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Taranaki RLTS Discussion Paper
Taranaki Regional Council
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25 September 2009

Submission on the Regional Land Transport Strategy for Taranaki – Stage One: Discussion Paper on the Key Transport Issues and Outcomes (August 2009)

Thank you for the opportunity to consider and make a submission on the discussion paper. This submission has been prepared by members of the North Taranaki Cycling Advocates group. We are willing to discuss any of the comments below with the Regional Council. We appreciated being asked to view the paper and prepare a submission on the key transport issues facing Taranaki.

About NTCA

The North Taranaki Cycling Advocates (NTCA) group in New Plymouth are an affiliated group of the national Cycling Advocates' Network (CAN), looking after interests of cyclists in North Taranaki. NTCA represents a good cross-section of cyclists in Taranaki, with both recreational and commuting members, road and mountain bikers and a wide range of ages.

Specific Comments

The Government Policy Statement (GPS) on Land Transport Funding for 2009 (Section 2.5 with Question 1)

We think that the GPS is somewhat short sighted and reactive, apparently catering for current statistics rather than planning ahead for desired modal shift. For example, to retrofit safety features (such as dedicated cycle lanes over the Waiwhakaiho Bridge) after budgeted projects are completed takes incremental time in design and re-engineering, effort and cost. These activities are also economically inefficient.

We think that the Regional Council should be looking for local fund raising alternatives to the now defunct Regional Road Tax and investigate ways in which this could be initiated.



Vision Statement for Taranaki (Section 4.1 with Question 2)

We support the 2006 RLTS vision statement as this encapsulates our ideas about access into the transport system for all road users and stakeholders both today and in the future.

Land Transport Outcomes (Section 4.2 with Question 3)

We support the outcomes described in this section. However, to reflect the multiple use and purpose of our transport system (for example by cars, trucks, pedestrians and cyclists for business and recreation); we would like to see added to the words 'secure and reliable', '*secure, diverse and reliable*'. Diverse in this respect also recognizes that our transport system is not solely based around private use of motor vehicles and trucks: if fuel prices rise our diverse network can respond.

Tourism is certainly an emerging and valuable activity in our region. We would like to see a new line added to the outcomes to highlight the role of the transport system in making a positive impact on the economic development of tourism.

Strategic land transport options (Section 4.3 with Questions 4 and 5)

We agree that the five options are probably the main themes for our region and that there are no further significant options to be considered. We disagree with the preferred strategic land transport option for Taranaki and think that the option 'Minimal change to roading with increased provision for alternative modes' would more closely reflect the desire to produce a more diverse transport system and meet future transport needs. This also introduces some elements of the 'modal transfer' option which, we think, should be the objective for the longer term.

Safety and personal security (Section 5.1.2 with Questions 7(a) and (b)).

We agree with the statement on page 16 that safety is currently perceived as a barrier to greater use of walking and cycling. While there are some alternatives on urban routes, rural routes (both major and minor roads) are usually always shared with high speed vehicular traffic. We are unaware of any rural roads with reduced speed sections to improve the safety of the pedestrian (walking/running) and cycling road user.

We agree that the safety and personal security issues are still current. We think that further issues do exist, such as providing and improving road user education to as many road users as possible and for example by promoting a share the road courtesy campaign and promoting the 1.5 metre recommended passing gap for pedestrian (walking/running) and cycling road users.



Also rural road cycle networks should be created (linking both recreational and commuting destinations) with safety improvements such as signage, proactive early warning signs or reduced speed areas. We think that heavy vehicle routes should be established away from some specified rural cycle networks. This may require co-ordination of regulatory and planning bodies.

Network Efficiency (Section 5.1.3 with Questions 8 (a) and (b))

We support the 2006 network efficiency plans and would add that the New Zealand Cycleway Project, introduced by the National Government in 2009 should be included in the actions of both the RCAs and within District plans such that ALL functions of key roads in the region are understood and linked into this new strategy.

Economic Development (Section 5.1.4 with Question 9)

We support the economic development issues for the Taranaki region. We think that the actions for the RCAs in developing and adopting a strategic roading hierarchy service levels should include provision for recreational users (this is linked to tourism and encouraging tourists to visit Taranaki).

Access and mobility (Section 5.1.5 with Question 10)

We support the issues and actions within this section. This section could also contain linkages to the New Zealand Cycleway Project. We think that a further issue is that our road space is a public space and utility and ALL users are entitled to use it – in other word marginalized users seek greater access.

Public Health (Section 5.1.6 with Question 11)

We support the issues and actions within this section. In response to Q 11(b) we think that public health actions should have a higher priority than currently portrayed in this RLTS.

Environmental sustainability (Section 5.1.7 with Question 12)

We support the issues and actions within this section, and in particular the “Alternative modes” issues covered on page 23.

In response to Q12(b) we think that District plans, Land transport programmes and LTCCPs should include provision for implementing walking and cycling strategies.



Other Matters – Integration of land use and transport planning (Section 6.1)

We support the issues and actions within this section and agree that low density housing in rural north Taranaki (for example around SH3A Mountain Road between Bell Block and Inglewood) has resulted in an increase in (single passenger) motor vehicle movements on surrounding minor rural roads.

We think that medium density housing/commercial development is a more desirable form of urban design. New subdivisions should include modern urban design with segregation of walking/cycling and motor vehicles.

Climate Change issues (Section 6.2 with Question 14)

We support the issues and actions within this section. We think that the RLTS should also address the issue of developing strategies to reduce the number of vehicles on the roads, for example by providing bus priority lanes and in promoting changes in the modes of transport (reference to our comments on section 4.3 of this RLTS).

Yours sincerely,

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