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Submission to Tauranga City Council's 2017/18 Draft Annual Plan

Introduction

This submission is provided on behalf of the Bay of Plenty District Health Board (DHB) and has been prepared by our public health unit, Toi Te Ora - Public Health Service (Toi Te Ora). Toi Te Ora's role is to promote, protect and improve the health of the Bay of Plenty population, prevent ill health and minimise the risk of disease and injury through population based interventions.

Public health approaches wellbeing and health in terms of the social, economic, cultural, environmental and political context from a determinants of health perspective. Many of the crucial underlying factors that contribute to population health and wellbeing are directly influenced by the decisions and activities of government.

Increase of parking fees in Tauranga Central Business District

The Bay of Plenty DHB supports the proposal to increase parking fees within the Tauranga central business district (CBD).

Due to the high cost of providing and maintaining public car parks, all ratepayers essentially end up subsidising them, whether they use public carparks or not. The DHB supports a greater user pays approach and believes that increasing parking fees is more equitable. Increasing parking fees will nudge people towards car pooling and active transport (public transport, walking and cycling), in line with the 2012-2042 Tauranga Transport Strategy.

Studies show the use of active transport is associated with improvements in air quality, commerce, and aesthetics; as well as increasing the use of existing green space, and decreasing stress in the community¹. Increasing physical activity in the community (which automatically occurs with higher levels of active transport) reduces the risk of conditions such as heart disease, obesity, type 2 diabetes and cancer. It also helps in the management of conditions such as arthritis, diabetes and depression². The Ministry of Transport (2008)³ anticipated that an increase in parking prices would promote active transport use and thereby improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists. Other potential benefits of effective parking pricing include:

¹ Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. (2011). Strategies to Prevent Obesity and Other Chronic Diseases: The CDC Guide to Strategies to Increase Physical Activity in the Community. Atlanta, USA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

² Ministry of Health. (2017). Physical Activity and Health Conditions. Retrieved from <http://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/food-and-physical-activity/physical-activity/being-active-everyone-every-age/physical-activity-and-health-conditions>

³ The Ministry of Transport. (2008). Raising the Profile of Walking and Cycling in New Zealand: A guide for decision makers. Wellington, New Zealand: The Ministry of Transport.



- Increased turnover of the most convenient spaces. This increases consumer convenience, facilitates deliveries, and reduces cruising for parking (searching for an unoccupied space).
- Reduced number of spaces needed to meet demand, reducing total parking costs, and allowing more compact development.
- Longer-term parkers are encouraged to use less convenient (ie cheaper) spaces.
- Reduced total vehicle traffic therefore lessening congestion, accidents, energy consumption and pollution emissions.
- Those who use car parking pay more of the actual cost of their provision⁴.

In supporting the Council's proposal to increase parking charges in the Tauranga CBD the DHB recommends that Council:

- Continually adjusts parking prices to achieve day time parking occupancy rates of 85-90%⁵.
- Applies the same approach to parking management at other local business hubs.
- Uses a portion of parking revenue to improve active transport infrastructure.
- Develops a comprehensive communications plan outlining the rationale behind the increases in parking including a breakdown of the real cost of providing and maintaining carparks.
- Actively promotes other modes of travel.

The BOPDHB does not wish to speak to its submission.

Yours sincerely



SALLY WEBB
Board Chair

⁴ Victoria Transport Policy Institute. (2016). Parking Pricing Implementation Guidelines: How More Efficient Parking Pricing Can Help Solve Parking and Traffic Problems, Increase Revenue, and Achieve Other Planning Objectives. Retrieved from <http://www.vtpi.org/parkpricing.pdf>

⁵ Shoup, D. (2011). The High Cost of Free Parking. Chicago, USA: American Planning Association.