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## **FEEDBACK ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE NORTHWEST**

### **Introduction**

The Rosebank Business Association ('Association') - 'Rosebank – Gateway to the West' - welcomes the opportunity to make this submission.

The Rosebank Business Improvement District is a commercial and industrial hub of 650 + businesses located on the Rosebank Peninsula in West Auckland. It has direct access to the SH16 North-Western Motorway and when the Waterview tunnel was completed, it's traffic count increased to between 25 and 35.000 vehicles per day with immediate access and link to the SH20 Airport Motorway. Businesses in the area generate an estimated \$1 billion in revenue, pay significant rates and employ about 9,000 FTEs. The predictions are that this workforce will increase to 20,000 by 2035.

Following recent election presentations and visits from most of the political parties including the Prime Minister, National Party and Act Party leaders one can assume that at least Central Govt agencies see and understand the role that Rosebank businesses will play in helping to regenerate business growth in West Auckland. That in itself will require all transport Agencies to develop acceptable and timely initiatives to keep Rosebank transport moving and well managed. The RBA are also seeking via this submission to see all transport agencies pull together and produce a strategic plan for Rosebank that provides for the next 5 years and then 10 years beyond that.

## **Background**

Auckland Transport and Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency have asked the Rosebank Business Association (RBA) for feedback on a proposal to improve public transport connections to and from Auckland's northwest.

The proposal involves Auckland Transport and Waka Kotahi working together on upgrades that will improve public transport travel time and reliability for people who travel by bus to and from northwest Auckland.

The improvements proposed over the next five years include:

- a station at Westgate and interim bus stops at Lincoln Road and Te Atatū motorway interchanges (**but not Rosebank**);
- upgrading and extending the existing bus shoulder lanes on the Northwest Motorway (SH16);
- improvements at motorway interchanges to increase priority for buses;
- a review of the bus network to utilise the new bus stops.

Funding for the interim improvements has been granted by the government through Crown infrastructure Partners Ltd and planning design work is underway. For the long-term (beyond five years), Waka Kotahi are exploring other public transport improvements that will be able to move even more people along the Northwest Motorway (SH16).

## ***Benefits***

Auckland Transport and Waka Kotahi say the benefits include:

- faster and more reliable bus services (bus journeys from Westgate to the city are expected to be around 25 minutes quicker);
- encouraging more people to use buses to help reduce congestion and carbon emissions; and
- improved access to job opportunities with around 170,000 more people in the northwest being able to get into the city within a 45 minute bus journey.

## ***Why these improvements are needed***

The northwest is growing. By 2046, it will have 37,000 new houses, 11,000 new jobs and nearly triple the number of people travelling along the North Western Motorway (SH16).

People living in the northwest have limited options for travelling to work, study and social activities. The lack of bus interchanges and gaps in bus priority lanes make it difficult to provide an efficient and reliable bus network. This means a large number of people rely heavily on their car.

If bus journeys aren't improved, congestion will get worse over time and journeys for motorists and bus passengers will take longer. Added to this dilemma we know that up to 50% of all trade workers in West Auckland travel outside of the West to obtain work. The cost to Auckland and NZ development agencies in lost productivity, added fuel costs to the Trade workers must be recognised and dealt with.

## ***Timeline***

Auckland Transport and Waka Kotahi noted the timeline was:

- Early 2020: Planning stage.
- Late 2020: Community engagement, detailed design and consents stage.
- Mid 2021: Staged construction starts.
- 2024-2025: All of the interim improvements are completed.

## **RBA Feedback**

On 7 October, representatives of the RBA met with Auckland Transport and Waka Kotahi along with Local Board Chair Kay Thomas and Board Member Warren Piper. The RBA raised the following by way of feedback at that meeting and this is confirmed in this document. Additionally, RBA Board Chair Stefan Crooks, Whau Ward Auckland Councillor Tracy Mulholland and Auckland Deputy Mayor Bill Cashmore met on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> October in a 'first steps process' to promote the Rosebank transport and traffic issues at the highest Auckland Council level.

### **(1) Investigate further an interim bus stop at Rosebank**

Foremost is the RBA's concern that the proposal does not include an interim bus stop at the Rosebank motorway interchange (as is proposed at Lincoln Road and Te Atatū). Though Auckland Transport and Waka Kotahi explained at the meeting this was mainly due to the current design of the Rosebank motorway interchange, the RBA asks that this be thoroughly assessed and they request further detailed information regarding the reasons for no interim bus stop at the Rosebank motorway interchange.

### **(2) Investigate further bus services to Rosebank**

Should an interim bus stop at Rosebank remain unachievable, the RBA asks for the current bus services and future options related to the interim bus stop at Te Atatū also be thoroughly assessed in terms of maximising opportunities for Rosebank. The RBA requests further detailed information regarding the frequency and route of the 138 - Henderson to New Lynn Station via Edmonton Rd and Rosebank Rd, especially at peak times. Bus shelters also require attention and improvement along Rosebank Road.

The RBA also supports further assessment of the 22R - Avondale Peninsula to City Centre via Rosebank Rd bus service and how this would integrate with the proposal. In this regard, the RBA raises the issue of access from the Avondale Train station, which is limited by the current local street configuration that places limitations on bus circulation. The RBA asks that Auckland Transport and Waka Kotahi prioritise longer term solutions regarding the St Jude street level crossing and for options to include trenching the rail line at the Avondale Train station.

On bus services, the RBA also offers to partner with Auckland Transport and Waka Kotahi on a research survey of Rosebank businesses and staff to assess the effectiveness of the current bus services and what could be improved (especially services for shift workers).

### **(3) Effects of the proposal on the Patiki road onramp and the merging of traffic into the motorway**

The RBA notes that the proposal appears to involve widening the bus shoulder at the Patiki road onramp where traffic merges into the motorway. The RBA notes that this is already a 'pinch-point' for Rosebank/Patiki traffic and raises concerns that the proposal could make this worse. The RBA asks that this be thoroughly assessed and they request further detailed information.

Also on this issue, the RBA asks for an update on the option to trial dynamic lanes using overhead and in ground signals at Patiki Road so that different lanes could be used at peak and non-peak times. This has been successfully trialed in Whangaparaoa. The

initial feedback from Auckland Transport at the meeting was that Patiki Road may not be suitable for this option because of the number of entry and exit driveways along the road. The RBA requests further detailed information on this matter.

#### (4) Resource Consents

The RBA asks that if any resource consents are required to implement the proposals that they be pre-consulted prior to any resource consent being lodged.

#### (5) Other transport issues

The RBA also takes the opportunity to raise wider transport issues with Auckland Transport and Waka Kotahi.

This includes asking for an update on when pedestrian safety improvements will be built along Rosebank Road, especially as the pedestrian refuge islands outside 607, 519, 437, and 391 Rosebank Road would improve vehicles illegally using the flush median. The RBA notes the delays for this project are now over a year.

A particular concern of the RBA is that heavy vehicles are struggling at times to get out into the Rosebank road corridor across traffic, which has increased dramatically following opening of the Waterview tunnels. The RBA asks for further consideration to be given to ways to give priority to freight rather than smaller private non-business vehicles.

Finally, the RBA asks about how cycling is being integrated into the proposal and whether options were being advanced for cyclists (such as a cycle lane on the eastern side of the Rosebank peninsula or even a cycle/pedestrian bridge from Timothy Place to Span Farm across the Whau River).

**The Association would be pleased to be discuss these and any other matters further.**

Yours sincerely,



Mike Gibson  
Chief Executive  
Rosebank Business Association