

TAHUNANUI BUSINESS & CITIZENS ASSN INC

SUBMISSION

NELSON-TASMAN REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT PLAN 2021-2031

28 March 2021

The Tahunanui Business and Citizens Association Inc (TBCA) represents the interests of businesses and residents of the seaside village of Tahunanui, and supported by 75 members of the community who attended a recent public meeting to discuss the Plan.

The Tahunanui Business and Citizens Association supports the Goals as stated in the Nelson-Tasman Regional Public Transport Plan to “deliver a system that builds on the existing services, supports accessibility and good urban design and provides a larger proportion of residents with a viable alternative to using the private car, is sustainable and contributes to emission reduction targets”.

However we consider as this will be a generational change it will require considerable funding for education and promotion. We believe that the current plan does not allow for these needs nor does it recognise the current needs of the aging demographic of our community.

While the stated Objectives of the document is based on a stepped customer focused approach TBCA questions the level of engagement with customers and the community.

TBCA applauds the Purpose of the Public Transport Plan being to encourage Council and public transport operators to work together in developing services and infrastructure. However further work may be required as we are informed that some operators were unaware of the Plan.

There are two main aspects of the plan which are of concern:

1. TBCA is strongly of the opinion that the bus route through Tahunanui should not be changed.
2. TBCA continues to be strongly opposed to clearways along Tahunanui Drive.

Many of the planned changes do not “build on existing services”. Some routes have been withdrawn and existing services have been changed. The promotion of these changes relies heavily on increased frequency and reduced fares as a method of promoting the use of public transport. While we applaud these approaches we consider frequency and reduced fares alone will not achieve the goal of reducing the number of commuter cars on the road. TBCA believes more community research is required before the implementation of any route removal and changes – this plan is trying to do too much with an insufficient budget.

In particular TBCA believes that a lot of the planned route changes through Tahunanui are not about building on the “existing services” that currently serve the Tahunanui community but are in fact for those passing through Tahunanui.

TBCA is strongly of the opinion that the bus route through Tahunanui should not be changed. Buses should be kept on Muritai Street/Annesbrook Drive/Main Road Stoke where they serve the community well, providing access and preventing isolation.

There are several retirement clusters in the Muritai Street area whose residents depend on nearby buses for transport. It would be difficult and dangerous for the elderly or disabled to access buses on Tahunanui Drive requiring them to cross the busy highway.

Many of our elderly residents use the buses to access supermarkets, as there are none in Tahunanui. The existing service takes Tahunanui people directly to and from the supermarkets, shops and services such as the banking hub in Stoke, and with a minor adjustment to the city end of the current route would provide better access to the City, supermarkets and shopping precinct of the CBD.

The justification given for moving the current route from Annesbrook/Main Road Stoke to Nayland Road for students from Tahunanui to access the Nayland school cluster is, in our opinion, flawed for the following reasons:

- a) Nelson City Council has recently invested heavily in Tahunanui to encourage students to walk and cycle to the Nayland schools cluster, and there are large numbers of students from our community currently choosing walking and cycling.
- b) It appears that these changes are being made to provide services for students from outside our community, and these students already use a privately funded service. (As an aside we have learned the provider of this service was not consulted as is required by the Act).
- c) The need for a service to Nayland College will diminish over the ensuing years as the school is introducing an enrolment zone next term.

The use of Nayland Road as is planned appears to be an attempt to fill the gap left by removing one of the current Stoke loop routes. This, in our opinion, will not meet the needs of the Nayland, Seaview Road, or Monaco communities, nor does it address the areas around the retirement villages in Stoke.

The introduction of a route from the Airport to the Brook is, in our opinion, another example of trying to do too much with too little. The Washington Valley and Brook communities may need a service, but extending this to the airport is in our opinion unjustified.

We would be interested in the data that indicates the need now and in the future for a service to the airport. Due to the frequency of flight changes any scheduled bus services would be totally uneconomic and even an on-demand service is questionable. The 'supershuttle' services with all their promotion and marketing failed. Even the 'flyer' service in Wellington has been curtailed.

We fail to see how a bus service meets the needs of people flying in and out of the airport. Including stops in Tahunanui as a way of increasing user numbers would, in our opinion, not achieve the goal of reducing the use of cars and promoting active transport modes. The collection of data would need to support such a solution.

A number of items in the plan are not explained:

- a) There is no information in the plan as to the location of the super stops planned for Tahunanui and Stoke. While large cities have bus interchanges, we question whether these super stops are necessary. With improved GPS technologies, Apps, and the planned frequency of services the provision of further shelters with information boards on the existing route would be an important first step, eg there are no shelters on the eastern side of Muritai Street.
- b) The location of 'super stop' facilities will have a major impact on our community and the likely future users of public transport services. We believe these should be a part of the City's Long Term Plan and further consultation is required.
- c) Bus Priority Lanes, Bus Jumps, and Clearways were mentioned during our public meeting. TBCA continues to be strongly opposed to clearways along Tahunanui Drive.
- d) TBCA were heartened to hear that the planned route for express buses into the city from Tasman will use Whakatu Drive and Waimea Road.

Other aspects TBCA believes should be taken into account:

- a) TBCA also has concerns about suggestions of putting the current document in for funding and questions staff statements that it could be 'fine tuned' later. The lack of detail makes forming a submission extremely difficult.
- b) On-demand services are tantamount to a taxi service and we question the viability of such a service in competition with existing providers and question how this sits within the provisions of the Land Transport Management Act 2003 as “A means of encouraging Council and public transport operators to work together in developing public transport services and infrastructure”
- c) TBCA also queries the bus time schedule of 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. While we support more frequent and regular public transport we consider these times may not meet the needs of those starting/finishing work outside these hours and that additional services may be required. The Plan documents as a goal on several occasions the provision of services for those working in the industrial Annesbrook area.

In conclusion:

- ⌚ How can the removal of services and routes be construed as building on existing services.
- ⌚ We do not believe the statement that the proposed changes provide better connectivity for communities.
- ⌚ We cannot comment on the provision of services in the Tasman district and hope the affected communities have been informed and given the opportunity for engagement with the appropriate Council officers.
- ⌚ TBCA believes that many of the route changes through Tahunanui are not about serving the Tahunanui community, but are for those passing through Tahunanui.

The Association wishes to be heard

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