

Informal Workshop Notes

Regional Transport Committee Workshop

Held: 9.30 AM, Friday 9 February 2024, Council Chambers, Regional House, 1 Elizabeth Street, Tauranga

Chairperson: Cr Lyall Thurston - Bay of Plenty Regional Council Toi Moana (BOPRC)

Deputy Chairperson: Cr Ken Shirley - BOPRC

Present: Mayor David Moore - Ōpōtiki District Council, Deputy Mayor John Scrimgeour - Alternate, Western Bay of Plenty District Council, David Speirs - NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (Waka Kotahi), Cr Andrew von Dadelszen - Alternate, BOPRC, Cr Berice Julian - Alternate, Kawerau District Council, Cr Conan O'Brien - Alternate, Rotorua Lakes Council (via Zoom), Chairman Doug Leeder - BOPRC (ex-officio), Commissioner Stephen Selwood - Alternate, Tauranga City Council (via Zoom), Mayor James Denyer - Western Bay of Plenty District Council, Mayor Victor Luca - Whakatāne District Council, Mayor Tania Tapsell - Rotorua Lakes Council (via Zoom)

In Attendance: External Advisors: Glen Crowther - Environmental Sustainability, Greg Pert - Freight Advisor, Stacey Spall - NZ Automobile Association

BOPRC: Cr Stuart Crosby (via Zoom), Cr Jane Nees, Cr Kat Macmillan, Cr Ron Scott, Mike Seabourne - Director, Public Transport, Presenters - as listed in the workshop notes, Amanda Namana - Committee Advisor

Apologies: Mayor Faylene Tunui - Kawerau District Council, Commission Chair Anne Tolley - Tauranga City Council, Angus Hodgson - KiwiRail, Cr Ken Shirley - BOPRC (for lateness), Mayor Tania Tapsell - Rotorua Lakes Council (for lateness)

1. Introduction

1.1 Background/Overview

Presented By: Mike Seabourne - Director, Public Transport

Key Points:

- Outlined the process to date and highlighted the following:
 - The workshop purpose was to review the draft Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP) 2024-34, guidance was sought on the draft prioritised list of significant activities for inclusion in the document
 - Noted the full list of Significant Activities held 71 projects to be considered for delivering the best transport outcomes for the region as a whole, with the workshop focusing on the top 30 projects as indicatively prioritised by the Regional Advisory Group (RAG)
 - The next step was the consultation phase, noting that despite the uncertainty around the Government Policy Statement for Land Transport (GPS), all Regional Councils were undertaking this process at present, with the exception of Auckland Transport.

2. Discussion

2.2 Prioritisation of draft RLTP 2024-34 Significant Activities

Presented by: Niki Carling – Senior Transport Planner, Oliver Haycock – Manager, Transport Planning and Andrew Williams – Team Leader, Transport Planning, supported by Craig Dunlop – Principal Investment Advisor, Transport Development (Tauranga City Council)

Key Points:

- The RAG consisted of senior transport officers from the voting members of the Committee - Regional Council, Territorial Local Authorities and Waka Kotahi, the draft prioritised list had been created using the prioritisation process approved by the Committee at the 31 August 2023 meeting
- To meet the submission date set by Waka Kotahi as the 14 June 2024, this was the final opportunity for the Committee to provide input on the Significant Activity prioritised list
- Acknowledged an error in the workshop pack for the hearing dates, which were scheduled for 10-12 April 2024
- Prioritisation parameters included improvement activities costing more than \$2M that aligned with the draft RLTP problem and benefit statements and transport investment priorities. This did not include continuous programmes low-cost, low-risk activities, or those with signed contracts/ funding already allocated
- Staff requested members focus on reaching consensus on any projects that should be re-prioritised and shifted within the list
- Waka Kotahi noted that the State Highway Improvement Plan would change as a consequence of the new GPS once it was released.

10.03 am - Cr Shirley **entered** the workshop.

Members' and Advisors' Comments/ Guidance Provided:

- The updated Transport System Plan (TSP) list had a different set of projects and sequencing, which was not currently available to the public – staff advised that the decision to release this sat with the TSP team

- The current prioritisation did not reflect the Western Bay of Plenty's objective, agreed through the SmartGrowth process that the top two priority projects for the subregion were State Highway (SH) 2 Stage 2 and SH29 being completed within a decade
- Underline the criticality/priority of strategic projects for the region that were fundamental to economic prosperity, connection to the Port of Tauranga and enabling housing at scale
- The additional table to be inserted as requested should not be a subsidiary table, but rather at the front of the RLTP highlighting the top priorities for the region
- The wider community were not attuned to the technical process, therefore it was critical to explain the priority projects and reasons for their priority during consultation, to clearly communicate the desired direction to the public.

10.05 am - Chairman Leeder **entered** the workshop.

In Response to Questions:

- The cost of each project did not have a bearing on the RAG score provided
- All original TSP projects for Tauranga and Western Bay of Plenty (WBOP) had been included
- The RLTP had been developed in conjunction with the TSP process, therefore these were as closely aligned as possible. However, there was some natural differing of prioritisation in this process due to regional and sub-regional priorities, particularly for WBOP
- Some WBOP and other regionally significant projects would go into a separate table for projects that had been featured previously and were not currently in the prioritised list, but still considered important
- The Lund Road unfunded resilience project in the top 25 had the potential to cost more than \$2M and had not yet gone through WBOP District Council's Long Term Plan process
- Noted that the way the Land Management Transport Act (2003) (LTMA) was written dictated much of the prioritisation process and the GPS could hinder the ability to prioritise according to regional priority.

10.25 am - The workshop **adjourned**.

10.25 am - Chairman Leeder and Cr Nees **withdrew** from the workshop.

10.45 am - The workshop **reconvened**.

10.47 am - Mayor Tapsell **entered** the workshop.

Key Points (Continued):

- The projects that the Committee considered significant but which were not included in the prioritised list for various reasons would be added with an asterisk referencing an explanation of why they were critical to the region
- During the adjournment, staff added the following projects into the top 25 list of priorities as directed by members:
 - Takitimu Northern Link Stage 2 (TNL) (funded through the New Zealand Upgrade Programme)
 - Katikati Bypass
 - Grouped SH29 package of works
 - Athenree cycleway
- Katikati Urban and Katikati Bypass projects were interrelated, each one being an option if the other was not undertaken e.g. the urban improvements would occur

if the bypass did not. Noted that these were not initially included as they were not currently indicated as being within the next ten year programme

- Public Transport Services and Infrastructure Transformation (PTS&I) project enacted the recommended outcomes of the business case, assuming they were endorsed
- The descriptions of the projects remained an issue, and staff would work to provide more clarity on these, although the names of projects would remain the same
- Reiterated the fact that this was an unweighted list and that the new government's priorities were still unknown.

Top 25 Priority Projects:

Members' and Advisors' Comments/ Guidance Provided (Continued):

- Acknowledged that Takitimu North Link Stage 2 was not included in the list because the project was being funded through the New Zealand Upgrade Programme rather than Waka Kotahi the National Land Transport Fund (NLTF)
- Group the SH29 projects together in one package with equal priority at Number one in the list. Staff noted that SH29 Piarere to Tauranga was a longer corridor, and as a safety project did not group well with the other projects, therefore members agreed this should remain independently at number 21. SH29 Stage 4 however, was a critical component of the project which included the four-laning of the SH29 corridor and needed to be brought forward and added to the SH29 package of works
- Move Cameron Rd Multi-modal Stage 2 project up to number three
- Athenree cycleway project would be better described as Athenree crossing as the project was a pathway across the harbour to Island View
- Waka Kotahi advised that further work needed to be undertaken regarding the Elizabeth Street upgrade to identify if the issues were significant enough to be included in the highway improvement project list. After discussion, members directed that a business case be added to the list looking at the benefits of an intervention at the Elizabeth St/SH2 junction, to be scored by the RAG for merits/priority
- Move the Connecting Mount Maunganui project to number three, shifting Cameron Road Multi-Modal to number four
- Whilst the Connecting the People Fifteenth Ave project had a relatively modest resilience rating by RAG, it was a vital corridor and should be moved higher up the list
- TNL Stage 2 belonged at priority two in the list
- Highlighted the importance of Rotorua public transport infrastructure and the gap created by the Rotorua Refresh not receiving funding through the Transport Choices funding package
- Acknowledged the regional nature of the prioritised list, but noted the projects significant to Rotorua (particularly across growth areas) sat below the \$2M threshold for inclusion
- Considered that the Matua pedestrian and cycling improvements project needed to be explained clearly in the RLTP document, for the public to understand its ranking and reasoning. Staff noted that the RAG score was due to the project enabling housing supply. The accessible streets projects would be reassessed for scoring by the RAG.

In Response to Questions:

- Each approved organisation submitted its list of projects which went through its own internal approval process, then was entered into Waka Kotahi's centralised

system, Transport Investment Online (TIO) (which captured and managed all activities for inclusion in the NLTP). RAG assessed each project against its contribution to the region's transport priorities, resulting in a suggested priority order

- Park and Ride business cases showed from a modelling perspective that a northern park and ride would not be the highest priority in terms of the public transport infrastructure provided. Due to public interest, it was suggested that a low-cost, low-risk trial was undertaken to identify demand
- By grouping the SH29 and SH2 projects together, they would receive the highest overall priority as a programme of activities
- There had been a late amendment to the Connecting Mount Maunganui project due to the economic benefit scoring which moved it higher up the list
- The two Connecting Mount Maunganui projects needed to be listed separately, although they were mutually dependent
- Stage 2 Omanawa Bridge project was included within the SH29 package of works at the top priority
- Projects were scored against themes and key outcomes, which affected their ranking in the prioritised list
- Noted that a low-cost, low-risk funding application for completing the proposed Rotorua Bus Network Refresh was in progress; the cost of the project was below the threshold to be included in the prioritised list of significant activities
- The front of the RLTP document needed to highlight the regionally significant issues and responses, with emphasis on the top priority projects that were required to deliver long-term outcomes for the region.

The workshop closed at 12.03 pm.