



14 May 2018

Auckland Regional Transport Committee
C/O Auckland Council
Private Bag 92300
Auckland 1142

rntp@at.govt.nz

SUBMISSION TO PROPOSED REGIONAL FUEL TAX AND DRAFT AUCKLAND REGIONAL LAND TRANSPORT PLAN 2018-28

Introduction and Overview

The Parnell Business Association is one of 48 BIDs in Auckland, representing over 25,000 businesses with a combined capital value estimated at \$24 billion. Our association represents over 1,100 businesses with a capital value of over 1.7 billion.

The Auckland Regional Transport Committee is seeking feedback on the Proposed Regional Fuel Tax and Regional Land Transport Plan 2018-28.

In summary:

- we agree that rapid population growth in Auckland has brought with it significant transport challenges and we support the focus in your proposals on public and active transport, which are designed to free up road capacity;
- our preference is that demand management of our existing transport network needs to be a key solution (following 'user pays' approaches, such as congestion charging);
- while we initially supported a regional fuel tax as an interim solution, the unexpected and previously unannounced additional national fuel tax and road user charge increases will place a further financial burden on business;
- we are concerned that the significant works planned (such as cycleways and light rail), will result in disruption detrimental to businesses and we ask that any disruption be properly mitigated (and transparently funded through a development response budget)
- road corridor improvements together with enhancing network capacity are a priority for us to make better use of the existing transport network and increase travel times through key routes and corridors.

Question (1) – Draft Regional Fuel Tax Proposal

Your on-line consultation says that without a Regional Fuel Tax (RFT), the funding available will only cover renewing our existing transport network and the projects we have already committed to, e.g. the City Rail Link. You say that to enable you to deliver projects that improve congestion, public transport and road safety, you recommend an RFT of 10 cents per litre plus GST (11.5 cents). You have asked for our opinion on this proposal, and especially if we support it, are neutral, or oppose this proposal.

We agree with your assessment that rapid population growth has brought challenges, including increased congestion, reduced accessibility, increased deaths and serious injuries on the road network, and increasing negative impacts on the environment. We also accept that we are not going to address this problem simply by building more roads. Demand management of our existing network has to be a key solution, especially creating priority for customer, employee and business traffic.



We do recognise the need to raise more funding for transport projects and services.

Our preference is to introduce initiatives that both manage demand and raise funding equitably as soon as possible (such as congestion charging), balanced with investment into affordable and more frequent public transport in order to effect sustainable behavioural change.

In the interim, while we initially supported a regional fuel tax of 10 cents per litre (plus GST), the previously unannounced additional 9-12 cent per litre national fuel **excise duty increase**, and **equivalent road user charge increases**, (to be brought in over the next three years) will place a further unexpected financial burden on business. This is likely to cause a supply chain knock-on effect that may deliver unintended consequences such as price rises on consumer goods and services. We also note the recent swing in support from the general public towards the proposed RFT and feel this is indicative of the reaction to a double tax burden. It is our opinion that the impact of the RFT will be minimal on commuter behaviour while the inflationary impact is likely to will be wide reaching.

Question (2) –Regional Fuel Tax Projects

Your on-line consultation says that you are proposing to spend the Regional Fuel Tax (RFT) on various programmes and projects, including: (1) Bus priority improvements; (2) City centre bus infrastructure (facilities); (3) Improving airport access; (4) AMETI Eastern Busway; (5) Park and rides; (6) Electric trains and stabling (storage facilities); (7) Downtown ferry redevelopment; (8) Road safety; (9) Active transport (walking and cycling); (10) Penlink; (11) Mill Road Corridor; (12) Road corridor improvements; (13) Network capacity and performance improvements; and (14) Growth related transport infrastructure (transport services and facilities for new housing developments). You have asked how important these projects are for us.

We support the shift of focus to public and active transport based on modelling and business case evidence supplied by Auckland Council and their agencies, which indicates investment across public and active transport modes will free up road capacity. We have not contested this evidence, but will closely monitor the expected outcomes against delivery. While we support these initiative in principle, we are not supportive of those that impact negatively on road capacity and parking

With regard to road corridor improvements, we agree that congestion on the arterial network is a significant concern, especially congestion on the freight network. While we agree that corridor improvement is important, we ask that the emphasis be first on improving connections to existing urban areas, the efficiency of existing urban corridors and improving access to the Ports of Auckland.

With regard to network capacity and performance improvements, we agree that Auckland needs to make better use of its existing transport system to increase the number of people who can travel through key routes and corridors. We also support Auckland ensuring that the operation of existing transport infrastructure and services are optimised.

However, in terms of new projects, our learnings from recent examples mean that we hold major concerns with the significant works planned (such as light rail) and some of those already underway (such as cycleways) that there will be harmful disruption to businesses during construction and over the longer term, (especially where that relates to loss of parking to support business). In the interests of the Auckland economy, it is of utmost importance to us that a comprehensive strategic development plan be implemented so that any business disruption be identified, minimised and avoided where possible through careful project management and adequately funded initiatives be designed and actioned to remedy and mitigate any disruption that is unavoidable.



Conclusions

While we welcome the release of the Regional Land Transport Plan as well as the Auckland Transport Alignment Project Report and the greater clarity this now brings to funding requirements, expenditure and broad delivery timeframes for transport projects across Auckland, we also need more detail on the precise timing and the relative priorities for both the funded and unfunded projects set out in the Plan.

It is of utmost importance to us that early and clear channels of collaborative communication are established between the delivery agencies (such as Auckland Transport) and individual BIDs as well as key stakeholders in those areas affected by the planned works in order to facilitate a smoother transition and a more efficient outcome for the projects.

It is also critical that the solutions sought are advantageous to Auckland for the next few decades and not a reactive stance for political expediency in the short term.

PARNELL RESPONSE TO BOTH FUNDED AND UNFUNDED PROJECTS

Parnell is Auckland's first suburb and has an enviable setting on the city fringe. It is one of the gateways to the city centre; located from the Auckland Domain to the bays of the Waitematā. Parnell is close to a number of major facilities including the Auckland War Memorial Museum, Spark Arena, Ports of Auckland, Auckland Hospital and the University of Auckland. It has long been one of Auckland's most desirable suburbs due to its strategic location, range of restaurants, bars, parks, community facilities and employment opportunities.

Yet with all these attributes, it is topographically challenged and experiences a lack of East/West connectivity, which is hindering how the suburb develops. It is also squeezed between the CBD and Newmarket, at the mercy of SH16, the heavy traffic from Ports of Auckland and the resulting restricted access in and out of the suburb. This could be remedied with a redesign of the section of SH16, between Ports of Auckland and Stanley Street. While we support several initiatives in greater Auckland to improve our multimodal transport options, it is of no use if the existing network in and around the city fringe is not improved.

The Parnell Business Association has been advocating for a precinct or master plan for Parnell as it is the only city fringe precinct without one. Recently The Waitematā Local Board has sponsored the development of a Local Area Plan for Parnell. This consultation document outlines a vision for the future of Parnell as well as objectives and strategies for achieving the vision. The consultation document has been developed in collaboration with a working group of key local stakeholders in Parnell as well as mana whenua.

When this consultation is complete, it will outline various important projects, which will need to be incorporated into the RLTP and we will then need the kind of funding support that has been offered to other town centre upgrades. The current Draft RLTP of over \$4 billion offers virtually nothing for Parnell and there are almost no specifically funded projects that are of direct benefit to Parnell (with the exception of 2 small NZTA allocations).

The Parnell Station is a game changer and offers an opportunity to create a new destination gateway to Parnell as well as support Public Transport uptake. It is unacceptable that the linkages in and around the station have not been considered and funded for a public transport project to realize its full potential, including footpath upgrades, access ways, the underpass and a cycleway through the old tunnel. Immense development will take place on the adjoining land by Summerset Group and Auckland Transport should be setting the foundation and parameters of this potential urban space.

Is this the forgotten suburb?

Comments on Appendix 1 Table 1A– Auckland Transport Proposed Funded Capital Programme

Committed, Ring-fenced, On-going Operational and Renewal Projects and Programmes (Alphabetical order)		
Project Name	Project Description	Indicative Project Cost \$
Funds for Local Board priorities and to support housing growth		
Local Board Initiatives	<p><i>To allow Local Boards to fund transport projects in their communities. Projects to be funded will be worked through with Local Boards to meet their specific priorities.</i></p> <p>The following are key projects for the Waitemata Local Board, but additional funding will be needed from Auckland Transport in order to meet these objectives</p> <p>Parnell Station – Parnell Station opened in early 2017 to limited services. The Board wants to ensure Parnell Train Station is operational to full services and accessible to all users at the earliest opportunity. This station has the potential to be the fourth busiest station on the network and will be an essential connection for the University of Auckland, Parnell Town Centre, Auckland Museum and The Domain, Stanley Street and Beach Rd.</p> <p>Parnell Train Station Pedestrian and Cycling Connections - Provide accessible pedestrian and cycling connections to Parnell Station. Open the Greenways route from The Strand through the old Parnell tunnel and create an accessible pedestrian connection from Parnell Station to the Domain, the Strand and Parnell Town Centre.</p>	242
Projects to be confirmed		
Projects deferred from 2017/18	<i>List to be confirmed in the final RLTP</i> We need detail on the list of deferred projects together with allocated costs and timing	TBC?
Committed Projects and Programmes		
	It is most concerning that within a budget allocation of over 4,2 billion, there is no specific allocation for a project of direct benefit to Parnell	
Ring-fenced Projects and Programmes		
	We note that there has been 41 million allocated to <i>'Local road upgrades, improvements to Glen Innes town centre and enhanced linkages to public transport delivered in conjunction with the Tamaki Regeneration Project'</i> . We need to see the same level of commitment to Parnell following the consultation phase of the Parnell Local Area Plan	
On-going Operational Programmes		
Advanced Destination Signage	<i>Installation of advanced directional signage and route numbering signage on the local road network to assist in customer wayfinding</i> . Parnell is challenged by topography and lack of East/West connectivity. As home to Auckland Museum and several other key attractions, good wayfinding is key to our objectives. We have had sight of the planned 'gateway' signage plinths planned for directional signage to Parnell Station, but that is not nearly adequate for the whole area. Additional gateway plinths are	6

	needed further up Parnell Rd as well as in and around St Georges Bay Rd to promote connectivity.	
Bus Priority:	<i>Localised Improvements Delivery of localised bus priority improvements across Auckland to support the roll out of the new bus networks</i> – We are supportive of new bus networks to transport employees to their place of work, and note that while the Link busses adequately service Parnell Rd, we desperately need more busses routed along The Strand, from Britomart. Currently there is only 1 bus that goes from Beach Rd along the Strand, to serve an area that will soon have nearly 2,000 workers.	53
Improvements Complementing Developments	<i>Programme to allow Auckland Transport to proactively work with developers to improve transport outcomes associated with new developments.</i> A recent missed opportunity in this regard is the development of the Manson site in St Georges Bay Rd. Not only are busses required along The Strand but a shuttle is needed to access the station and we are not aware of any positive conversations with Auckland Transport and developers in this regard.	11
Parking Programme	<i>Programme of initiatives to support AT's parking activities, including residential parking permits, on-and off-street paid parking, and enforcement activities.</i> We are supportive of the Parnell Parking Management Plan and need this to be implemented for the whole suburb as soon as possible.	44
PT Safety, Security and Amenity and other capital Improvements	<i>Programme to enhance safety, security and amenities at Metro train stations and terminals region wide, as well as bus stops, minor improvements at stations, wharves and provision of PT information.</i> It is imperative that safety and security measures such as the ticket gates at Parnell Station are implemented as soon as possible, as well as the completion of the remaining platform works. The Tui-Tui Arts Trust has put forward a proposal to occupy the heritage station building in the interim, which we have supported. The collective of Parnell Heritage, Parnell Trust, Auckland Museum and Parnell Business Association are looking to have a mini 'i-sites type tourist facility within that building as part of the long term objective of giving Parnell Station destination appeal.	121
Regional Improvement Projects	<i>Programme to respond to community requests for corridor improvements that focus on ensuring safe and efficient operation.</i> Despite an upgrade in lighting over the pedestrian crossings in Parnell, they still pose a hazard and there have still be further accidents involving pedestrians – both in the day and at night. Calls to improve this and potentially create signalised or raised crossings have not been addressed. Neither have safety concerns along The Strand (NZTA)	62
Renewals	There is a substantial budget allocation here and Parnell would just like our fair share of renewals. Several of the side streets are in disrepair an there is not a single bed of flowers on a footpath in Parnell, as compared with many other suburbs.	3,073
Local Board Projects (Alphabetical order)		
Orakei shared path	We note mention of <i>A cycling and pedestrian feeder link from the Gowing Drive area to the Glen Innes to Tamaki Drive Shared Path</i> , yet very little else is specified. The Waitemata local board are advocating for a cycleway through the old tunnel to The Strand, which would be the most direct way to get to the CBD from Newmarket, as well as a delightful ride. The previous cost estimate would be greatly reduced now that construction of the bridge in Sarawia Street is underway at one end and the Carlaw Park Pathway at the other. Mention has been made in this document of a crossing at Stanley Street by	

	NZTA – so all that is left is the middle section. Summerset Group could also be approached for a contribution.	
Environmental Focus		
Street Lighting Improvements	<i>Programme to deliver improved street lighting throughout the Auckland Region where it has been identified as deficient, such as where there are safety concerns. This programme also includes rollout of LED street lighting on the local road network.</i> It is noted that the roll out of LED lighting is part of this budget and we would like that to roll out in Parnell as soon as possible. (2019 has been indicated) Parnell Rd is a lot darker than several other town centres.	
Public Transport		
New Footpaths	<i>Regional Programme Programme to construct new and widened footpaths.</i> Improved pedestrian footpaths from Parnell Station up to the town centre needs to be on a priority list for this section, as well as a discussion around mechanically aided pedestrian assistance (such as escalators). -	45
Urban Cycleways Programme	<i>Completion of the current Urban Cycleways Programme .</i> We are supportive of cycleways that improve amenity and do not destroy business and are currently awaiting an update following workshops late in 2017 on an updated design for Gladstone Rd and upper St Stephens Ave. The cycle route from Newmarket through the old tunnel and along the railway line is the preferred option to be included on the Urban Cycleways Network. .	153
Walking & Cycling Programme	<i>Walking and cycling programme focuses on achieving maximum impact for short trips to the city centre, public transit interchanges, schools and local and metropolitan – as per above comments</i>	338
Other bus network improvements		
Whole of Route Bus Priority Programme - Phase 1	<i>Delivery of whole of route bus priority improvements across Auckland to support the roll out of the new bus networks.</i> As per previous comments we desperately need more busses routed along The Strand, linking to Britomart. Currently there is only 1 bus that goes from Beach Rd along the Strand, to serve an area that will soon have nearly 2,000 workers. We note mention of improvements within the CBD, as well as the Eastern suburbs, but no mention of Parnell.	215
Network Capacity and Performance Improvements (Alphabetical order)		
	Please refer to general overview for response to this section – refer S16, current corridors	
Corridor Improvements		
Additional Seal Extensions	The tar seal is folding along The Strand due to ongoing heavy use from trucks	

Comments on Appendix 1 Table 1B – Auckland Transport Capital Programme - additional items currently unfunded

Public Transport		
Rail improvements including bus-rail interchanges		
Parnell rail station underpass access	<i>Underpass at northern end of platform to provide customer access to both platforms from Carlaw Park and Parnell. At a cost of 3 million, it is unacceptable that this tiny project has been put on hold. This is a vital link in the cycling, pedestrian and PT network and as previously described could potentially be co funded. This project must be reallocated to funded together with cycleway route via the old tunnel.</i>	3
Corridor Improvements		
St Georges Bay Road street upgrade project	<i>Renew existing footpaths, kerb & channel and carriageway on St Georges Bay Road. This project needs to be brought forward in response to the Parnell Local Area Plan. Over the past few years developers have invested over \$100 million into this street alone and soon there will be approximately 2,000 workers in the area. Initial feasibility work has already been done by Auckland Transport and with certain funding commitment from Auckland Transport, there is potential for a public/private partnership.</i>	7

Comments on Appendix 2 – New Zealand Transport Agency Investment Programme

New Zealand Transport Agency Investment Programme - committed and major ATAP initiatives		
Maintenance, Operations and Renewals		
	Is anything identified in here for SH16 in Parnell? This is of the utmost necessity!	1499
Active Transport		
SH16 Gladstone to Alten Road	<i>Investigate options for missing link Grafton Cycle way to Gladstone. Connection of existing infrastructure. Gladstone Road/ SH16 intersection is likely to be signalised with provision of cycle lanes to Quay Street (currently investigating options with AT/ Ports and AMA). Opportunity to connect to Grafton. It is essential that the dangerous intersection with SH16 and Gladstone is addressed. Full engagement with the Parnell BID and Strand stakeholders would need to take place before considering the connection to Grafton.</i>	3
SH16 Stanley St Pedestrian Crossing	<i>Upgrade of the SH16/Stanley St intersection to account for expected increase in pedestrian numbers through the interchange. This is recommended to be in the form of a separate pedestrian and cycle crossing facility. We are in total support of this as an ideal extension of the Station link via the Carlaw Park Pathway and would like this prioritised</i>	5
Corridor Improvements		
	Within this category there are several mentions of SH16, totally several millions and we are totally	



	aghost that there is no mention of an upgrade to the section of SH16 from the Ports of Auckland to Stanley Street. This section of the corridor is downright dangerous and carries far too much heavy traffic, cuts off Parnell from the CBD and constrains access into Parnell Rd and Carlaw Park. While we agree that corridor improvement is important, we ask that the emphasis be first on improving connections to existing urban areas and addressing the efficiency of existing urban corridors. This section of road should be undergrounded for Ports Traffic.	
--	--	--

Comments on Appendix 3 – KiwiRail Capital Programme

KiwiRail Group - Funded Programme (Alphabetical order)		
	It is the obligation of KiwiRail and Auckland Transport to get Parnell Station to full operational status as soon as possible, as an important link in the Public Transport network for greater Auckland.	