in preparation of this strategy.

The issues identified were grouped under the following headings:

- infrastructure
- integrated transport and land use
- safety and personal security
- advocacy
- promotion and coordination.

## 4.1 Infrastructure

Infrastructure provision enables pedestrians and cyclists to feel safer, have improved access to a number of areas, and their 'own' space. Ensuring good design standards is significant for enabling all users access, including those with mobility or cognitive impairments. Infrastructure provision is also important for encouraging the uptake of these modes. Key themes in relation to infrastructure are connectivity, integration and safety. The following issues are highlighted:

- lack of designated, well-designed, integrated (between on and off-road trails) and maintained cyclist and pedestrian facilities and paths, particularly for disabled and elderly people, and which cater for different user groups (such as on-road for competent cyclists and off-road cycle facilities for new/novice cyclists)
- lack of secure cycle parking and facilities (such as facilities at workplaces)
- lack of funding towards upgrading and maintaining safe, practicable, efficient, visually pleasing walking/cycling networks and facilities to suit variable conditions and people (such as on-road for competent cyclists and off-road cycle facilities for novice cyclists)
- no walking and cycling facilities on most rural roads, narrow shoulders, including one-lane bridges
- lack of safe crossings points on the state highways and railway lines creating severance
- lack of consistency in signage
- lack of pedestrian accessibility in town areas
- lack of consistent standards for design of walking and cycling infrastructure.

## 4.2 Integrated transport and land use

Integrated transport and land use involves encouraging urban developments and redevelopments that are compact, have mixed uses, are well connected with a clearly defined structure of centres and corridors and comprise complementary land uses that can provide a variety of facilities within short distances.

Integrating different transport modes is also important to encourage multi-modal travel such as walking or cycling and public transport combinations. Multi-modal travel also assists disabled people to access footpaths, pedestrian facilities, car-parking and transport centres. The following issues are highlighted:

- Lack of walking and cycling facilities for new subdivisions.
- Urban sprawl creating longer distances to walk and cycle.

## 4.3 Safety and personal security

There are a number of safety and personal security issues that act as barriers to people walking and cycling. Particular areas of focus include police enforcement, education programmes aimed at improving road use skills, providing infrastructure that minimises risk for its users, cycle and walking education programmes and incorporating the concept of 'crime prevention through environmental design' (CPTED). The following issues are highlighted:

- popular perception that walking and cycling are dangerous, particularly in recreation areas/off-road paths
- poor urban design creating unsafe environments
- high volumes and speeds of motor traffic
- concerns about cycle and pedestrian safety during events
- unsafe driving and drivers without licences
- multi-lane roundabouts are a barrier for some cyclists, pedestrians and mobility impaired
- need for some cyclists to have improved skills to safely cope with riding on the road with vehicle traffic
- broken glass is a big deterrent for pedestrians, cyclists, wheelchairs and mobility scooters
- poor lighting.

## 4.4 Advocacy and promotion

Walking and cycling have many benefits (see Section 1.2) which are often unrecognised. There is a real need to recognise the link between encouraging walking and cycling as transport modes and achieving objectives in other areas such as health and sustainability. The following issues are highlighted:

- lack of promotion of walking and cycling routes, activities and benefits
- walking and cycling are perceived by many as unattractive and socially unpopular.

## 4.5 Coordination

Leadership and coordination of walking and cycling activities is key to support territorial authorities and stakeholders to promote and implement walking and cycling initiatives. The following issues are highlighted:

- need for more coordination of routes and activities across the region
- the needs of pedestrians and cyclists have often been overlooked in transport infrastructure and land use planning
- lack of provision for cycling/walking in local government planning and policy documents
- lack of leadership and effort towards promoting and maintaining regular cycling/walking habits
- lack of coordination between planning and engineering.

## 4.6 Funding

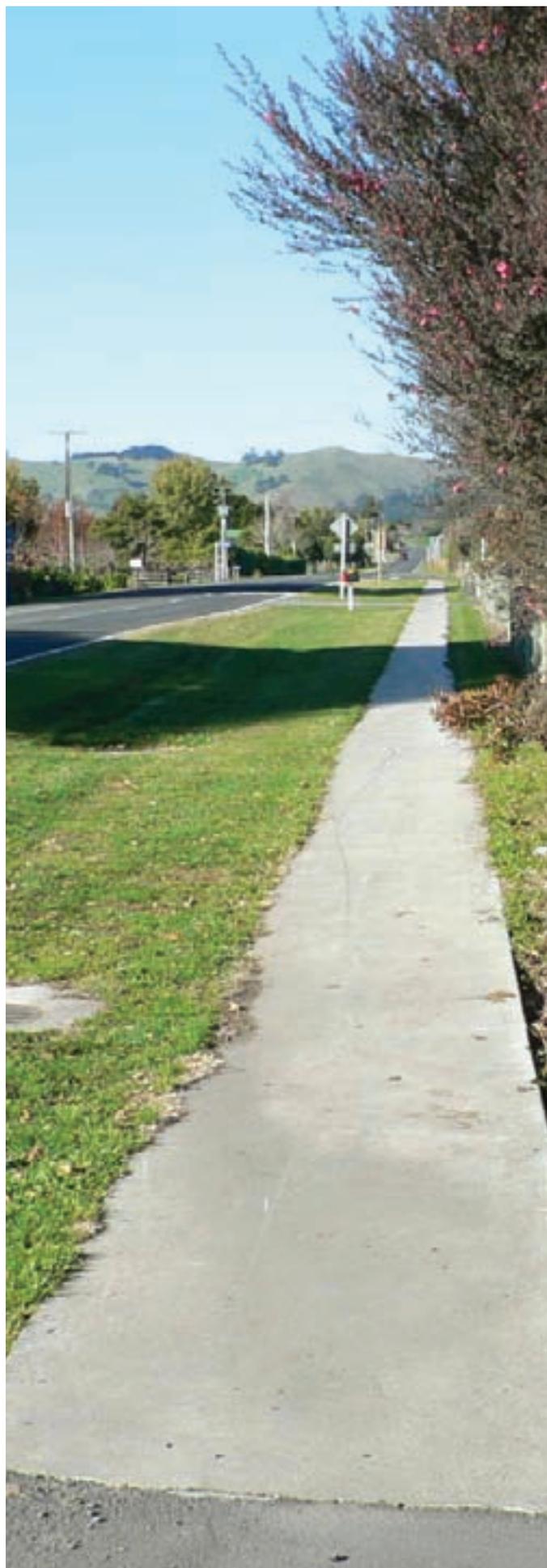
Funding for walking and cycling relies on both territorial authority share and NZTA share. All proposed walking and cycling projects need to be included in a territorial authority's LTCCP as well as the RLTP in order to be eligible for financial assistance<sup>1</sup>.

The following issues are highlighted:

- funding categories for walking and cycling modes for transport and recreation
- long term funding for walking and cycling.

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<sup>1</sup> Note: as at 30 September 2009, NZTA requirements related to walking and cycling activities have limited the range of activities eligible for funding subsidies.



Safe access to rural schools and communities.