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Otaki Cycling Environment & Access Network (OCEAN)

Otaki, 4th October 2009

SUBMISSION TO NATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN 2009

- Kapiti Cycling Inc is the local voice for people who cycle for transport and recreation and children who cycle to school.
- Kapiti Cycling works with Kapiti Coast District Council on local access issues. Member of the Council Advisory Group for Cycling, Walking and Bridleways Represented on the Cycling, Walking and Bridleways Strategy Group
- Membership: Supporting organisations, individual members from all walks of life. Kapiti Cycling is affiliated to Cycling Advocates Network Inc.
- OCEAN is the Otaki branch of KCI

GENERAL

Land Transport road infrastructure touches the area in which our organization work to retain the character and existing and planned cycling infra structure at the same time urging our council to always have in mind cycling facilities when constructing new roads. We want to supply you with this case study to better support our submission.

The Kapiti Coast District Council together with cycling, walking, open space groups, friends of the river groups and horse riding groups designed the Western Link Road to be a two-lane road with adjacent facilities for cycling, walking and horse riding. The pathways along the road connect to river pathways and two suburbs for fast access to the Districts main Town Center Paraparaumu. The consultation was run under the required by law Local Government Act Long Term Council Community Plan (LTTCP). One of the designated Roads of National Significance is Wellington to Levin SH1. The Government fronted by Honorary Minister Stephen Joyce is now requiring a complete re-design of the WLR to an expressway. Alternatives are even less palatable to our community as they will mean destruction of many properties.

Our reaction to this destruction of community efforts is that there is too much haste. At present Electrification is being extended to Waikanae and is planned to Otaki. Kapiti Coast commuters are increasingly choosing to commute by train. When the WLR-two-lane road (including the bridge between Waikanae and Paraparaumu) is constructed a great amount of motorized traffic will shift from SH1 to WLR. The WLR and bridge is almost ready to start building whereas we understand that the alternatives could take 4-5 years at least.

We refer to the OECD report that advises that “more is not always better” as it reinforces the message that “before undertaking investment in new capacity, it is important to ensure best use is made of existing infrastructure”

The Hyder Consulting Report (Link: <http://can.org.nz/node/5392>): “ The importance of making best use of existing networks in promoting productivity: A value for money approach.” emphasizes that there are many cost-effective ways to optimize existing networks.” Chris Money suggests that “ a little bit of everything” is more likely to see meaningful reductions in congestions.

Both reports underline that more expressways and motorways do not always equate to greater economic growth, which seem to be this governments underlying reason for motorway construction all over the country. The Hyder report reviews the new GPS and provides very useful material to support the economic argument for cycling investment in NZ.

SPECIFIC ISSUES (ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS)

- 1. Base information:** Whereas the amounts of kilometer of rural roads, highways etc. is listed there are **no figures for infrastructure for cycling**. We suggest that the National Cycleway be included in the National Infrastructure Plan due to its likely economic impacts. Whereas the funding sources for roads are listed and explained well, there is no attempt to show the full cost to the tax payer of motorized transport vs. public transport i.e. rail & bus. Costs such as accidents, enforcement, hospitalization, other road services such as emergency vehicles (ambulances and fire engines), pollution both in storm water and air. **We are aware that health cost for example is included in the cost benefit ratio, but this and other related costs of motoring needs to be explained in detail, so that submitters are made aware of this extra cost and can consider these in their submissions to this document.**
- 2. Missing Issues:** There are no reference at all to future oil price fluctuations and peak oil, cost of future climate change emissions and other externalities of a road dominated transport system (Health cost as mentioned above).
- 3. Decision-making:** As we understand it from the following paragraph in the document, we question how a Minister can step in and make political decisions (as in the case on the Kapiti Coast):

“ The NZTA has statutory independence over determining whether particular road activities should be included in the National Land Transport Plan (NLTP) and approving NLTF funding for road activities. The purpose of the independence is to de-politicize decision-making about individual road projects. “

The estimated costs, when approving infra structure such as roads must include possible future scenarios other than economic. It appears from point 65,66 and 67 that this will be the case. However in the case study from the Kapiti Coast we do not believe that the following has been considered:

- Tourism and recreational value of the well-designed KCDC WLR
- Health costs when less people cycle and walk, finding the Expressway easier
- Electrification of Wellington trains to Waikanae and later Otaki
- Upgrade of Capital Connection commuter train vs. possible discontinuance of same if people move from rail to the Expressway
- Bridge and direct link between Waikanae and Paraparaumu
- More children using bus to school or cycling and walking to school due to NZTA's good safe routes programs.
- More adults cycling and walking
- The Broadband Infrastructure Plan has potential to reduce travel due to people being able to work from home.
- Cost of destruction of many homes on the alternative routes
- Other social costs of split community sentiments
- Increased emissions
- Destruction of the railway walking and Cycleway just finished (Otaki)
- Destruction of valuable farmland (Kapiti is Wellington's pantry when road transport becomes too expensive.
- Better technology on waterfronts resulting in faster and more efficient rail transport.

We particularly support point 68 therefore i.e. “Because of the complexity of the analysis and the large numbers that are usually involved, bias can result from analysis being led astray by “intuition”, “common sense” or “judgment”. Therefore if the result of a CBA does not seem intuitively right, further inquiry or an independent review may be appropriate.”

Whereas our submission is partly built on the specific case of planned Expressway infrastructure on the Kapiti Coast, we believe it has relevance to the rest of New Zealand and wish to express our wish that it be taken onboard as such.

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