



# CYCLING ACTION NETWORK

PAI TE HAERE MĀ PAHIKARA

**Hīkina te Kohupara – Kia mauri ora ai te iwi**  
**Transport Emissions: Pathways to Net Zero by 2050**

**Cycling Action Network – Submission, 25 June 2021**

CAN (Cycling Action Network) is New Zealand's national network of cycling advocates. We work with government, local authorities, businesses and the community on behalf of cyclists, for a better cycling environment. We've been around a long time. We speak for more than a million people in New Zealand who love riding bikes.

<https://can.org.nz/>

**We like the framework of Hīkina te Kohupara. Now show us the action.**



Source: David Horsey, davidhorsey.com, seattlepi.com

We like the emphasis on equity, inclusiveness, and just transition.

On climate, winning slowly is the same as losing. Use stronger language and commit to actions that will deliver a safe climate.

Global net anthropogenic CO<sub>2</sub> emissions must decline by 45 percent on 2010 levels by 2030, reaching net zero around 2050, to prevent overshoot of 1.5 degrees Celsius.

**Be ambitious. Cycling is a proven way to cut emissions, with extra benefits for health, prosperity, decongestion and fun.**

### **Aim high**

Set ambitious targets, and fund them. We say the target should be 15 percent of all trips nationally by bike by 2050, against 1 percent today. This is the target in the report [Turning the Tide - from Cars to Active Transport.](#)

- Set a target of 8 percent of all trips by bike by 2035, on the way to 15 percent by 2050.
- Enable biking at a system level with infrastructure, training, programmes, and subsidies
- Boost the growth of e-bikes, making cycling viable for more journeys in more places and improving the equity of a transition to EVs.

“A climate appropriate response would be to rapidly roll a comprehensive network of safe routes in towns all across the country, backed up by low traffic neighbourhoods. Instead of, or at least as well as, suggesting incentives to switch to electric vehicles, the commission needs to recommend the government provide incentives to e-bikes – which could also be much cheaper for the government given e-bikes are magnitudes cheaper than buying even non-electric cars.”

Source: [Greater Auckland](#)

### **Crush the carbon curve**

New Zealand’s success so far at crushing the Covid curve proves that with the right advice, leadership, goals, and communications, a team of 5 million can transform habitual behaviours for the better. Let’s apply those lessons to crushing carbon.

### **Change systems. Avoid preaching.**

Let’s get serious about driving behaviour change. It’s a system thing not about individual choice. Climate-friendly behaviour like biking needs to be the easy default rather than a tough personal choice. Behaviour change will come from making biking more attractive, not from asking people to change their behaviour.

Increase investments in programmes that get more people riding, more often: For example, Low traffic neighbourhoods, Bike Ready, public e-bike and bike share schemes, and Bikes in Schools. Use trials like Innovating Streets to demonstrate success and kickstart projects.

[CycleScheme](#) is a proven way to get more people on bikes

### **Use both carrots and sticks to drive travel mode switch**

Making cycling easier can benefit people who don't cycle too. For example, when someone switches from driving to cycling and leaves their car at home, it frees up road space and parking. Unfortunately, demand tends to increase to use up any 'spare' capacity generated. This is known as Jevons' Paradox - with a more dramatic example being the way new urban motorways quickly become [just as congested as what was there before.](#)

To avoid this rebound effect eating into the benefits, we must improve other modes like public transport and make driving relatively less attractive to cancel out any increases. Tools to achieve this include cutting road space, reallocating it to bus and bike lanes, and footpaths, and cutting space for on-street parking.

Improving travel choice helps everyone - the stick is not used to punish those who need to drive but to shift the balance towards those other choices. Car-free city centres and low-emission zones are popular and effective tools used in many cities.

### **Build park and ride at transport hubs for bicycles**

Adding secure bike parking at train stations and bus stops is a good idea. Building carparks is less effective than improving public transport.

### **Reshape the city**

Aim for the 15-minute city, where you can access most destinations you need within 15 minutes by foot, bike or public transport.

### **Consider equity and value for money**

We welcome the emphasis on equity. Incentives that shift people to electric vehicles will favour those who can afford one. E-bikes are expensive compared to other bikes, but far cheaper than electric vehicles. Each dollar of subsidy would have far more impact used to support e-bike uptake than EV uptake.

This article sums up the issues of over-investing in EVs.

EVs are not and cannot be the primary answer: we must prioritise mass and active transport over EVs, and share EVs where we do use them, writes Jack Santa Barbara.

### **Overcome the barriers that Councils face in building bike lanes**

Government funding is currently linked to fuel consumption. This incentivises adding road space and increasing fuel use. Move from a 'predict and provide' funding model to 'decide and provide'.

Reform the way land transport funding works so it's not dependent on increased fuel consumption. Solutions include (de)congestion charging and road pricing.

### **Focus on efficiency**

With limited resources, we must focus on things with the best return. Cycling projects typically have much higher benefit-cost ratios than other transport projects.

A glimpse of what can be possible comes from Ireland: walking and cycling receive 20 percent of transport capital expenditure. Every local authority must develop a high-quality cycling policy,

### **Apply environment and equity principles to guide transport decisions.**

Treat this as a public health emergency, because it is.

Consult, but not too much. There's a strong status quo bias in transport and city planning. Lengthy and exhausting consultation on transport plans is a major obstacle to change. Not everyone needs to be convinced. Apply public health emergency strategies: make the case for change, mitigate negative impacts, deliver change.

### **Support advocates**

To build social licence for change, Government should support and resource advocates who can help build public support.

### **Focus on avoiding emissions**

The Ministry of Transport should emphasise action on the **Avoid and Shift principles**. This will give everyone the best chance to achieve a net zero carbon future.

Making more trips by bike, foot, micromobility and PT possible is an effective way to cut emissions.

There are compelling co-benefits such as road safety and better urban form. Messages could align themes of protecting vulnerable road users, speed management, clearer road hierarchies, better amenity, and access, improved health outcomes and reduced vehicle kilometres travelled (VKT).

## **Systemic change is necessary|**

Low and zero carbon modes such as walking, cycling, and public transport must be prioritised, along with better land use so long trips can be avoided.

The way land transport is funded is broken. Waka Kotahi income depends on more people driving, further and more often. That's perverse. It runs counter to better equity concerns, road safety, lower emissions, and better cities. Fix that.

A low-carbon transport system is also an equitable one. It will achieve better outcomes for the most vulnerable in society.

## **Less driving**

Reducing the use of motor vehicles reduces CO2 and other contaminants, creates health and wellbeing benefits. It is a modal shift that can be achieved more quickly and cheaply than other transport solutions. Planning for our cities and towns should make active transport a central priority goal replacing the current vehicle-centric designs.

CAN accepts the evidence on climate change and the goal of reducing CO2 and other gases to achieve a limit of temperature rise to 1.5C or less above pre-industrial levels. We agree with the Climate Commission's advice to government *Ināia tonu nei: a low emissions future for Aotearoa* on the need to centre the urban form of our cities and towns around people and accessibility for all.

One of the three areas recommended by the Commission in their policy direction for transport was:

**Reducing the reliance on cars (or light vehicles)** and supporting people to walk, cycle and use public transport. Government needs to support this change with clear targets, plans to meet those targets, and substantial increases to funding.

Local government plays an important role in changing how people travel, and it needs more support from central government to do the job well. This includes enabling them through legislation, removing regulatory barriers, and providing increased and targeted funding.

We need to **Shift** the way New Zealanders move from cars to public transport, cycling and walking. The report notes "*decades of underinvestment in infrastructure and services have often made these travel choices slower, less reliable, and ultimately less attractive than travelling by private vehicle*" and the need for "*making sure people have access to affordable, reliable, convenient and well-integrated public transport, and extensive, high-quality and safe cycling and walking infrastructure will be critical for achieving the scale of change required.*"

The Climate Commission recommendations on the need for active transport are aligned with our viewpoint.

According to the 2018 census around 48,000 people cycled to work (2.2 percent of commuters) and 31 percent of people (female 26 percent, male 36 percent) have cycled in the last year. Travelling by bike is increasing in a number of cities and towns, including Christchurch, Auckland and Wellington following increased investment in infrastructure.

Cycling infrastructure benefits many other forms of micro-transport including skaters, scooters and other mobility devices. Pedestrians also benefit from joint crossings across roads.

## **Changing the way we travel (Avoid + Shift)**

Our experience advocating for cycling over decades has highlighted some key barriers to change.

## **Safety**

Our vision is to create a safe environment for everyone to cycle. Safety is the number one issue for the "interested but concerned" who will, with their families, take up cycling if the right environment is provided. In most places this requires separated cycleways, reduction in traffic

speed, and safe ways to cross busy roads that give priority to cyclists and pedestrians. A simple way to measure perceptions of safety is the gender and age balance of cyclists. One busy road or intersection without a safe option to cross will be a big deterrent to cycling the whole journey.

CAN sees a continuing need to fund programmes like Bikes in Schools and Bike Ready.

Make it mandatory for truck and bus drivers to attend training sessions on visibility, such as CAN's Share The Road programme, <https://sharetheroad.org.nz/>.

Require new trucks and buses to have cameras and collision prevention systems.

Require side under-run protection on all heavy vehicles.

Legislate for safe passing distances.

Penalise drivers who park or drive in cycle lanes, pass cyclists too closely, or use cell phones illegally.

Move freight off the roads into rail or shipping.

Make the standard urban road speed 30 kmh rather than 50 kmh, unless protected bike lanes are present.

Some businesses refuse to allow their employees to cycle in work time due to health and safety concerns. WorkSafe should be asked to clarify the legal situation and to actively promote the overall health benefits and safety of various active transport methods.

Research shows that the more people who cycle, the safer it becomes for all.

### **Minimising political risk**

Resistance to change is strong, but can be overcome. While the majority of people support cycling, getting cycleways approved is frequently a battle. Even the most supportive councillors get tired of the negative, sometimes nasty, feedback. The issues continue during the building stage as local businesses may have a temporary downturn in revenue due to access issues. Media coverage is often predominantly negative. Government funding is critical to get many projects over the line in a timely manner and should continue at 50-75 percent, as it is easier for councils to support cycleways and harder to turn down funding when the rates burden is minimised.

Other policies or incentives to encourage local government to support accessible cities should also be investigated. Waka Kotahi should be funded to provide design and project support for smaller councils.

We support the setting of targets for councils to deliver active travel networks with appropriate central funding. This should be part of planned urban design, that provides convenience benefits for active transport above motor vehicles.

From a climate change perspective, the goal is to encourage people to bike (at least) one or two days a week. New York is considering implementing a scheme to subsidise 50 percent of the cost of an e-bike up to a maximum of US\$1,100. A similar scheme could be implemented in Aotearoa as part of the car feebate scheme. The use of cargo bikes should be subsidised through the car feebate scheme.

Cargo bikes can take freight off the road, particularly on the first and last miles.

Businesses and councils should be required to provide end-of-ride facilities at employment, schools, public transport stations/stops and public buildings and other high-use facilities, and add bike lockers to public transport stations and stops. It should be compulsory for all urban buses to have bike racks. All trains should allow bikes for free (as in parts of the EU) for all hours of service.

### **Funding**

The [Government Policy Statement on Land Transport 2021/22-2030/31](#) says all the right things but the reality, found in table 3, is that the funding for walking and cycling for the next decade is expected to be between 2.2-3.0 percent (\$95 to \$180M) of the total budget. This funding is a significant improvement on the past but is insufficient to make a difference in the timeframes required to address global warming. The Climate Commission report recommends a substantial

increase to this funding. CAN believes at least 20 percent of national transport spend should be dedicated to active transport, and with funding flowing through to support local government. Only this will see transport emissions begin to be cut to meet goals.

The government should also fund upgrades to the most dangerous intersections for cyclists, particularly near schools, as part of their safety strategy.

All cycleways should have counters with the data available to the public, so that use can be measured.

### **Just transition**

While biking is not for everyone, there are some groups who would benefit from additional support. Support community programmes to get people cycling. A programme of providing free bikes, helmets and locks for children in low-income areas would be beneficial. There are community groups teaching migrant women to cycle. A free bike on completion would be life changing for some people. Investigate options to provide financial support to purchase bikes for those that would benefit. Identify cycling advocates already doing good work within communities and provide financial support, particularly among deprived groups.

### **Legislative changes**

Make cycling more attractive than travelling by motor vehicle for urban journeys.

Speed up changes to legislation that make separated cycle lanes part of the legal road, as it will make the infrastructure cheaper,

Introduce minimum passing distances as part of the Accessible Streets programme of rule changes.

Allow cyclists to turn left on a red light, and go through a T intersection at the top end, preferably by building cycle routes off the road or clear of other traffic.

Require high quality cycle parking at all major destinations including sports grounds and proportionate to cars. Note that one car parking space can accommodate ten or more cycles.

Require SOEs to take into account pragmatic climate change solutions, such as KiwiRail sharing their land and road crossings where appropriate, and put a compulsory mediation system in place when there is no agreement with other parties such as Councils.

### **Communication and Learning**

Support research into best practice and provide free training and support for staff involved in planning for these new urban designs and cycle infrastructure. Often in small councils there is little expertise in this area and many planners have little or no cycling experience. Best practice evolves over time. Provide positive stories of change and challenge some of the misconceptions.

Thanks for the opportunity to have a say.