

Rotorua Cycle Action  
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ROTORUA

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Environment Bay of Plenty  
P.O. Box 364  
WHAKATANE

SUBMISSION ON DRAFT REGIONAL LAND TRANSPORT PROGRAMME 2009/2110-2011/12

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this submission.

'Rotorua Cycle Action' is a cycling advocacy group, affiliated to the national organisation Cycling Advocates' Network (CAN). Rotorua Cycle Action is committed to increasing the number of people who choose cycling for commuting and recreation and the infrastructure to support cycling. Our purpose is:

**To advocate for improved conditions for Rotorua cyclists; support initiatives for cycling education, encouragement, and enforcement; and to facilitate communication between relevant stakeholders such as councils and cyclists.**

Our members represent a wide cross section of our community and across all cycling interests, including commuters, recreational and sporting cyclists, and parents. Rotorua is a 'hot bed' of cycling action, with several cycling clubs and a particularly active and prominent mountain biking community and an extensive forest-based track infrastructure.

Cycling is, in our view, an excellent indicator of environmental wellbeing, in much the same way as trout fishing is an indicator of water quality. Both conjure up strong images of peace and harmony, leisure time, and people enjoying great places to live, work and play.

Rotorua is uniquely positioned to be one of the best cycling cities in New Zealand due to its unique mountain bike area in Whakarewarewa Forest and the recreational value associated with cycling around and between the lakes. This position and the values of cycling to the Region cannot be underestimated.

**We commend Environment Bay of Plenty for preparing and releasing the draft Regional Land Transport Programme and the obvious commitment that has been made to date.**

From a cycling (and walking and public transport) perspective, there is much to support in the draft Regional Land Transport Programme. Key positive elements are:

- Cycling is a key part of Priority 3 for the region (of five priorities);
- Significant funding (\$19.6 million) is forecasted for walking and cycling related works over the next ten years;
- Integration of walking and cycling facilities is recognised as being important for “all major transport infrastructure projects”;
- Table 1 (Page 24) lists 20 worthwhile walking and cycling projects over the period 2009/10 - 2011/12, in various parts of the region. These projects include addressing some recognized potential “death traps” for cyclists, such as the Mourea Bridge, on SH33;
- The tabulated summary of transport planning projects (Page 25) includes a “BOP Strategic Walking and Cycling Strategy”, focused on regional integration of walking and cycling studies.

There are, however, some elements of the strategy that deserve comment:

- There is a very uneven distribution of proposed expenditure across the region:
  - Opotiki District Council - \$120,000;
  - Whakatane - \$2,754,000 (including \$614,000 for walking);
  - Rotorua - \$594,019;
  - Tauranga/Western Bay of Plenty - \$4,620,000.
- To a certain degree this obviously reflects population distribution. There does, however, appear to be a significant imbalance between Rotorua and other parts of the region, as Whakatane and Tauranga/Western Bay of Plenty are indicating much higher relative levels of investment in cycling-related infrastructure.
- There appears to be only limited integration of cycling opportunities and development of facilities across the region.
- For various reasons (including fuel costs and sustainability), the place of cycling is becoming more important in New Zealand society and it is going to take some time for infrastructure development to be integrated and safer for cyclists (a key issue). On that basis, it is somewhat disappointing, on Page 39, to see cycling projects starting at Priority 77 and then grouped between Priorities 85 and 91 (out of a total of 120). We suggest that cycling-related initiatives need a higher regional priority.

Another key area requiring more effort that doesn't appear to have recognition in the programme is the promotion and implementation of safer cycling for school-aged children, including access to and from schools. Environment Bay of Plenty should support initiatives by schools (and District Councils) to promote increased and safer cycling access to schools.

There may also be a case for specifically mentioning the need for Environment Bay of Plenty, from time to time, to actively support cycling advocacy (say with relevant publications and the use of other media) or the development and maintenance of regionally-important cycling networks.

Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you wish to discuss any aspect of this submission.

We look forward to working with Environment Bay of Plenty. We wish to be heard in support of our submission, although this will be subject to availability of our volunteer members during any hearing.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Willie Shaw', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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for Rotorua Cycle Action

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