

5 November 2017

Tauranga City Council
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TAURANGA 3143

Submission on Ngatai Road Bike Lane

Introduction

Health begins where we live, learn, work and play. Many of the crucial underlying factors that affect the health of people and communities are directly influenced by the decisions and activities of councils. The Bay of Plenty District Health Board (BOPDHB) is required under legislation to improve, promote, and protect the health of people and communities; to promote the inclusion and participation in society and independence of people with disabilities; and to reduce health disparities by improving health outcomes for Maori and other population groups. For these reasons, the BOPDHB is committed to working collaboratively with councils and welcomes the opportunity to comment on the plan for the two-way bike lane along Ngatai Road, Tauranga. This submission has been prepared by Toi Te Ora Public Health (Toi Te Ora) which is the public health unit of the BOPDHB.

Proposal for two-way bike lane along Ngatai Road, Tauranga

The BOPDHB supports the proposal to add a two-way bike lane along Ngatai Road. It is evident through the information available and processes undertaken regarding the Tauranga Cycle Plan, that the Council acknowledges many of the benefits in encouraging cycling through providing safe and effective cycling infrastructure. The following table further highlights some of the key economic, societal, environmental and public health benefits of active and public transport¹:

Public health (being sufficiently physically active)

- Improves quality of life and life expectancy among adults (even if physical activity is adopted later in life),
- halves the risk of heart disease and stroke,
- reduces the risk of some cancers (e.g. breast and colon cancer),
- reduces the risk and improves the management of the most common form of diabetes,
- assists with the prevention of falls in the elderly by maintaining bone mineral density,
- reduces the symptoms of depression and anxiety, lowers levels of stress,
- increases self-esteem,
- helps maintain a healthy weight, and
- reduces air pollution and major respiratory illness.

Societal

- Providing car spaces for parking uses up valuable land in and around cities.
- Walking, cycling and public transport can also help make a community more liveable, making it easier for people to connect with one another while travelling, working, shopping and socialising.

Environmental

- Reduced air and noise pollution, and
- reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

Economic

- Financial benefits at the individual, community and national level including reductions in the cost of fuel, building roads, providing parking spaces, land use and opportunity costs,
- improved productivity i.e. the productive capacity of human resources measured in terms of both the quantity and quality of their output.

¹ <https://www.cph.co.nz/wp-content/uploads/ActivePublicTransportInfrastructureReview.pdf>



2013 data indicates the average volume of vehicles per day along Ngatai Road exceeds 4,000². Providing cycle paths with a separating verge along roads with traffic volumes of this size would increase safety and perceived safety for cyclists (and all road users)³. Whilst this volume may not be perceived as high compared to other roads, this road is a primary route for access to multiple schools and therefore has a high percentage of vulnerable road users, whether by car, foot or bike.

In supporting the Council's proposal to create a two-way bike lane along Ngatai Road the BOPDHB recommends that Council:

- Acknowledge that whilst there is no one size fits all option, determine the main types of users (eg using those categories in the NZTA Cycle Planning Guide⁴) that will be using the cycle way and consider their needs in the design.
- Consider whether this is a shared path. If so, what practices have been put in place to ensure the safety of both cyclists and pedestrians? If no, ensure there are adequate pedestrian paths available along Totara Street.
- Ensure safe access entering and exiting the cycle path regarding merging with other paths or lanes.
- Ensure an appropriate lane width has been considered in accordance with NZTA cycle lane width **recommendations**⁵.
- Ensure safety and usability benefits of a two-way cycle lane versus single cycle lane on each road side are weighted appropriately in comparison to cost benefits (eg how will the Council mitigate/reduce the risk of accidents with traffic having to look both ways for cyclists when crossing the cycle lane).
- Consider using additional traffic calming devices, if applicable, for further safety benefits.
- Recognise the greatest usage will occur through improvements in the wider cycle network and cycle friendliness of the city.
- Plan and evaluate this project in context of the wider cycle network.

Note that these recommendations are specific to the Ngatai Road bike lane proposal. The BOPDHB wishes that this submission is read in collaboration with the information provided within the BOPDHB Tauranga Transport Plan submission (submitted 27/10/2017) and the Tauranga Cycle Plan submission (which will be submitted on 05/11/2017).

The BOPDHB would like the opportunity to speak to its submission.

Yours sincerely



SALLY WEBB
Board Chair

² <http://www.trafficcounts.co.nz/>

³ <http://www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/resources/cycle-network-and-route-planning/docs/chapter6.pdf>

⁴ <http://www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/resources/cycle-network-and-route-planning/docs/cycle-network-and-route-planning.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.nzta.govt.nz/walking-cycling-and-public-transport/cycling/cycling-network-guidance/designing-a-cycle-facility/between-intersections/cycle-lanes/#cycle-lanes-next-to-kerb>

