

STAFF REPORT

TO: Chair and Members, Engineering Services Committee

FROM: Transportation Manager, Gary Clark

DATE: 07 August 2010

SUBJECT: **Transportation Report July – RESC-10-08-02**
Report prepared for meeting of 19 August 2010

1 INTRODUCTION

This report will differ from those of regular meetings. This is due to a second report that provides an annual report of the transportation activities. In this report I discuss a number of matters relating to each of the activities that fall within the transportation portfolio.

2 GENERAL

In this section I will briefly discuss the wider projects that are within transportation which sit across the various departments of Council.

Richmond Town Centre Project

I am project leader for the Richmond town centre upgrade project which has had a few start-up meetings with some real enthusiasm to improve this important area of the district. Various parts of Council have already been involved in several meetings to develop thoughts and concepts of what Richmond is.

This has been an interesting process to date with very exciting ideas coming forward on how to improve the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre. There is willingness across Council to make Richmond the centre of interest for the district in terms of providing a retail and commercial hub for the region.

Some of the various concepts to date include:

- wider footpaths;
- more green space;
- extending the Sundial Square area to provide a central park for Richmond;
- allowing taller buildings;
- encouraging residential development above ground floor retail;
- better pedestrian amenity along Queen Street;
- a slower speed area along the main road;
- more retail frontage; and
- screening the parking areas behind a building edge.

The team was asked about a theme for Richmond and there was a consistent view that water would be both fantastic and appropriate. Water was considered to be fun, interactive, enduring and relaxing which ties in well with Sundial Square and the importance of water to the district.

As part of the information gathering process we will be holding a stall in the Richmond Mall on 23-24 August 2010 to obtain the views of the community. This will form part of the wider consultation/information gathering for this important project.

Old Mill Walkway

The main phase of the construction for Old Mill Walkway is now complete with the landscaping to be planted by the end of August. This project has been well constructed and will be an asset to the community for some time. An official opening involving the community and the local school is planned for 24 September 2010.

3 ROADING

Technical Audit

During the week of 19 July 2010, Tasman District Council roads were the subject of a technical audit carried out by the funding arm of the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA). NZTA carry out these audits on a regular basis to ensure that the funds they supply to local authorities are being well spent and appropriately allocated.

The audit involves investigating all Council records with regard to road maintenance and operations as well as detailed road inspections across the district. Funding restrictions can be placed on local authorities that cannot show that NZTA funds are well targeted.

We have had an initial close-out meeting with the final report due in two months. Discussion at the close-out meeting showed that Tasman District Council is doing an excellent job in managing its road network to an appropriate level. All our systems are well run with excellent work on the forward vision for the road network. We have well prepared forward maintenance work and strategies to deal with the issues that arise from freight and forestry.

NZTA were very complimentary of Tasman District Council staff and our consultants MWH for the state of the road network and its management. They said Tasman District was one of the better managed networks across the country.

NZTA are looking for good performing local authorities to bulk fund their maintenance, operations and capital works programmes. This would mean that funds would not be as closely monitored and there would more ability to plan and carry out works where they are needed rather than allocated to individual work activity groups. This would be a significant advantage to Tasman District as it would allow Council to have a more targeted works programme to deal with the issues as they arise.

In closing, NZTA have mentioned that they see Tasman District Council as a roading authority that has excellent management practices for looking after the road network. NZTA would be recommending that Tasman District Council would be a good candidate for bulk funding.

I will report back to Council formally once I have received the final report and further information about bulk funding.

Connecting Tasman

The Regional Land Transport Strategy, *Connecting Tasman* has now passed all the necessary requirements and has been released to the wider public. Hard copies have been sent to key stakeholders, all submitters, the Regional Transport Committee, Council Offices and Libraries. The document can be viewed on Council's new website and CD copies are available upon request.

Some work has started on the implementation plans that fall under the wider strategy and various plans will be presented to the committee over the next year as they are completed. Unfortunately this work is taking longer than I would like. This is due to other activities which require work at this time such as the website and meeting NZTA changing requirements.

4 RIVERS

The Motueka Flood Control Project is progressing well with significant amounts of work in modelling the river to test various scenarios. Consultation has been carried out with the community with an attempt to engage all sections of the Motueka Ward so as to understand all of the very different views.

Newsletter 1 has been sent to the community to provide information about the process. Newsletter 1 provided information about the facts relating to the reasons for the need to better manage floods and some historical information about the river. This information was hard data relating to the known's relating to the current river system. There was no information within this first newsletter that could be disputed as it was surveyed data. Unfortunately some of the community are trying to read between the lines and come up with their own views on the project. We are encouraging the community to keep an open mind on all of the issues and move forward in a productive way to address the flood control issues positively. The final project must be acceptable to the community and needs to be affordable.

Newsletter 2 is due out soon and within this document will be the results of some of the river modelling, structural issues with the current stopbank, and where to from here.

5 AERODROMES

I have been reviewing the Activity Management Plan (AMP) of the aerodromes activity area recently. The AMP for this activity area has various gaps which need to be addressed to ensure Council considers all the associated risks.

For example there are parts of the AMP that do not address the matters relating to buildings, asset maintenance and minimum levels of service for the operation of aircraft at our two aerodromes.

With this in mind there has been real consideration of the management of these assets going forward and what Council should do with them. Accordingly I will be carrying out some important work on these assets which will initially result in a strategic plan for each aerodrome. The strategic plans will consider the direction for the aerodromes, levels of funding and how funding maintenance and improvements are best managed.

These strategic plans will be prepared with the view to providing information for Council to consider as part of the next Annual Plan process.

6 COASTAL STRUCTURES

As with the Aerodromes, there is a lack of strategic direction for the coastal structure assets which, in time, are likely to be the most significant asset to be under attack from climate change. All our boat ramps, wharves and rock walls need to be carefully reviewed to gain a good understanding of how we are going to manage these going forward.

Having reviewed the Coastal Structures Activity Management Plan, the same issues exist as in the Aerodromes AMP. There is a lack of depth of asset information and how we are going to manage changes in the future. The AMP provides a basic level of asset management however it is necessary to improve the level of management. As with aerodromes there are significant issues for the asset and the general public if these assets are not better managed now and in the future.

7 RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Transportation Report July (RESC10-08-02) be received by the Engineering Services Committee.

Gary Clark
Transportation Manager