

# IMPROVING TRANSPORT IN WELLINGTON REGION WORKSHOP

Local Government Commission (LGC)  
Lower Hutt, 4 July 2016

## Attendees:

Name	Organisation
Alan Smith	Former Chairman of Wellington Civic Trust
Julia Balsille	Community Programme Manager, My Life My Way
Genevieve McLauchlan	My Life My Way (Chairs their Transport Working Group) (Managing Director, Adaptive Technologies)
Linda Moore	My Life My Way Transport Forum
Pam McNeil	My Life My Way Transport Forum
Don McNeil	My Life My Way Transport Forum
Susan Chapman	Project Manager, NZTA Interface, Kiwirail
Byron Cummins	President, Bikers' Rights of New Zealand (BRONZ) Federation Inc
Paul Gresham (?)	My Life My Way
Michael Gross	Chair, Wellington Council NZAA
Christine Patterson	PSA

## Views on the draft problems identified by LGC and councils' work on transport

### Integration/alignment

- Current work underway to better integrate road and rail: NZTA is currently working with a range of interested parties (including Kiwirail and councils) on programme business cases for three projects:
  - Wellington Port Access
  - Ngauranga to Te Marua
  - Te Marua to Masterton.
- Issues for disabled people:
  - Outcomes including efficiency and effectiveness, rather than how transport is organised, is the most important issue
  - Disabled people's groups are not seeing the changes they would like to see, and views of small communities get lost eg can disabled people travel on public transport from Upper Hutt to the airport outside business hours? Airport Flyer was removed from Upper Hutt as Lower Hutt needed more buses, but means a loss of mobility for visually impaired and elderly people
  - It appears there is no oversight over transport decision-making across the region, particularly in terms of transport issues experienced by disabled people.
- Better planning is needed:
  - A 'whole of system' approach is needed to the way services are delivered, particularly things that make a difference at the community level
  - Serial roadworks in similar places at different times should be better managed. There is a need to balance strategic thinking with local detailed thinking. Utility 'user groups' and

council departments should be pulled together to ensure roadworks address all needs at the same time

- Poor planning of facilities placement eg putting the Regional Aquatic Centre and ASB Sports Stadium in Kilbirnie creates difficulties for people coming from the other side of the Mt Victoria tunnel (which is getting much busier). No thought was given to how people from the Hutt would be able to access regional facilities
- Spatial planning is needed to assess where things are being developed and how people can get to them
- Are councils spending too much time on strategies and planning, not enough on 'doing'?
- Accessibility planning is needed rather than mobility ie looking at how people travel from their home to places and services (eg shops, doctors, hospitals, schools, universities, workplaces).
- Local councils need more power in terms of roading eg queuing for access to motorway system causes backups on local roads. In Auckland studies have found that people use the motorway for 5km trips so are using the motorway to make local trips.
- Climate change issues should be considered in transport planning eg how long before the Petone road area will be underwater?
- Ticketing across public transport modes should be integrated.

### **Capacity/capability**

- Issues for disabled people - there are not enough disabled vans in peak hours.
- A lot of the transport expertise seems to be employed by NZTA.
- Employees go to the employer that can pay the most.
- Turnover of staff is an issue eg turnover of bus drivers.
- Councils need to better manage the design stage of projects, and check the work that has been done eg Hutt City has 3 staff doing contract management, so may not have sufficient capacity to ensure quality of project delivery.

### **Other problems**

- Other problems that should be included in the scope of the study are:
  - Air and sea transport
  - Rail freight, in terms of its ability to move transport of freight from road onto rail. Efficiency of freight and freeing up roads should be kept in mind
  - (Note: these aspects of transport are excluded from the Indicative Business Case work as they are not controlled by local government, which is the focus of the LGC's work. NZTA, which is also involved in the transport work, is only responsible for State Highways and suburban commuter rail).
- Unless local government and NZTA buy into LGC's process, nothing will come out of it. LGC noted that we have been working hard with councils to bring them along with us in the Indicative Business Case process. The options discussed at the meeting have been developed and tested with councils. Councils are supportive of the work, but have not yet decided which option/s they support.
- One participant thought that it was unclear what the problem is – the transport system in Wellington seems to work well.
- Administrative arrangements are several steps removed from people eg bus services are contracted by Greater Wellington Regional Council to providers, so who do you contact if you have a problem with a bus driver?
- The rating base is an issue eg Kiwirail currently has about 40 cycleways wanting to use the rail corridor, as it is seen as "free". This is a safety issue.
- Lower Hutt bus system used to work well, but commercial imperatives mean the bus terminal has now been replaced by Westfield and buses need to park on the roadside.
- Accountability issues are important:

- Motorcycling community questions whether roads are being built to the appropriate standard that is being paid for
- Who assesses that standards are being met? Eg accessibility standards.

## **Views on the draft options for change**

### **General**

- Centralising skills could have benefits for solving some of the capability issues across the system, but the concern in this case is the loss of focus on local concerns.
- Larger organisations may attract staff from local areas, leading to a loss of institutional knowledge.
- There is already a lot of amalgamation of services in the system.
- There needs to be a lot more communication with the public over any potential transport changes.

### **Option B – Non-structural measures**

- Voluntary measures relate to the people in an organisation at the time.
- If organisations were doing the job they are meant to be doing (eg providing the right standard of roading) things would work better under the status quo. This option is more cost effective than structural change.

### **Option E – Wellington Transport**

- Most participants at the meeting agreed that Option E would be the preference given 'a blank sheet of paper'.
- The trade-off is between clear accountability and the local voice.

## **Other suggestions**

- One participant suggested the approach to zoning taken in Queensland (Queensland Infrastructure Act) would be perfect for Wellington – in residential zones developers need to pay all the costs for the site they are developing. This would extend to contributing to transport infrastructure eg Park and rides, busways into the city.