

REPORT

TO: Engineering Services Committee
FROM: Trevor Norriss
DATE: 7 April 2005
SUBJECT: Chairman's Report – April 2005

Firstly I need to comment on the recent 5 cent per litre and diesel road user charge increase enforced on us by Government to fund roading upgrades in Auckland. This is once again a blunt tool to gather revenue by forcing all road users to pay for what is basically a problem created by Auckland councils who have clearly not spent enough on this in the past.

Compare the money spent by Tasman District on roading – approximately \$35 of every \$100 collected in rates, with Auckland's approximately \$8 to \$15 for every \$100. Based on these figures I am amazed the public have not stood up to be counted – maybe it's because they are not aware of the facts!

The cost to industries like forestry, fishing and farming is horrendous and all businesses will face increased costs – think of the costs to our district who are almost wholly reliant on road transport.

It becomes even more frustrating when in our region, funds are needed to progress Ruby Bay Bypass, McGlashen Avenue etc and we sit and watch the costs rising and our district at the end of the list.

The Owen River Bridge project has been completed and the old bridge removed. This has made a huge improvement and the opening was well attended by locals, Transit, contractors and Council. (See photo on agenda cover). This could well be the last major bridge project in our district for some time, unless the Motueka River Bridge collapses!

The recent heavy rains have left major damage to our roading network and damage to areas in our rivers. I would like to thank our consultant and contractors who performed well over this period and have a heap of extra work as a consequence of this storm.

There has been some criticism regarding our early warning system in the Upper Motueka and Motupiko and hopefully this will be rectified urgently as some property owners were faced with rescuing stock and equipment with very little notice.

Council's submission regarding the draft Ten Year Plan for Transit NZ has been circulated to Committee members. I would like to thank Cr Stuart Bryant and Deputy Mayor Tim King who had input into our submission which will be presented later this month.

Finally, thanks to all committee members and Engineering staff for the work involved in our budget meetings. This is only the start of the process and hopefully we will be able to keep as many of these projects in the work programme for the coming year.

Regards
Trevor Norriss