



Innovating Streets featured project

# Brooklyn Road cycleway

Wellington City Council

## The project

Brooklyn Road in Wellington is a main bus route and the key access to the landfill, which means it has a high volume of heavy vehicles (9.4 percent of all vehicles on Brooklyn Road). Even without space for cycling, there were 156 daily bike trips on average, but vehicle volumes and speeds and, the road layout made for dangerous conditions, especially uphill (approximately 7000 cars per day).

So with support from Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency, Wellington City Council (WCC) tested road reallocation for safer cycling, creating 1.3km of temporary separated bike lane on a busy 50km/hr road.

The quick and low-cost interim uphill cycleway resulted in:

- More daily bike journeys;
- Less overall speeding on the route and;
- A head-start on a permanent and safer design for this corridor.

*'This programme has been a real lightbulb moment internally, that this is a really good way to deliver projects.'*

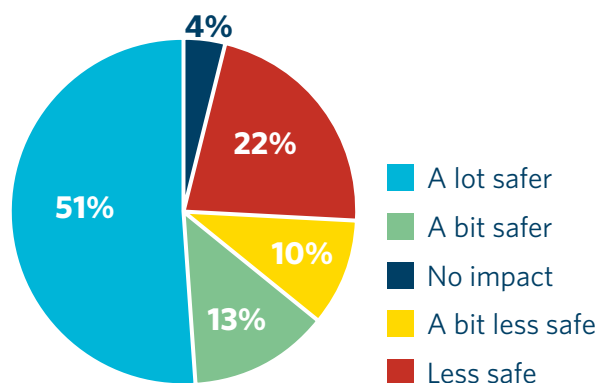
Project Manager

# 64%

of people thought that the trial made traveling between the city and Brooklyn safer for all users

# 67%

of women rated their experience of the Brooklyn Road trial as positive



### Strategic fit:

The Brooklyn Road Cycleway project is part of WCC's Cycleway Masterplan, a plan to develop a connected, citywide bike network. It also fits with the Council's 'Let's Get Wellington Moving' plans to move more people with fewer vehicles, and the Council's Te Atakura goal to be net zero carbon capital by 2050.

### Project goal:

Make travel between the city and Brooklyn safer for all.

### Project extent:

1.3 km between Nairn Street and just north of Tanera Crescent.

### Project cost:

\$300,000

### Project outcomes:

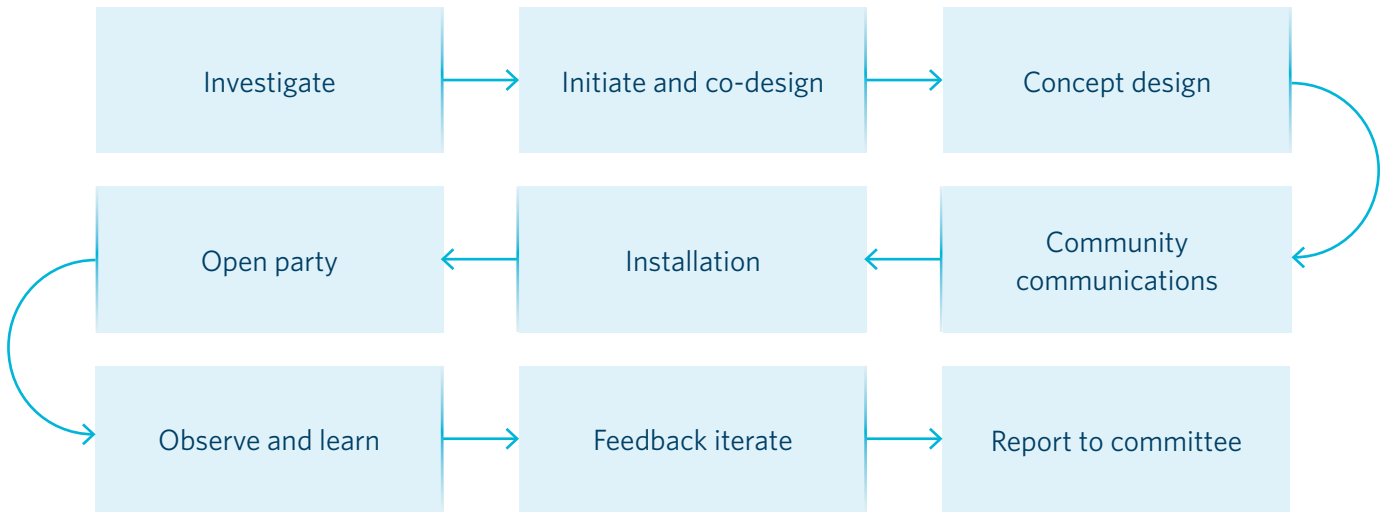
Across the month of July there was a 6 percent increase in the number of people riding on Brooklyn Road on weekdays and a 10 percent increase on weekends, compared to July 2020.

### Next step:

WCC Councillors have voted unanimously to make the cycleway permanent, with improved connections at each end to the Victoria St cycleway and the Brooklyn shops. The project also sparked confidence in using tactical approaches and catalysed the WCC Transitional Programme, a rapid rollout of the city's planned bike network.



## Process



### Community communications

Before installation began there was a concerted effort to speak to the community about what was going to happen. Key messages included that the project was a trial, there would be no consultation before it was installed and, in this instance, engagement would be through implementation to focus on people's experience rather than opinion. Mail-outs, drop-in sessions, media advertisements and social posts were all part of the communications plan for this stage.



### Installation

The project team used an 'engagement through implementation' approach rather than extensively consulting in advance.

Space was reclaimed for a protected uphill cycleway by reallocating an overtaking lane.

Simple rubber bumpers and flexi-poles created a 1.5m wide lane.

Parking spaces were moved so the lane became parking-protected, reducing pinch points and the potential for dangerous close-passes.



### Observe and learn

Part of the process was asking people what they would like changed through the trial and being adaptive to feedback. The project team gathered feedback via an online survey, even when meeting in person. The team also collected data on bike trips, vehicle speeds and volumes, parking occupancy and travel time.

The two most common suggested improvements were improving connections to and from each end of the routes, and more gentle turning at intersections.

Seven changes were made to the design while the trial was in place to test different solutions and inform the design of the permanent solution.

## Outcomes

### Reduction in vehicle speeds and capacity, without increasing congestion

The 85th percentile speed southbound on Brooklyn Road dropped 8 percent, from 56 km/h before the trial to 51.7 km/h during the trial. The average trip of a person driving between Nairn Street and Brooklyn Terrace is between 12 and 17 seconds longer depending on time and day. This is consistent with the reduction in speed. This, combined with the slight drop in vehicles counted, suggests there has been no increase in congestion caused by the trial.

### A safer road for all users

59 percent of people found their experience on the trial layout positive, while 64 percent of people thought that the trial made traveling between the city and Brooklyn safer for all users.

In addition to the shift in perception, across the month of July there was a 6 percent increase in the number of people riding on Brooklyn Road on weekdays and a 10 percent increase on weekends, compared to July 2020.

### Identification of areas where parking interventions may need to be considered

There were approximately 63 car parks repurposed for the bike lane, reducing parking by 35 percent within the boundary of the trial.

Overall, the parking occupancy in the trial area remains low, indicating there is excess parking. The trial helped to identify three parking zones where a new parking scheme will need to be implemented to align with the Council's parking policy, which sets the desired occupancy rate for parking at no lower than 50 percent on average, and up to 85 percent.



## Tips for practitioners

**Better and now is preferable to perfect and never** - there were aspects of this project that weren't perfect and won't be permanently installed, but they were better than what was there and enabled the project to proceed.

**Functional design can be fine, in context** - a short timeframe meant there was limited scope for broader community conversations about placemaking and aesthetics. In the end, a functional look-and-feel suited this location and helped communicate the trial nature of the project.

**Set a clear path** - by communicating a strong commitment to the process, some well-defined metrics for success, and the connections to longer term plans, the focus is kept focus on the goals, which helps everyone involved understand what's happening and why.

**Engage widely** - early feedback came particularly from people who regularly cycled the route, and was strongly positive. The project team also reached out to heavy vehicle drivers, bus operators and other road users with targeted flyers, drop-in morning teas, and road signs. Ultimately, the majority of all respondents (64 percent) said the road felt safer.



## Partners

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# Absolutely Positively Wellington City Council

Me Heke Ki Pōneke

# Isthmus.