



**THE NEW ZEALAND  
AUTOMOBILE  
ASSOCIATION  
INCORPORATED.**

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## **SUBMISSION FROM NZAA SOUTHLAND DISTRICT ON PROPOSED VARIATIONS TO OTAGO SOUTHLAND REGIONAL LAND TRANSPORT PLAN 2015 – 2021**

The NZ Automobile Association (NZAA) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Proposed Variations to Otago Southland Regional Land Transport Plan 2015 - 2021. The NZAA has over 1.6 million members, of whom 19,000 live in the Southland region. The NZAA Southland District represents the interests of motorists in this region.

The NZAA Southland District Council would like to commend the Otago and Southland RTCs for their continued foresight in working together in a collaborative approach to developing a common transport strategy.

They would also like to commend them further with their foresight to acknowledge that journeys do not stop at administrative boundaries. The NZAA Southland District also support *'that many journeys, whether by freight or visitors, span Otago and Southland, and beyond. At a larger scale, there are critical freight and visitor journeys crossing regions, extending along and across the South Island, and connecting to both Stewart Island and the North Island'*.

### **Summary**

The Council's main concern in the RLTP 2015/2021 was that the RLTP contained too many objectives and when combined with the Plan's primary and supporting policies we were concerned that the Plan's key objectives would not all be achieved over the lifetime of the Plan. We were also critical that there was insufficient measurement criteria specified, against which the success or otherwise of meeting the broader objectives could be measured.

- Our Council was pleased to see that the proposed variation is much more concise around the objectives and policies and presents a far more compelling picture of what is to be achieved. And in particular we are pleased to see under *'Regional Land Transport Planning Management'*, the objective to finalise and operationalise a results monitoring scheme for the RLTP's.

- We note and agree with the Chair's foreword;

*'The prosperity of both Otago and Southland, and our quality of life, depends heavily on good transport infrastructure and service. Our primary industries drive much of the area's economic growth, so good access and freight services linking farms and forests, suppliers, processors and export gateways are critical. Tourism, another major economic driver in Otago and Southland, also depends on quality road links'.*

- The NZAA Southland District Council is of the opinion that the mix of projects for the 2018 – 2021 programme are well thought out and agree to the priorities proposed in Table 1: Top Priority Projects. However they would like add the following projects to “projects that the RTC's would like to see developed in future RLTP's” on page 115. Council believe they should be included from a network resilience prospective:
  - **Riverton one Lane Bridge** - With increasing pressure on the road network from the dairy industry we believe that the economic impact of something forcing the closure of this bridge would be significant and fall into the resilience of the network category.
  - **SH1 to Bluff** – Likely increasing resilience issues in the future from rising sea levels and climate change.
- We note the increased allocation of projects in the Queenstown Lakes area but support this as Queenstown Lakes is one of New Zealand's fastest growing regions with the growth forecast to continue. As such the District will face increasing pressure to manage the associated infrastructure and environmental demands.
- On page 31 it outlines that Southland's transport system is broadly fit for purpose but that some of the tourist roads have variable levels of service. Given that throughout the RLTP document reference is made to the challenges that growing visitor numbers will pose, Council would like to see further commentary about how these variable levels of service might be addressed in the future.
- Council support the identification of the three key problems facing the transport system today and believe that they accurately reflect the issues that the Otago/Southland region faces
- The Council would like to highlight under problems on the regions' state highways the following issues that have been referred to NZTA and are significant ongoing issues.
  - The flax issue across all state highways and in particular the recent spraying with large areas of dead flax needing to be removed. Council would also like to see a clear policy established for the process around flax removal in the future.
  - Surface texture issues including small repairs, lack of maintenance / temporary fixes and flush seals on all Southland roads e.g. SH 99.
- We support the RTCs' proposed advocacy programme and in particular:
  - Minimisation of road trauma. In relation to this point we fully support the work of the Southern Road Safety Influencing Group. We also note under this section Visiting Driver Signature Project – Council are concerned that funding for this programme will not extend beyond this year. Given the commentary in the RLTP around significantly higher tourist numbers in the region and the

increasing numbers of self-drive tourists, we believe that a continuing funding option for this is essential.

- Provision for mode choice including walking, cycling and public transport and good connectivity between modes.
- Under table G Council would like some further clarity around the proposed projects in the Low cost/Low risk programmes. Our chief concern is that as Southland has a relatively small amount of large projects, these smaller projects get categorised into a much larger pool where it will be difficult to keep track of and measure their progress. In particular we reference the following projects:
  - Invercargill Moto Rimu Rd Safety Improvements
  - Longbush Invercargill Safety Improvements
  - Maitara Intersection Improvement

## **Conclusions**

The NZAA Southland District welcomes the opportunity for input on the Proposed Variations to the Otago Southland Regional Land Transport Plan 2015 – 2021 and asks that the issues we have raised above are addressed. We look forward to being further involved in this process to ensure a better outcome for road users within the region as ultimate consumers of the transport system.

The NZAA Southland District does not wish to speak to the submission at the hearing.

Yours sincerely



**Doug Davidson**

**Chairperson**

**NZAA Southland District Council**