

Submission of the Rosebank Business Association (RBA) on the Local Government (Auckland Council) (Transport Governance) Amendment Bill

To:

Transport and Infrastructure Committee
Parliament of New Zealand

From:

Rosebank Business Association Incorporated (RBA)

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1. Introduction

1.1 The Rosebank Business Association (RBA) welcomes the opportunity to submit on the *Local Government (Auckland Council) (Transport Governance) Amendment Bill* ("the Bill").

1.2 RBA represents more than 520 businesses employing approximately 8,000 people on the Rosebank Peninsula and surrounding industrial precincts in West Auckland. The area is one of Auckland's most productive manufacturing and logistics hubs.

1.3 Efficient transport, freight reliability, and coordinated infrastructure delivery are critical to the success of our member businesses and to Auckland's regional economy.

1.4 RBA supports the intent of the Bill to improve democratic accountability and strengthen local involvement in transport governance. However, we have concerns about governance complexity, transition risks, and potential disruption to transport delivery and investment certainty.

1.5 This submission sets out RBA's analysis and recommendations to ensure the Bill delivers practical, stable, and business-friendly outcomes for Auckland.

2. Context: The Rosebank Business Environment

2.1 The Rosebank Peninsula connects directly to the Northwestern Motorway and the regional freight network linking West Auckland, the Ports of Auckland, and the wider North Island.

2.2 Congestion, freight delays, and limited public transport options continue to affect productivity and staff access. RBA has worked closely with Auckland Transport, the Whau Local Board, and Auckland Council to progress local safety, parking, and access projects.

2.3 It is essential that governance changes do not undermine the coordination and delivery of such critical projects, including arterial road upgrades, freight access improvements on Patiki Road, and safer multimodal connections into Avondale and New Lynn.

3. Summary Position

3.1 RBA supports reform that increases democratic accountability and transparency, but this must be balanced with:

- Continuity of transport expertise and delivery capacity;
- Stable and predictable governance for business and freight planning;

- Retention of professional capability within Auckland Council and Auckland Transport (AT); and
- Strong alignment between local, regional, and national strategies.

3.2 Our support is therefore conditional upon several key amendments and safeguards, outlined below.

4. Key Submission Points

4.1 Local Accountability and Balance of Power

4.1.1 RBA supports greater accountability of Auckland Transport to elected representatives. However, the proposed Auckland Regional Transport Committee (ARTC) structure gives half of its membership to Ministerial appointees, creating a risk of politicisation and reduced local autonomy.

4.1.2 To strengthen local democracy, the Bill should be amended to:

- Ensure Council-appointed members hold a majority on the ARTC;
- Require that the independent Chair be selected jointly but demonstrate strong Auckland transport governance experience and independence; and
- Mandate public transparency of ARTC agendas, deliberations, and votes.

4.2 Professional Capability and Transition Management

4.2.1 Auckland Transport currently provides significant technical expertise in planning, engineering, and project delivery. A six-month transition is insufficient to safely transfer these responsibilities to Auckland Council.

4.2.2 RBA recommends that the Bill:

- Provide for a minimum 12- to 18-month phased transition, with clear milestones and consultation;
- Require an independent transition audit six months after commencement;
- Protect core operational staff, systems, and budgets from fragmentation; and
- Formally consult business and freight organisations during transition planning.

4.3 Freight, Industrial Access, and Network Reliability

4.3.1 Freight reliability is the backbone of Auckland's industrial economy. Disruptions to arterial roads and freight corridors directly impact productivity, employment, and export competitiveness.

4.3.2 RBA recommends inclusion of a "freight and industry performance" clause in the Bill requiring the ARTC and Auckland Council to have regard to:

- Freight corridor efficiency and reliability;
- Industrial access and heavy-vehicle safety; and
- Parking and loading management for mixed-use business zones.

4.3.3 Freight priorities should also be explicitly recognised in the 30-year Auckland Transport Plan.

4.4 Local Boards and Place-Based Decision-Making

4.4.1 The proposed delegation of local road functions to Auckland's 21 local boards is a positive step, but many local boards lack sufficient technical capability to manage transport operations and regulatory decisions.

4.4.2 RBA recommends the Bill require that:

- Local boards be supported by qualified technical advisors within Council/ARTC;
- Clear statutory guidance distinguish between local, collector, and arterial roads; and
- Local boards be required to consult affected business associations before making decisions that affect commercial or industrial areas (e.g. parking, freight routes, speed limits).

4.5 Integration with Spatial, Climate and Economic Strategies

4.5.1 The 30-year Auckland Transport Plan should align with the Auckland Plan, the Future Development Strategy, and Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri: Auckland's Climate Plan.

4.5.2 RBA recommends adding a statutory clause requiring that: "In preparing the Auckland Transport Plan, the Auckland Regional Transport Committee must give effect to Auckland Council's spatial, economic development, and climate strategies."

4.5.3 This ensures consistency across land use, employment growth, resilience, and emission reduction objectives.

6. Conclusion

6.1 The Rosebank Business Association supports reform that improves transparency, responsiveness, and integration of Auckland's transport system.

6.2 However, governance changes must not come at the expense of network reliability, freight efficiency, or business confidence.

6.3 We urge the Committee to adopt the recommendations above to ensure the Bill delivers a transport system that works for Auckland's businesses, communities, and economy.

6.4 RBA would welcome the opportunity to appear before the Committee to elaborate on these matters and share insights from the Rosebank industrial precinct.

Kind regards

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