

OTHER FEEDBACK - KRRR submission to LTP 23-24

INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

We have chosen to address only one element of the strategy - Roading and Footpaths as this affects the Kuaotunu Community the most, given we have no water or wastewater services.

1. Roading and Footpaths

We have reviewed the Road and Footpath section of the Infrastructure Strategy. We agree with the council's strategy of "building back better" after the recent cyclone events and are the success that Council's proactive stance with submissions on Crown funding 91% of the Funding Assistance Rate (FAR) that covered both Cyclone Gabrielle and Hale events.

We agree with the preferred options for: Resilience of the road network and Condition and Age of Critical Roading Assets in Section 8.1. We also agree that provision in Section 7.4 Assumptions Item 16 for one future severe weather event per year triggering a state of Emergency is a wise provision – presumably this triggers the 71% FAR rate – has this been included in the funding streams?

There however is no mention in the text of the recent funding achieved amounting to some \$30m leaving the remaining 9% (c\$3m) to be funded by TCDC. It is not at all clear in the LTP where the \$30m item is or how it was applied. We understand this FAR funding is only applied to build back (rather than better) and it does not apply to footpaths.

We request that TCDC be transparent in the LTP text as how much was received from Government FAR contribution– and identify the specific list of 114 projects that it has been applied to (over the two years it is applicable) and how it has reduced rates.

We understand that TCDC have also applied for more than \$1.3bn funds from the Waka Kotahi Resilience Strategic Response (RSR) programme for resilience of the road network spread over 15 years. This funding request does not appear to be included in the documentation and should be stated and the projects identified in text accompanying Fig 11.10. We also understand from the TCDC presentation at the Matarangi Ratepayers AGM that Council have been successful in receiving \$811m over the next 6 years from the Waikato Regional Land Transport Committee (RLTC). For transparency, these funding streams need to be identified by source in Fig 11.10 and the expenditure allocated.

We note there are 4 Crown Funded projects for resilience of strategic infrastructure (outside SH25) shown in Fig 11.10. We note that these projects will only proceed if 100% funding is received. We query the Coromandel Bypass Item at \$37.23m FY 26/27 onward and what Council contribution is involved (if any) (we note an item exists in the LTP 2021-2031 that is an order of magnitude less than this and query the business case rationale for the change).

Please advise why, given the urgency of other infrastructure renewal for resilience and building back better, that Council cannot advocate to government for a reallocation of \$37m to District bridge replacement or component renewal (budgeted at less than \$5m over ten years).

We do not agree with your strategy noted in your Document on Our Activities and Framework – on pg 18 - Transport stating after "tough calls "TCDC has "chosen not to plan or fund some "nice to haves" in the 10-year budget". The planning and funding for essential community safety with footpaths and walking and cycling facilities is not in the category of "nice to have" – it is top of most community needs and indeed lists and please refer to Item 1.1, 1.2 and the Summary in Capital Expenditure lists below for our further comment.

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE LISTS

Overview

We are disappointed that none of the items on our list ([see link to 1st attachment](#)) that we made on behalf of KRRA in initial meetings with TCDC in 28 October 2023 at the Whitianga Drop in session appear to have been taken into account. These items were filled out in your feedback form with your Area Manager (attached copy of a photo scan). The same items were listed in KRRA input into the Mercury Bay North Community Plan July 2023. They were also based on the results of a Community Survey (attached).

As far as we can see there is no evidence that the issues are addressed and indeed there is little north of Whitianga for Mercury Bay North apart from limited and lagged Matarangi three waters infrastructure.

This area north of Whitianga contributes a significant amount in rates and has been ignored in expenditure in favour of capital expenditure in other areas such items such as the Thames Pool that has appeared in the earlier LTP 2021/31 at \$14m (like for like) and is now \$39m.

1. Kuaotunu Community Items

For our Kuaotunu community there are no road safety improvements - no footpaths on SH25 Waitaia to Bluff Road, and no restoration of the link between Kuaotunu to Matarangi. We outline detail of these issues and request that these key items are included in the LTP redressing balance for areas north of Whitianga.

1.1 Road Safety Improvements – Safe footpaths on SH25 from Waitaia / Cemetery Roads to the Kuaotunu Village and Kingfisher Way to Quarry Point boat ramp and onto Bluff Road

Our request for Road Safety footpath Improvements adjacent SH25 has no capital expenditure line item evident. Both locations above were listed in the 2018-2028 LTP.

To our surprise there is expenditure on Community Facilities - Conveniences Renewals – including Blackjack Road Reserve Renewal \$280k in 2027/28. We as a Community were not consulted in this line item.

We ask that this \$280k be reallocated to footpath road safety improvements – originally included as two items in the 2018-2028 LTP page 75 as follows: Kuaotunu footpath Greys to Quarry FY 20/21 \$ 336,000, Kuaotunu to Waitaia concrete path \$164,000 FY21/22 and \$198,000 FY25/26. Inclusion of both items were a significant positive to a community that has campaigned for many years on this issue. They both disappeared in subsequent LTP 2021-2031 with no reason given and other items in Whitianga given priority.

We request that the SH25 section from Kingfisher Way to Bluff Road via the Quarry Point Boat Ramp be completed first. This would complete some work undertaken several years ago that was originally cost shared with NZTA. NZTA completed their share we understand but TCDC did not.

The advantage in completing this section is that it is an area of high risk –involving no road shoulder. It is putting walkers, runners and cyclists at high risk against a high-speed 70 km/hr environment. This is further complicated by boat trailer parking in the swales at peak periods.

Completing this section, would also make a significant contribution to a safe Kuaotunu to Matarangi Link as noted below.

A staged construction of the Waitaia Road to the Village junction should also be added to the LTP as it responds to the increased residences at Pumpkin Flat and Waitaia Road especially young families with school age children accessing school buses at the Kuaotunu Reserve.

1.2 Restoration of the Walking and Cycling link between Kuaotunu to Matarangi.

We note that your Document on Activities pg 18 - Transport states after “tough calls “TCDC has “chosen not to plan or fund some “nice to haves” in the 10-year budget This includes new footpath construction and investment in walking and cycle routes ... but we’ll continue to maintain what we’ve already got’.

KRRA and MRAI have jointly submitted to TCDC since the rockfall in December 2021 for the restoration of the connectivity the communities had via Bluff Road. (i.e. **maintaining what we had**). This included MBCB in Sept 2022 passing a resolution for the connection via a suspension bridge at the rockfall location. We note that not even the Business case expenditure has been allocated and there is no evidence of staged capital expenditure (refer our Drop-in session notes and Annual Plan submission).

As communities we have regularly offered to co-fund the capital cost – your figures c\$750,000 and remedial works of 6 slips (cost unknown). This is not a “nice to have” - the connection is essential for resilience between the communities as well as being a strategic walking and cyclic route that with existing road infrastructure can be the foundation of a TCDC walking and cycling strategy identified in correspondence by your own officers, undertakings by your CEO to our RRA chairs, and setout in Pinnacles Civil and Urban Solutions reports. This could also attract government funding if pitched appropriately to Waikato RLTP and NZTA funding sources.

Summary

We find it surprising that under the Activities & Framework section - Transport pg18 - TCDC has chosen not to either “plan or fund” footpaths for safety or walking and cycling over a 10 Year period for two communities and restoring a connection that the two communities had.

We are of the view that this is a fundamental function of Local Government that is not being discharged, nor even planned over a 10-year period. We request that both the above items be added to the LTP with budget identified by TCDC staff and appropriate staged expenditure included over the next 2 years. This would make 2 of our 8 items included in the LTP.

We would appreciate the remaining items noted in our attachment be included in specific line items of expenditure and be advised of the location if in the LTP / or your decision on them also.

2. Coastal and Hazard Management

Time precludes us from detail comment on the Shoreline Management Plan issues, but we note TCDC’s strong lead in instituting the recent SMP report as mitigation strategies proposed will be of benefit to this coastal community.

We however note that only \$151,000 of expenditure for Mercury Bay Dune Protection Projects and \$ 342,000 Coastal Protection Asset Renewals is allocated for the next 10 years. This is not location specific and needs to be more clearly detailed. We trust that there is a separate operating budget that allows at least the current level of service to be maintained. Please advise this detail.

3. Other Capital Expenditure Items

We have briefly reviewed other areas of expenditure and submit as noted below:

- Community Facilities – Parks and Open Spaces - Renewals (\$3.7m over 10 years) and Critical Structures Renewals \$269k
Please supply further information as to what is covered in this line item so that various communities can understand the scope of the proposed investment and identify items of Community lists as being adopted or not.

KRRA have several items in our list submission such as tennis court overlay, boat ramp improvements and Grays Ave/ Bluff Road culvert repair through the dune escarpment to prevent further erosion of the park and dune frontage.

- Whitianga Esplanade Waterfront Redevelopment \$12.57m – it is not clear as to the scope of this project and why this capital expenditure is not deferred in favour of a more equitable distribution of expenditure to footpath, cycleways and streetlighting and other capital projects listed in 1.1 and 1.2 above or other locations for example. Please provide feedback and separate consultation on this key cost issue to Ratepayers.
- Thames Sub Regional Pool: \$40m over 3 years – in the earlier LTP 2021/31 at \$14m (like for like) (FY25/26 – FY26/27) and is now escalated to \$40m (FY26-FY29). The decreasing Thames area population data does not support such a capital spend or increase spend. A review of the business plan is needed in view of the cost escalation, and the expenditure deferred to fund and maintain key infrastructure in our view.
- Thames HQ Council Building \$8.9m Option 1 – this is a new item, and it is not clear why it was not included in the Annual Plan 23/24 when its condition was clearly known in 2022. Refer our notes in the Decision 5 form.

We query if Option 3 is correctly represented. The capital expenditure should be a net value after the sale of the existing site and the new site appears to be in Central Thames and in the title box it is inferred already Council Owned (although disadvantages listed it may yet to be identified and thus not owned). Option 3 offers key advantages as listed particularly synergies with other facilities and the lack of disruption to Council operations in Option 1 but assuming the new site is geotechnically suitable. Please clarify in the LTP if the site needs to be bought and what the nett cost position is after the sale of the existing building.

- Motor Vehicles – \$3.764m – The expenditure of \$584,000 in FY 24/25 seems large (possibly replacement of vehicles) compared to following years and such expenditure could in our view be deferred to fund infrastructure.