

31 March 2020

Urban Form and Transport Initiative

Attention: Robert Brodnax

cc. Bill Wasley, Ken Tremaine

By email

Dear Robert,

Feedback on Draft Reports & your Plan

Following on from our previous communications and various interactions including your visit to Te Puke, UFTI forums and Smart Growth Strategic Partner Forums we would like to reinforce some of our thinking. The COVID-19 state of emergency also provides an opportunity for economic stimulus once we come out of lockdown and return to normal.

Water

- a. Current infrastructure will not easily support additional population and industry growth. Considerable investment in infrastructure must be quantified.
- b. Projects like the Waiari Scheme and continued draws from aquifers seriously compromise our eastern water resources in the long term.
- c. Water is precious and the water supply from the Te Puke district must be preserved for our industries and population growth. Serious questions need to be asked about population growth centred on Tauranga. The idea that more and more people are crammed into limited spaces needs to be revisited. The need for water will only increase and at some point, territorial protection will become an issue for the Government - case in point - Tangata Whenua and Te Puke land and property owners will jealousy protect Te Puke district water for Te Puke needs. (Te Puke is defined as the region from the Papamoa Hills to Otamarakau)
- d. Agreement on long term (multiple generations to come) access to water and making provision for our needs must be agreed in the short term. This is a high priority.

Roading & Transport

- a. The Kiwifruit Industry employs tens of thousands of people. Te Puke is recognised as the Capital of the Kiwifruit Industry - orchards, post harvest activity, science, support industries. Investment is significant by New Zealand standards. Kiwifruit plantings are expected to continue to grow and with that comes increased post harvest activity, people movement and freight movement.
- b. Local roads must be maintained and in many cases improved or expanded to meet growth of the Kiwifruit Industry. This includes State Highway 2 from Paengaroa to Otamarakau.
- c. Whilst the Western Bay of Plenty District Council has responsibility for the Te Puke Highway (TPH) and connecting rural roads from Orchards & Farms to SH2, SH 36 and the TPH, Government needs to be mindful of the huge costs associated with roading

- and the burden that places on our local authority. These more basic needs must be prioritised as essential for continuity, safety & growth of a high value export industry.
- d. Government must provide levers for our local authority to access capital to get this work done and not only focus on big ticket roading items like the Northern Transport Link. As a result of COVID-19 there is also an opportunity for a '**Government wide**' - *central, regional and local* -**stimulus package**, to get important work done in an effort to protect and grow vital industries like horticulture. At the same time this creates economic value add for local communities.
 - e. Movement of seasonal employees will require better transport systems. Aside from bus and smaller van transport, consideration needs to be given to public transport systems to move a growing workforce efficiently from all points of the Western Bay to pick up points then to orchards and post harvest. This could include light rail or fast bus routes. Paengaroa is a good example of a superb location as a pick up point. Remember that more than 50% of the national crop is in the Te Puke region.
 - f. Access for freight to the POT will remain critical for Te Puke. We highlight the urgency required to relieve congestion and to address safety concerns on busy roads to the Port (e.g. Hewletts Road)

Rangiuru Business Park

This industrial zone is a high priority for Te Puke and the Western Bay of Plenty. To get this moving, Government needs to provide capital for off ramps on the Tauranga Eastern Link (TEL). Applications to the PGF and Infrastructure funds have been agonising with no result. Government needs to step up and get this work done. Whilst Quayside Holdings as the investment arm of the BOPRC have frustrated us all with inaction, delivery of the off ramps will force their hand and they will need to get moving. It is also important to remember these facts:-

- There is growing demand for industrial land and costs to develop are now competitive.
- Access routes to the POT via the TEL, a secondary highway (TPH) and an adjoining railway make the location a winner.
- This designated industrial area is surrounded by existing solid infrastructure - schools, shopping centres, sports facilities, long established community groups, professional services, residential areas with capacity for growth, a willing work force - all essential to make the park feasible.

Housing

For many years we have lobbied for the need to progress more housing areas in the Te Puke region to meet growing demand for people coming to work in the Kiwifruit industry and for those aspiring to live in an attractive well serviced rural area. We have volumes of submissions on this matter, All of these are well understood by Smart Growth. We support the latest iteration of thinking - namely **Hamlet developments** (Paengaroa, Pongakawa, Pukehina & east) continued growth in the **Te Puke township** and perhaps a larger new 20000+ residential area in the **Rangiuru** area. Doubts that TCC will be able to progress Wairakei-Te Tumu is another good reason to get the east moving. We need a can do attitude and make it happen mentality and we need it now. We need to plan and deliver infrastructure and get in step with growth of the Kiwifruit industry. Whilst the Rangiuru residential idea is longer term, we can get on with Hamlets and more in Te Puke township without delay. Let's enable this.

The East

We speak for a wide range of interests in the east - The Te Puke region being the area from the Papamoia Hills to Otamarakau. We have a strong economy. Kiwifruit is the driver. Other agriculture adds value. Secondary industry and support services contribute to a sound and viable economic engine. We understand that the Te Puke region with 17000 people is but one part of a bigger system. But what we have is significant to the national economic effort and will continue to grow.

Summary

In your representations to Government we ask for 4 key outcomes:-

1. Ensure our water resources are protected for generations to come.
2. Provide local government with access to capital to ensure we can improve local roading and services which is critical for the movement of people and export product.
3. Build off ramps from the TEL to the RBP and with that will come development.
4. Easily enable new housing in our region. We understand that the RMA makes it hard, but we have a real need with a real economic driver, we have willing entrepreneurs to get on with it and we have a good Council who can deliver infrastructure so long as the Government gives them access to capital.

All the very best in your negotiations with the Government. Please speak up loudly for the Te Puke region and our powerful economic engine.

Sincerely,



Mark Boyle