

**Date:** 17 June 2024

**Subject:** Deliberations on Better Travel Choices for Taranaki

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**Approved by:** M J Nield, Director - Corporate Services

**Document:** 3278939

### Purpose

1. The purpose of this memorandum is to deliberate on the submissions received on Better Travel Choices for Taranaki.

### Executive summary

2. In December 2024 the Committee held a hearing of submissions on Better Travel Choices (BTC). It was subsequently agreed to delay deliberations by four months (from February to June 2024) in order to better align the final BTC with other transport work streams underway, in particular the public transport business case.
3. Attached is an Officers' Report summarising the key themes raised in submissions. The report provides an assessment of each of these submission points and provides recommendations to consider in response to the submissions.

### Recommendations

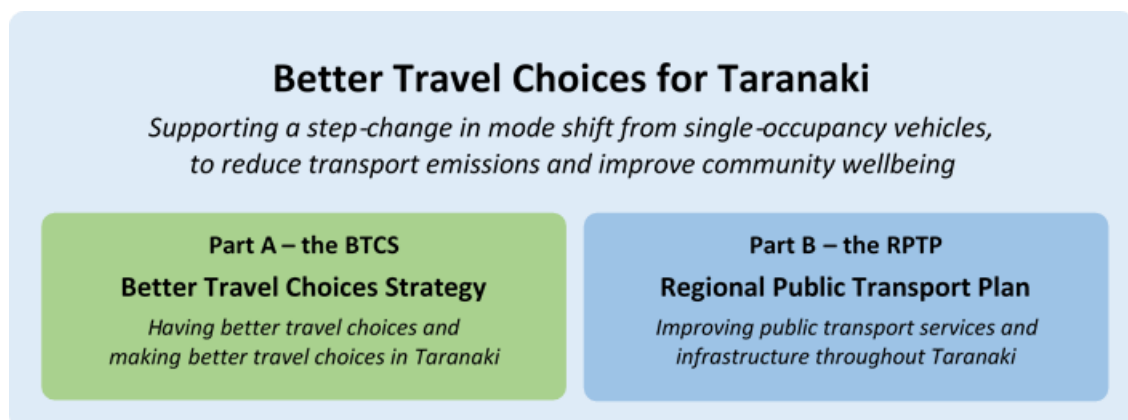
That Taranaki Regional Council:

- a) receives the memorandum Deliberations on Better Travel Choices for Taranaki submissions
- b) notes the length of time elapsed since the Hearing of submissions on 4 December 2023 is due to the need to align with related processes underway including the public transport business case
- c) receives copies of all submissions received in response to the draft Better Travel Choices for Taranaki documents
- d) receives the Officers' Report on submissions received in response to the draft Better Travel Choices for Taranaki
- e) advises staff on any changes from the recommendations contained within the Officers' Report and this memorandum
- f) notes staff will be making minor changes to the structure and format of the BTC ahead of the next meeting
- g) notes that the updated Better Travel Choices for Taranaki documents will be brought back to the 29 July 2024 meeting for approval

- h) determines that this decision be recognised not significant in terms of section 76 of the Local Government Act 2002
- i) determines that it has complied with the decision-making provisions of the Local Government Act 2002 to the extent necessary in relation to this decision; and in accordance with section 79 of the Act, determines that it does not require further information, further assessment of options or further analysis of costs and benefits, or advantages and disadvantages prior to making a decision on this matter.

## Background

- 4. The Committee is responsible for overseeing development of Better Travel Choices for Taranaki (BTC), which incorporates a multi-modal Better Travel Choices Strategy (BTCS) and the draft Regional Public Transport Plan (RPTP) as shown below.



- 5. Release of the draft documents for consultation was endorsed by the Committee on 11 September 2023. Public consultation ran from 19 September to 29 October 2023, with a significant quantity of responses received, particularly through the online survey tool. On 4 December 2023, the Committee provided the opportunity for submitters to speak in support of their submission if they wished to. A Consultation Report, which collated key submissions themes across all response channels was received at that same meeting.
- 6. While the original intent was to deliberate on submissions early in 2024, the Committee subsequently agreed to delay deliberations until the June meeting in order to ensure better alignment with other significant transport plans underway in the first half of 2024 – the Regional Land Transport Plan 2024 and the public transport business case.

## Issues

- 7. There is a need to deliberate on the key submission points received to provide guidance to staff on consequential document changes to make Better Travel Choices more robust and enduring.

## Discussion

- 8. The Regional Land Transport Plan 2024 is to be finalised by the Regional Transport Committee on 13 June 2024, and the business case preparing for new public transport contracts is nearing completion, with a presentation update being provided earlier in the agenda. These work streams have helped to provide greater direction and specificity to the BTC Officers' Report, particularly when responding to submission points on public transport.

9. The attached Officers' Report provides an assessment of each of the key submission points made and makes suggestions on potential amendments to the documents. The Committee are asked to advise any changes to these recommendations or where a particular focus is needed to strengthen aspects of BTC.
10. Much has progressed in related work streams since the draft BTC was prepared that could now be woven into the final version to ensure that it is as up-to-date and robust as possible. As well as the Regional Land Transport Plan 2024 and public transport business case, the New Plymouth Integrated Transport Framework has progressed significantly, and there have been substantial changes at the national level from the new Government, in particular a revised draft Government Policy Statement on Land Transport 2024. It is proposed that where further information is available that provides greater direction and specificity this is incorporated within the BTC. Changes will only be made where they are in keeping with the direction and intent of the document as consulted on.
11. In addition to formal submissions, there was useful feedback on the structure of the documents to assist with their readability. It is proposed that these changes to layout will be made at the same time as content amendments.
12. The resulting updated documents will be brought back to the Committee for approval at the 29 July 2024 meeting.

## Options

13. At this stage in the process, there is only one viable option being the consideration of submissions and progressing forward to finalising Better Travel Choices. Any other option to fundamentally change the document or to seek further consultation and/or engagement will result in the Council not being able to provide Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency with the necessary updated Regional Public Transport Plan to support funding requests ahead of retendering of contracts.

## Significance

14. In terms of the Significance and Engagement Policy, the decision is determined as not significant as:
  - the decision does not affect a large number of residents and ratepayers to a moderate extent
  - the consequences of the decision do not affect a small number of residents and ratepayers to a large extent.
15. A detailed and iterative approach to consultation has been undertaken over the last 15 months as part of the preparation of BTC. As such, further consultation and/or engagement is not considered warranted.

## Financial considerations—LTP/Annual Plan

16. This memorandum and the associated recommendations are consistent with the Council's adopted Long-Term Plan and estimates. Any financial information included in this memorandum has been prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice.

## Policy considerations

17. This memorandum and the associated recommendations are consistent with the policy documents and positions adopted by this Council under various legislative frameworks including, but not restricted to, the Local Government Act 2002, the Land Transport Management Act 2003, the Resource Management Act 1991 and the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

## **Iwi considerations**

18. This memorandum and the associated recommendations are consistent with the Council's policy for the development of Māori capacity to contribute to decision-making processes (schedule 10 of the Local Government Act 2002) as outlined in the adopted Long-Term Plan and/or Annual Plan.

## **Community considerations**

19. This memorandum and the associated recommendations have considered the views of the community, interested and affected parties and those views have been recognised in the preparation of this memorandum.
20. Substantial engagement with the community and interested parties has been undertaken throughout 2023 and 2024 on their priorities and needs for land transport. All the feedback provided is feeding into the transport planning and funding options being considered through these documents.

## **Legal considerations**

21. This memorandum and the associated recommendations comply with the appropriate statutory requirements imposed upon the Council.

## **Appendices/Attachments**

Document 3275475: Officers Report on draft BTC submissions June 2024

Document 3269511: Better Travel Choices submission no. 1-147

Document 3269509: Better Travel Choices bespoke submissions 148-162

Document 3269512: Better Travel Choices submission no. 163-266