



It's
our
Place

3

Foreword

From the Mayor

5

The Strategy

What is our walking and cycling network?

Why is our walking and cycling network important?

What does this strategy include?

Why do we need a strategy?

How has this strategy been prepared?

What do we have now?

What do we have to think about?

10

Action Plan

What are our goals?

What do we want to achieve?

17

Appendices

Maps of proposed projects

Monitoring and review

Glossary of terms

Recreation Mountain biking Trails



From the Mayor

Our vision - more people, more active, more often

Walking and cycling are enjoyed by many in our district. These activities provide vast benefits for our people, from better health and wellbeing, and greater environmental and economic outcomes, through to more lively and connected communities.

Mid Canterbury's terrain offers great opportunities for people to participate at whatever their level or ability, with our flat Canterbury Plains and more challenging hills and mountains in the west.

Since the 2008 Walking & Cycling Strategy was introduced, there has been great progress made to support these two important recreational activities in our district.

We are also very fortunate to have motivated local volunteer groups who have taken the lead in developing and improving trails such as the ACL Skills Park, Braided Waters Cycle Trail, the Methven Walkway, mountain bike trails and the Rakaia River Terrace Walkway.

With such momentum and, through working closely with our community, we have reflected on our progress and signalled our focus for the future.

It is with great pleasure that I present to you the Ashburton District's revised Walking & Cycling Strategy. This strategy builds on our vision of more people, more active, more often by setting goals and objectives to be achieved in the years ahead.

Our aim is to develop a network to connect our existing infrastructure with key points of interest for the community, with active transport in mind. This means creating better connections between houses and schools, sports facilities, the Ashburton town centre and other important public facilities.

At the heart of this strategy is developing our township connectivity and ensuring residents have access to move between and around these spaces.

Through this process, we endeavour to encourage more residents to be more active by cycling to work, walking to school or combining these activities into their everyday travels.



Neil Brown, Mayor



The Strategy

The Strategy

- What is our walking and cycling network?
- Why is our walking and cycling network important?
- What does this strategy include?
- Why do we need a strategy?
- How has this strategy been prepared?
- What do we have now?
- What do we have to think about?

The Strategy

What is our walking and cycling network?

Our district has a walking and cycling network that assists people to explore Mid Canterbury and its many natural attractions. Some of this network is for walking only, some is for cycling only and some allows for both.

Our walking network

We maintain 233km of footpath that is suitable for walkers. This is mostly located within Ashburton township but there are also footpaths in parks and recreational areas. Our walking network needs to cater for the needs of all users and different levels of ability. This ensures that footpaths can be used by people with mobility scooters, wheelchairs and recreational devices, such as skateboards and scooters. A community survey, undertaken when developing this Strategy, found that people walked primarily for recreational, social and health reasons.

Our district has a wide range of walking infrastructure including:

- Urban footpaths/shared paths (sealed)
- Urban area walking tracks (usually unsealed and shared with cyclists)
- Rural walkways (unsealed and mostly shared with cyclists)

- Pedestrian crossings (zebra, islands, raised platforms and traffic signals)

Footpaths enable people to move around their communities and offer an alternative to driving. Footpath condition is measured from data collected during rating surveys. This is important for planning renewal and maintenance programmes. We also co-ordinate the streetlight renewal and upgrades programme in urban areas to help make walking at night safer.

Our cycling network

People cycle for different reasons including:

- On-road cycle training/racing – Cyclists who do this complete long distance road circuits mainly on the wider major road network. They tend to cycle at speeds of around 30km/h and seek good road surfaces.
- Leisure – This involves people who cycle for enjoyment and general exercise, usually on recreational tracks and in parks or reserves.
- Transport – To reach a destination such as work or school.

For the purpose of this strategy, the great mountain-bike trails and tracks are not considered to be a part of our walking and cycling network. Council acknowledges the important role they play in enhancing our residents quality of life. Further

information about these tracks and trails can be found in Appendix D.

Feedback from the community survey (mentioned above) indicated there were many people who were interested in cycling but felt concerned about a lack of separation between them and traffic on busy roads. The survey found that like walking, the most common motives for cycling in the district were recreational, social and health reasons.

Our district offers a range of cycling opportunities and infrastructure, including:

- Urban shared paths (sealed)
- Urban area cycling lanes on the road
- Sealed roads with low traffic volumes
- Rural shared cycleways/walkways (unsealed)

There is about 5.5km of separated urban cycleways in the district. These are all shared pedestrian/cycle paths. There is also about 9km of cycle lanes painted on roads. This is all in the Ashburton township.



The Strategy

Why is our walking and cycling network important?

Our district's flat terrain is ideal for walking and cycling within urban centres. However, the large distances between towns limits the use of walking or cycling as transport. Many of the roads within the rural network have narrow carriageways, little or no shoulders, and high speed limits. Travel by private car is the main form of transport in our district and between the townships within the district. There is no public transport.

Our walking and cycling network is important for a number of reasons.

- It gives people the opportunity to walk or cycle,
- enables an ageing population to move around easily, including using mobility devices,
- improves health and well-being,
- reduces carbon emissions by reducing the number of vehicles on the road, and
- supports economic outcomes such as tourism

What does this strategy include?

This strategy identifies the objectives, actions and projects that will help us achieve our vision for walking and cycling in our district.

The strategy:

- provides information on the walking and cycling network that we manage and the work we undertake;
- sets out how we will work with our community and stakeholders; and
- provides information on our plan to make our district a more active transport friendly area over the next 10 years

This strategy is designed to guide Council decision making on our district's walking and cycling network. It is structured as follows:

- Strategy - outlines the goals and objectives for our walking and cycling network
- Action Plan - explains how and when objectives will be achieved
- Appendices - contains relevant background information



The 2008 Ashburton Walking and Cycling Strategy focused on the urban area of Ashburton. Our Sport and Recreation Strategy (2010) is scheduled for review and will include the recreational walking and cycling areas of our district.

Many of this Strategy's objectives are also relevant to the smaller towns of Mayfield, Mt Somers and Hinds but specific infrastructure projects for these towns have not been included at this time and may be considered in the future. The Strategy is a living document and projects can be added over time.

This document has focused on the highest priority areas and improvements to the existing network. It is expected that future revisions of this document will incorporate the outcomes of the Future Development Strategy (FDS) for which is currently under development.

The Strategy



Why do we need a strategy?

The Strategy provides a framework for making walking and cycling (for transport and recreation) safer and more attractive, with the aim of increasing the number of people using the walking and cycling network. In the context of this strategy, walking includes the use of mobility aids and devices such as scooters and skateboards.

The development of an improved walking and cycling network requires investment over time. This Strategy provides well considered direction and sets priorities for Council and other parties, including the Waka Kotahi (NZ Transport Agency) and community organisations, for future investment. It also provides the context and support to develop business cases for funding.

Central government funding for assisting us to deliver the walking and cycling programme will come primarily through Waka Kotahi (NZ Transport Agency), who will pass this funding on from Road User Charges and fuel taxes.

The Strategy

How has this strategy been prepared?

This Strategy was prepared after reviewing walking and cycling amenities, surveying the community, reviewing other plans and strategies for alignment, and running a workshop with key stakeholders. The key stakeholders included representatives from: Ashburton District Council, NZ Police, Tinwald Cycling Club, Bike Methven, Safer Mid Canterbury, Sport Mid Canterbury, Mobility Solutions Centre, Braided Rivers Cycle Trust, NZ Transport Agency, Mid Canterbury Principals' Association, Rakaia Community Association, Mountain Bike Ashburton, Run and Walk Ashburton, and Experience Mid Canterbury.

- **A review of relevant strategies and plans**

The Walking and Cycling Strategy needs to align with national, regional and local strategies and plans. This includes the Government Policy Statement (GPS) on Land Transport, the Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP) that sets out regional land transport priorities, the Long-Term Plan (LTP) that specifies Council's intentions for the next 10 years and how we will fund them, and the Ashburton District Plan that provides the planning framework for our district.



- **A review of current amenities and use in the townships**

Site observations and traffic counts were done in the district's townships. These identified issues that were discussed at the stakeholder workshop.

- **Survey of the community**

An online survey was posted on our Facebook page. The survey asked people why they walked or cycled and how often. It also asked what challenges they experienced when walking or cycling.



The Strategy

What do we have to think about?

- **Accessibility**
- **Safety**
- **Urban growth and development**
- **Participation**

Accessibility

In the context of this Strategy, accessibility measures how easy it is for someone to participate in a desired activity or to get to a particular destination. The walking and cycling network contributes to making our district's destinations more accessible to residents and visitors, particularly those who use mobility aids such as scooters or walking frames.

Safety

People walking and cycling can encounter safety issues including falls, crashes between pedestrians and people on bicycles, crashes with motor vehicles, fear of using active transport beside vehicles and problems with personal security. These concerns can be addressed by ensuring walking surfaces and cycle lanes are of good quality, having adequate crossings, managing traffic speed and using a "Crime

Prevention through Environmental Design" approach to create naturally safer environments.



Urban growth and development

Our District Plan provides the planning framework for the district. It encourages the development of pedestrian areas, walking tracks, and cycleways to improve the accessibility of amenities for residents. The plan recognises that the connectivity of the cycling and walking network is an important aspect of urban growth and development. The location, design and layout of such connections also need to consider the safety of people using these spaces. For new residential areas, an Outline Development Plan forms the basis for us to shape how walking and cycling can be supported.



Participation

Increasing the number of people walking and cycling requires a holistic approach that encourages people to walk or cycle for health and wellbeing, and economic, and environmental benefits.

A lack of participation can be addressed through an approach that includes skills development and safety and participation programmes, along with providing accessible information and physical infrastructure. This generally involves council and other parties working together.

A photograph of three women jogging on a wooden path in a park. The woman on the left is wearing a dark grey long-sleeved shirt and black leggings, with blue and white sneakers. The woman in the middle is wearing a red tank top and black leggings with mesh panels, with purple and pink sneakers. The woman on the right is wearing a dark grey t-shirt and black leggings with a geometric pattern, with black sneakers. They are all smiling and looking towards the right. The background is a lush green park with trees and a wooden fence.

Action Plan

Action Plan

What are our goals?

What do we want to achieve?

Action Plan

What are our goals?

Collaboration with key stakeholders and reviewing policies at a local and national level has led to four main goals for our Walking and Cycling Strategy.

1 A coherent, safe and connected urban walking and cycling environment

This means:

- developing facilities that meet the needs of people in urban and rural areas
- networks that are easy to use and link to key destinations
- people feel safe using the walking and cycling networks



2 A quality, fit for purpose recreational walking and cycling network that connects to key destinations

This means:

- networks meet the needs of people with varying abilities and allow for the use of different mobility devices
- networks are good quality for their purpose
- people using the networks can travel between key destinations

3 Ensuring the urban and rural walking and cycling networks integrate to create an accessible district

This means:

- there is adequate wayfinding signage and map information available for networks
- rural and urban networks are unified including linkages



4 A district committed to walking and cycling for health, well-being, safety, environmental and economic reasons

This means:

- encouraging travel behaviour changes through strong leadership and collaboration with key stakeholders
- promotion of walking and cycling in our district
- reviewing funding and resource prioritisation for walking and cycling amenities

Action Plan

What do we want to achieve?

To achieve these goals, 14 objectives have been identified. They are set out in the following table.

Our vision - More people, more active, more often



GOAL 1: A coherent, safe and connected urban walking and cycling environment.

Objectives:

- 1.1 Improve facilities to increase pedestrian accessibility
- 1.2 Reduce gaps in the footpath network
- 1.3 Improve continuity and quality issues on roads with cycle lanes
- 1.4 Investigate separation of urban cycle facilities from traffic
- 1.5 Investigate State Highway/railway/river severance issues for communities
- 1.6 Review standards such as footpath width
- 1.7 Improve street lighting to increase personal security

GOAL 2: A quality, fit for purpose recreational walking and cycling network that connects to key destinations.

Objectives:

- 2.1 Improve wayfinding signage for recreational networks
- 2.2 Develop resources such as track specifications that can be shared with community groups

GOAL 3: Ensuring the urban and rural walking and cycling networks integrate to create an accessible district.

Objectives:

- 3.1 Identify gaps in the footpath and cycle networks connecting urban and rural areas
- 3.2 Improve wayfinding signage to recreational networks from urban areas

GOAL 4: A district that is committed to walking and cycling for health, well-being, safety, environmental and economic reasons.

Objectives:

- 4.1 Co-ordinate the promotion of walking and cycling to increase participation
- 4.2 Develop information resources on cycling routes in the district
- 4.3 Align development planning through the District Plan, using best practice methods

Our Action plan

Short term
2021 - 2023

Medium term
2024 - 2027

Long term
2027 - 2031

	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	PRIORITY/ TIMEFRAME
1.1	Improve facilities to increase pedestrian accessibility	A. Fix localised pedestrian accessibility issues. Involves an audit of sites identified in the strategy field work and forming a list of jobs. The work could be undertaken as maintenance/minor works tasks.	■ High priority; Short term
		B. In conjunction with NZTA, develop a Moore Street/SH77 crossing between West Street and Park Street.	■ ■ Medium priority; Short to medium term
1.2	Reduce gaps in the footpath network	A. Ensuring there is a footpath on at least one side of each street in Methven and Rakaia to provide better walking connections. Installation of new footpaths in Methven and Rakaia when the EA undergrounding is complete.	■ ■ Medium priority; Short to medium term
1.3	Improve continuity and quality issues on roads with cycle lanes	A. Improving cycle lane continuity/quality on Walnut Ave, Ashburton by connecting gaps and increasing the width of the existing cycle lane routes. This will also involve coloured surfacing across side road intersections, additional crossing facilities etc.	■ ■ Medium priority; Short to medium term
		B. In conjunction with NZTA, improving cycle lane continuity on SH77, Ashburton by connecting gaps in the existing routes. This will require removal of some parking.	■ ■ Medium priority; Short to medium term
		C. Improving cycle lane safety on Chalmers Ave, Ashburton by providing coloured surfacing across side road intersections and sharrow markings at Beach Road roundabout.	■ ■ Medium priority; Short to medium term
1.4	Investigate separation of urban cycle facilities from traffic	A. Developing a shared path on Racecourse Road as an important recreational link.	■ High priority; Medium term
		B. Confirming an Ashburton urban cycling network and developing a business case for funding.	■ ■ Medium priority; Medium to long term
		C. Improving pedestrian and cyclist safety at Walnut Ave/Oak Ave intersection.	■ ■ High priority; Medium to long term
		D. Improving pedestrian and cyclist safety at Walnut Ave/Chalmers Ave intersection.	■ ■ High priority; Medium to long term

Our Action plan

				Ongoing 2021 - 2031	Short term 2021 - 2023	Medium term 2024 - 2027	Long term 2027 - 2031
	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	PRIORITY/ TIMEFRAME				
1.5	Investigate State Highway/railway/river severance issues for communities	A. In conjunction with NZTA, providing a SH77 crossing in Methven, possible safe crossing options includes pedestrian refuge island or kerb extension near the public toilets and park.	■ ■ Medium priority; Short to medium term				
		B. In conjunction with NZTA, reduce severance by improving crossings over SH1 in Rakaia.	■ Medium priority; Medium term				
		C. In conjunction with NZTA, reduce severance by improving crossings over SH1 in Tinwald.	■ High priority; Short term				
		D. Installing traffic signals at Walnut Ave/West and East Street intersections. This project is being developed by NZTA and is programmed for completion early 2021.	■ Low priority; Short term				
		E. The current Ashburton Bridge, proposed Ashburton Second Bridge and associated upgrades on Chalmers Avenue and in Tinwald provides an opportunity for improved walking and cycling facilities.	■ ■ Medium priority; Medium to long term				
		F. In conjunction with NZTA, reduce severance by improving crossings over SH1 between Havelock St and Walnut Ave. For the Railway overpass bridge, Domain, Museum	■ High priority; Short term				
1.6	Review standards such as footpath width	A. Reviewing footpath widths to cater for a more diverse range of users and devices. Best practice is 1.8m as this allows two wheelchairs or mobility scooters to pass each other.	■ High priority; Short term				
		B. Kerb cut downs by developing assessment and rating system for inclusion in the Transportation Asset Management Plan. This would require maintenance funding allocation.	■ High priority; Short term				
1.7	Improve street lighting to increase personal safety	A. Conducting street lighting audits, investigating where pedestrians feel unsafe and creating a priority approach for street lighting renewals.	■ High priority; Ongoing				

Our Action plan

Short term
2021 - 2023

Medium term
2024 - 2027

Long term
2027 - 2031

	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	PRIORITY/ TIMEFRAME
2.1	Improve wayfinding signage for recreational networks	A. Establishing wayfinding guidelines/signage for urban cycling and key walking networks that integrate with recreational and rural paths.	■ High priority; Short term
2.2	Develop resources such as track specifications that can be shared with community groups	A. Liaising with the Braided Rivers Cycleway Trust to establish if any standards have been developed. If not, ADC to facilitate the development of standards.	■ High priority; Short term
		B. Identifying where additional cycle parking is required and implement with best practice guidance from NZTA.	■ Medium priority; Medium to long term
3.1	Identify gaps in the footpath and cycle networks connecting urban and rural areas	A. Developing a new footpath connection on Dobson Street West to the ACL Skills Park.	■ Medium priority; Short term
		B. Investigating a cycling link to the Skills Park from Moore Street. This may be complex as it passes through an industrial area. An alternative is to use the trail identified in the Ashburton Domain Plan.	■ Medium priority; Short term
		C. Developing a pedestrian/cycle path around the EA Networks Centre.	■ Medium priority; Short term
3.2	Improve wayfinding signage to recreational networks from urban areas	A. Developing recreational wayfinding guidance by establishing a guideline for recreational cycling and walking networks that integrates with the urban networks (for example Methven Walkway).	■ High priority; Short term

Our Action plan

Ongoing	Short term	Medium term	Long term
2021 - 2031	2021 - 2023	2024 - 2027	2027 - 2031

	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	PRIORITY/ TIMEFRAME
4.1	Co-ordinate the promotion of walking and cycling to increase participation	A. Introducing School Travel Plans and supporting initiatives. These could include local safety improvements, car parking/drop-off management and crossing volunteers. A programme including training, helmet use and riding tracks can teach kids how to ride safely.	■ High priority; Short term
		B. Preparing an information pack for businesses on travel planning and available schemes that could support their goals such as the NZTA Employer e-bike purchase support schemes. Information could also include the NZTA workplace cycling guide and the cycle parking supply and design guidance.	■ High priority; Short term
		C. Promoting events that encourage walking and cycling including Walk2Work Day, Aotearoa Bike Challenge or September.	■ High priority; Ongoing
		D. Investigate a learn-to-ride cycling space on Council property.	■ High priority; Short term
4.2	Develop information resources on cycling routes in the district	A. Establishing a cycling information tab on the ADC website and include maps and links to resources or initiatives.	■ High priority; Short term
4.3	Align development planning through the District Plan, using best practice methods	A. Ensuring land use planning and transport rules consider walking and cycling outcomes in the District Plan, e.g. introducing planning requirements that promote a more walkable town, and increase cycle parking.	■ High priority; Short to medium term

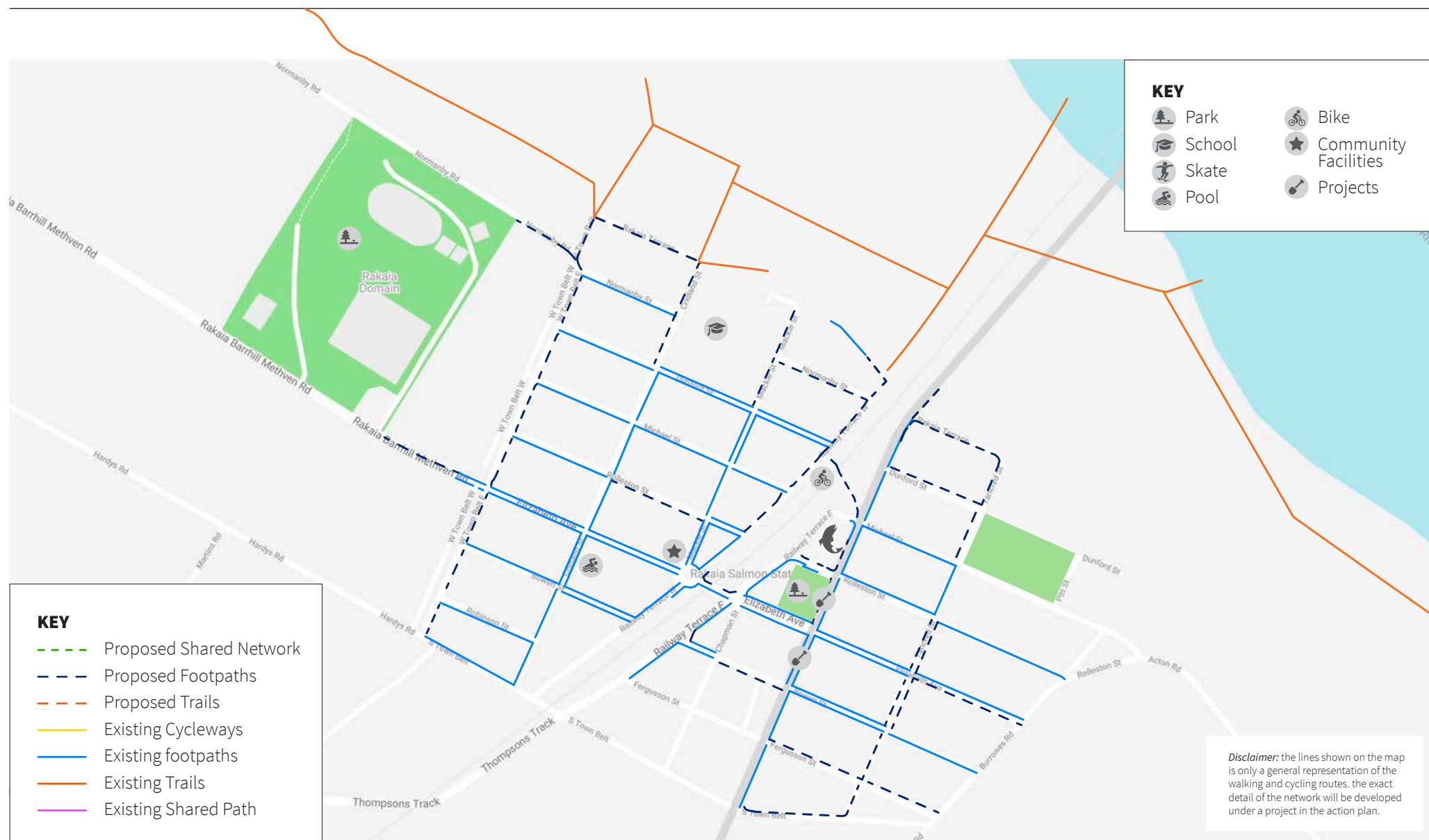


Appendices

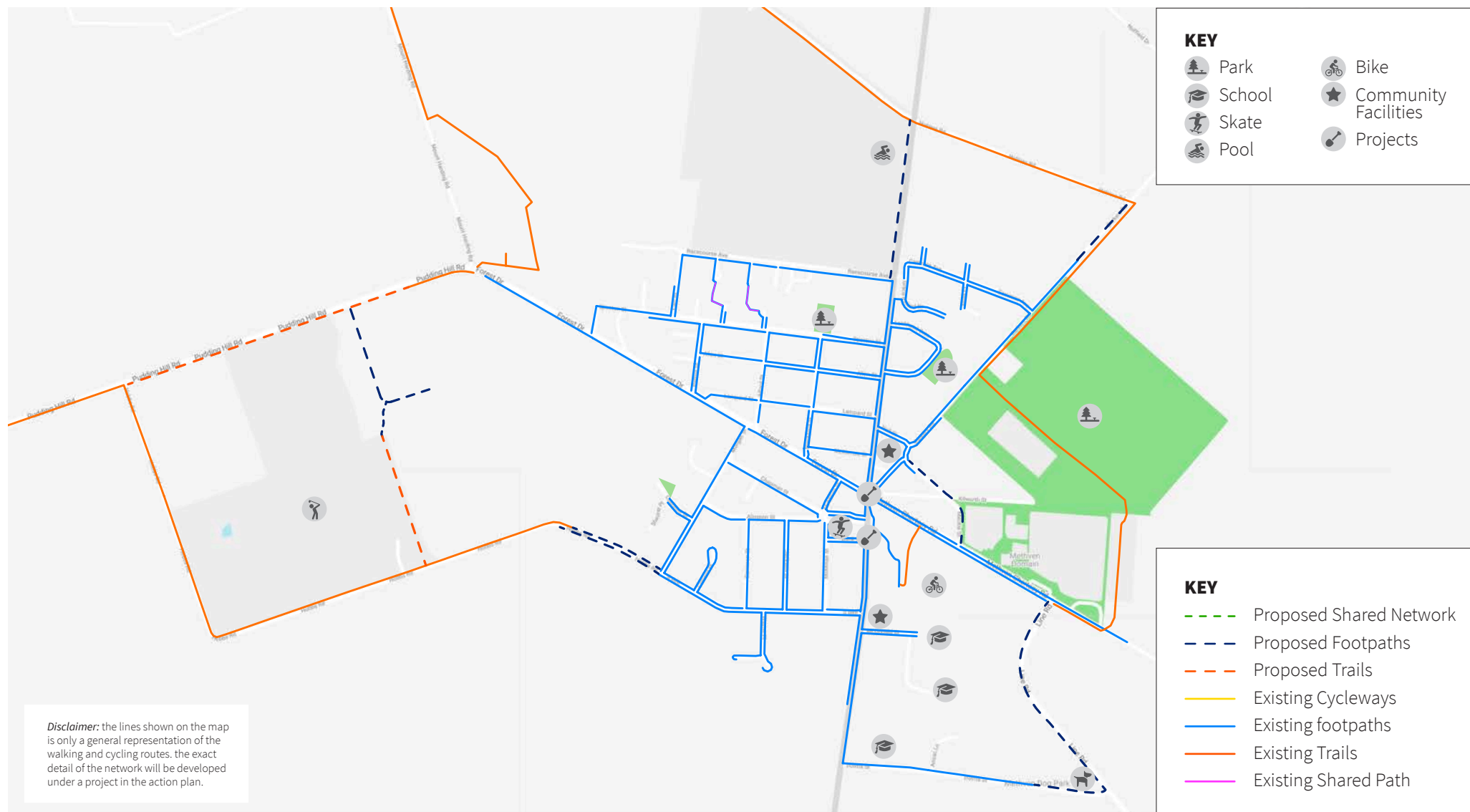
Maps of proposed projects
Monitoring and review
Glossary of terms

Appendices

Appendix A - **Rakaia** | Proposed Walking and Cycling Projects

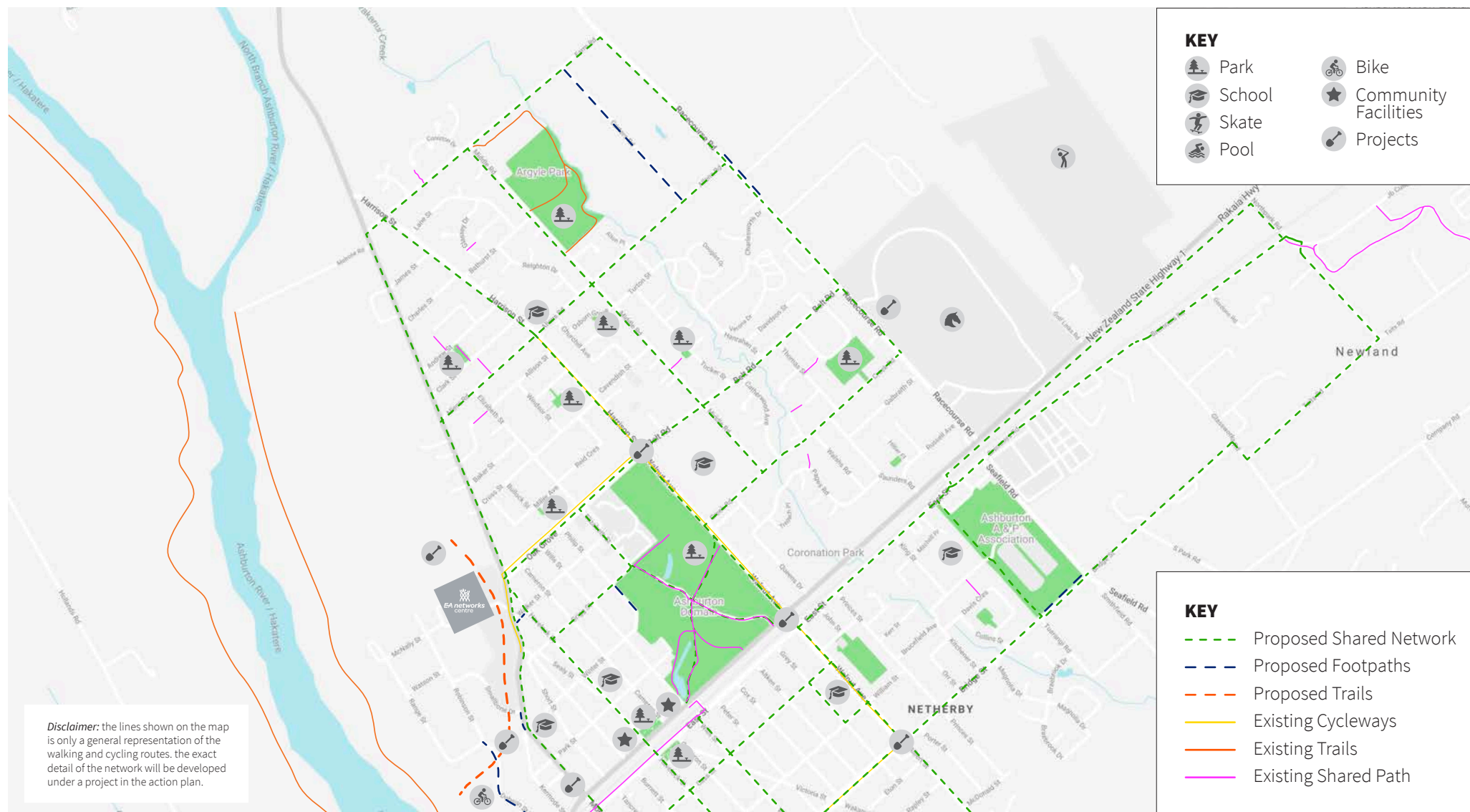


Appendix A - **Methven** | Proposed Walking and Cycling Projects

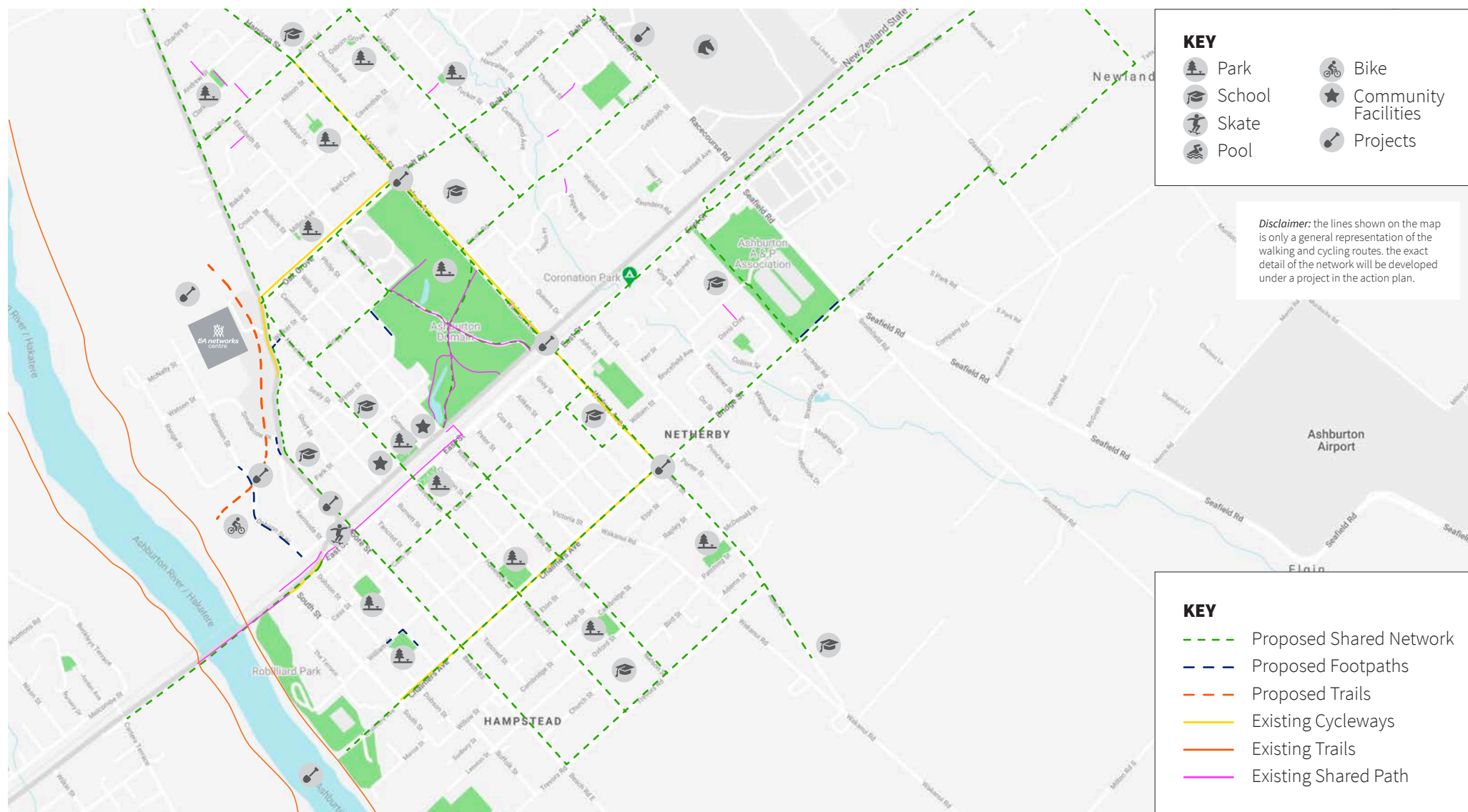




Appendix A - **West Ashburton** | Proposed Walking and Cycling Projects



Appendix A - East Ashburton | Proposed Walking and Cycling Projects



Appendix A - Tinwald | Proposed Walking and Cycling Projects



Appendix B - **Monitoring and review**

A Walking and Cycling Working Group will be formed to undertake the monitoring and review of this Strategy. The group will be made up of Council staff and elected members. A Council staff member to co-ordinate and take ownership of the Strategy may be required.

Monitoring and reporting

The progress of actions and projects outlined in the Implementation Plan will be monitored. If any actions or projects become unfeasible, they may be removed. New actions and projects can be added by the Working Group and approved by Council as required. Progress and monitoring information will be reported through the Working Group, as and when that information is available. A brief report on progress on the Strategy's implementation will be prepared as part of Council's overall annual reporting.

In addition to the actions and projects, several key aspects will be monitored. These relate to uptake and participation, progress on cycling infrastructure (as this is where the most effort is required) and community satisfaction.

Uptake and participation

Monitoring uptake and participation will enable Council to identify overall walking and cycling trends, predict future trends and provide evidence-based funding applications. It allows the vision of 'More

people, more active, more often' to be monitored. This will be achieved by:

1. Adding the latest Household Travel Survey results to the historical database and showing this visually. The aim should be to reduce the current downward trend and an upward target can be established once the 2019 results are published by Statistics NZ.
2. A survey of residents every two years (using the same questions as the 2019 survey) to measure time spent walking and cycling and frequency.
3. A School Travel Survey every two years to monitor active travel to school (a 2020 baseline survey is required as the last survey of this scale was 2006). A target can be set from the baseline survey.
4. Undertake annual walking and cycling counts at key locations during the same time periods used in this Strategy.

Progress on the cycling infrastructure development

A plan to ensure there is a footpath on one side of each street in Rakaia and Methven is straight forward to implement within the existing renewals budget. Urban cycle infrastructure is desired by the community but funding will need to be obtained.

5. Keep a running total of the length of urban cycling infrastructure (the baseline is 5.5km off-road and 9km cycle lanes).

Community satisfaction

Understanding how people feel about the walking and cycling environment will also provide a good basis for monitoring the Strategy progress.

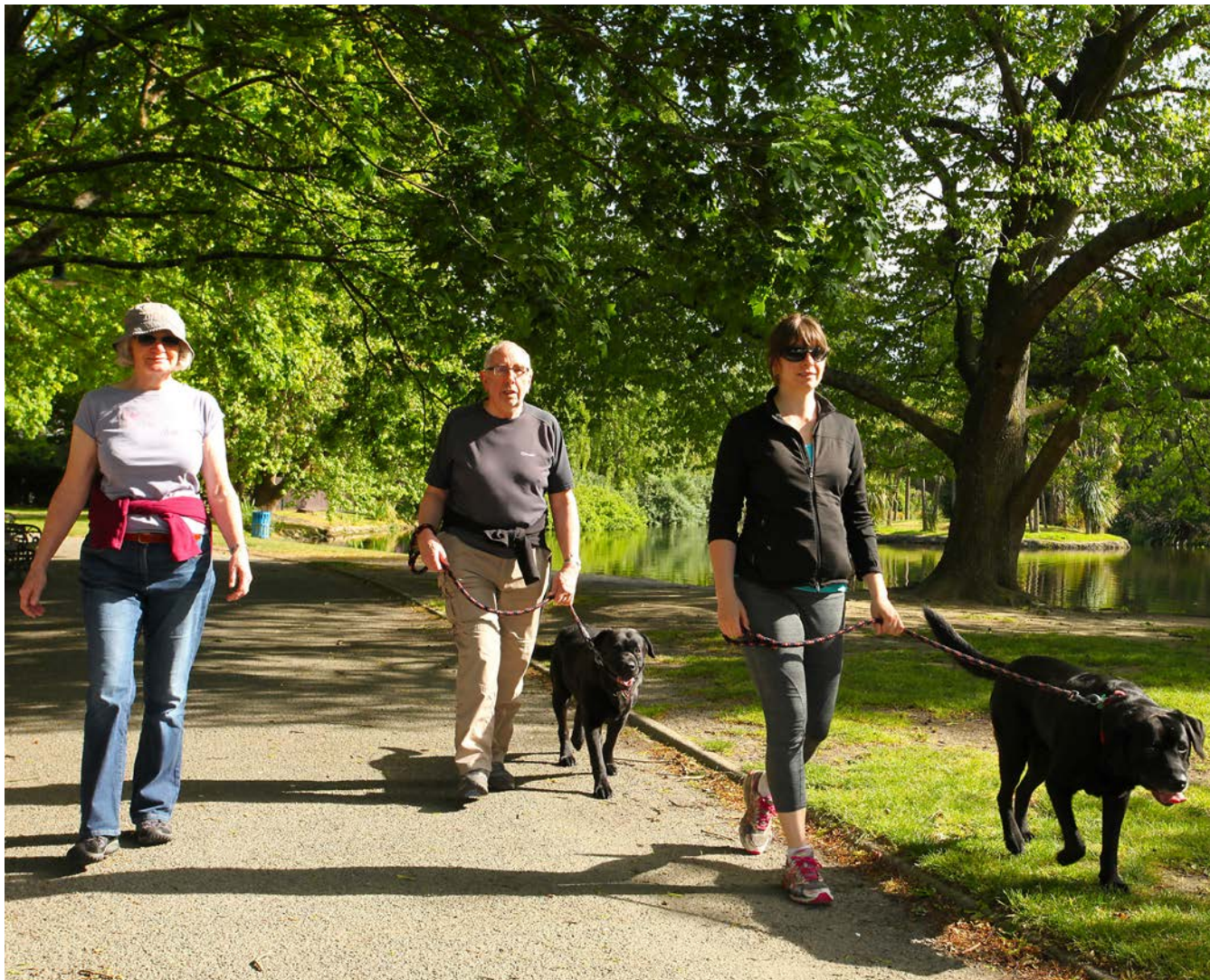
6. A survey of residents every two years (using the same questions as the 2019 survey) to measure satisfaction with the district's walking and cycling provision.

It is recommended that a question about footpath satisfaction is added to the Annual Residents Survey to capture more data.

Review

The Walking and Cycling Strategy will be reviewed every five years. The Implementation Plan will be reviewed on a three-year cycle coinciding with Council's LTP. This review cycle reflects the need to maintain alignment with the national funding programmes and related projects regionally and locally.

Appendix C - **Glossary of terms**



Glossary of terms

Accessibility – The measure of how easy it is for someone to participate in a desired activity or to get to a particular destination.

Arterial – A major route in a system of roads.

Collector roads – Larger urban roads that link to arterial roads. In rural areas, these are smaller roads linking smaller communities to arterial roads.

Severance – Separation of people from facilities, services and social networks they wish to use within their community; changes in comfort and attractiveness of areas; and/or people changing travel patterns due to the physical, traffic flow and/or psychological barriers created by transport corridors and their use.

Sharrow markings – Markings that indicate a cyclist can share a traffic lane with other vehicles.

Walkability – The extent to which walking is readily available as a safe, connected, accessible and pleasant mode of transport.

Wayfinding – The process or activity of determining someone's position and planning and following a route.

Appendix D - Recreation Mountain biking Trails

Mountain bike tracks in the district includes

Mt Hutt Bike park

Mt. Hutt Bike Park boasts a 30km+ trail network, from a family friendly XC loop to epic single track, double-black diamond technical descents and with some nice climbs to link it all together*.

The Park could be access through Rosehill Road via McLennans Bush Road and State Highway 77.



Ashburton MTB Loop

Running along the Ashburton River near the CBD is Mountain Bike Ashburton's purpose built mountain bike track. The full loop is 11.5km but can be shortened by turning around in several places*.

The loop could be access via multiple locations which include ACL Skill Park, Ashburton Bridge, Melrose Rd etc.

River Walkway

The Walkway was created primarily for walkers, runners and dogs to avoid collisions with cyclists on the busy MTB Loop. Beginner cyclists may also take this route*.

The walkway could be access via multiple locations which include ACL Skill Park, Melrose Rd etc.

Ashburton/Hakatere River Trail

Following the north side of the river, you can ride from Ashburton to the Hakatere beach settlement and river mouth. It is a wide two-way track open to bikers, walkers and horse riders 17km long (one way)*.

The trail could be access via multiple locations which include MTB Loop, Trevors Rd, Hakatere Huts etc.



* Information of the bike trails were reference from the mountain bike club websites

Lake Hood Trail

The Lake Hood Trail follows the south side of the river for 7km from Ashburton to Lake Hood. It is a wide two way track suitable for walkers and bikers of beginner skill level. A loop of the lake will add another 6km to your ride and there's some great pump tracks for the kids too.*

The trail could be access via multiple locations which include Ashburton Bridge, Lake Hood etc.



Mountain biking Trails

The mountain bike trails have been maintained by Local Trail Associations including but not limited to Mountain Bike Ashburton and Bike Methven. The District is privileged to have volunteers from these clubs to help maintain the mountain bike trails.



* Information of the bike trails were reference from the mountain bike club websites

A photograph of two people walking away from the camera on a paved path in a park. The person on the left is wearing a light grey long-sleeved shirt and dark trousers. The person on the right is wearing a dark vest over a light-colored long-sleeved shirt and blue jeans. The path is surrounded by green grass and trees with some autumn-colored leaves. The background is slightly blurred, showing more trees and a few other people in the distance.

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