Ruapehu Transport System Design

Post workshop notes | 11 October 2019

Workshop Objective

The aim of the workshop was to produce an initial coordinated implementation program of works for 2020 and for the following three year planning cycle of government.

The scope of the programme development at this stage was limited to Transport Demand Management, existing infrastructure improvement and resources in preparation for business planning cycles NZTA, RAL, DoC, Regional and Local Govt.

The target outcome for the workshop was:

1. A draft short term implementation plan document that enables accountability for coordination of resources across multiple agencies that contribute to transport solutions in Ruapehu

2. Revision of knowledge gap analysis to inform medium and longer term elements

3. Agree pathway forward

This post workshop summary outlines activity carried out during the workshop and provides initial programme thinking.

Key issues from ViaStrada report

- Funding constraints

- Lack of transport choice

- Peak period congestion

- Road safety

- Visitation capacity

- Infrastructure pressure at peak times

- Lack of cohesive and synchronised visitor information

- Overlapping jurisdictional boundaries

Public transport problem definition from the strategic case

- **High volumes of Tongariro National Park visitors on peak days at key destinations** is resulting in deteriorating visitor experience and a reduction in repeat visitors impacting long term sustainability of the region.

- **Increasing traffic volumes of freight,** unfamiliar drivers and current "Level of Service" of the road network is resulting in increasing safety issues and probability of serious crashes.

- **Increased** opportunity to significantly improve the **economic and social prosperity** of the community and region.

- **Improved co-ordination of operations** by / and **between operators** and partners has provided confidence that regional improvements can be achieved through a co-ordinated and 'do more with less' approach at a larger scale.

Transport system design principles

Plan for uncertainty in the future:
Anticipate a wider range of extreme circumstances e.g. climate change impacts on ski season or walking tracks.

Design systems that are Robust, Repairable, Resilient, and Responsive:
Critical infrastructure should consider these principles, as well as the wider system – 'the weakest link'.

Flexible governance and operating systems:
Flexible approach to the planning and design of transport systems requires an integrated approach to succeed.

Think network:
Integration of different transport modes, land use and activities, means thinking needs to be network based.

Personalise:
Consider the end user and their interaction.

Adapted from CityLab

Users

A key consideration is the variety of users within the Ruapehu District with varying needs. Different actions and considerations in the design and function of a transport system is required to meet these different needs.

Some of the users for example, are as follows:

- Active outdoor visitors
- Non-English speaking tourists
- "New" New Zealanders
- Local employees
- Couples travelling
- Solo travellers
- Groups of friends on holiday
- Families with young children
- Transport operators

Transport outcomes sought

Participants reviewed previously identified outcomes developed in gap analysis workshop. These were reconfirmed as still being valid and were further considered in the development of each groups draft programme.

- Parking is managed well

- Transport system management is driven by safety

- Transport infrastructure and services are provided at an efficient level

- Culture is respected and communicated to visitors

- Internal conflicts within and between partners and stakeholders are resolved

- Stakeholders understand one another

- More opportunities for iwi

- Cumulative development effects are managed

- A vehicle fleet that is high quality

- Visitor experience of transport is seamless and positive

- Positive and safe user behaviour is promoted

- A synchronised visitor information platform

- Roads are consistently maintained to a high but affordable standard (ONRC)

Infrastructure and non-infrastructure interventions considered

During the workshop participants had time to discuss different interventions which could be considered in relation to the transport system to respond to the knowledge gap analysis. After being presented with an initial range to start with, the group developed a few more. The interventions considered were as follows:

- Communications Plan
- Day visitor facilities
- TAC Visitor Hub
- TAC Pass
- Central Visitor Hub
- Fleet standards
- Network Traffic Counters
- Mountain Parking Pricing
- NP Transport Pass

- Gondola to Whakapapa Village
- Walking trail monitoring
- Wayfinding
- Turangi Park n Ride
- Taupō – Turangi TOD
- Parking Management Plan
- Road Pricing
- Parking occupancy monitoring
- Ski/Bike/Hike Trains

- Central Visitor Information Portal
- Visitor Information
- Multi-agency board
- Local parking
- Public transport system
- Management structure, RCAs, coordination, NZTA boundary
- Transport certainty
- Cultural Centre

Group programmes

Following the discussion, participants were sorted into groups to further think through and develop a three year plan for the interventions discussed, along with some of the related risks, challenges and opportunities associated with these interventions.

The outputs of the four working groups are outlined over the next few slides. Note outputs vary depending on the specific focus of each group.

From these a draft initial programme has been compiled and is presented for consideration.

Group 1 programme

Plan: Years 1- 3

- **Communication Strategy:** VMS, car counters, wayfinding app
- **Parking Strategy:** Levies, Park n Ride Hubs, bookable parking
- **Tongariro Alpine Crossing Pass:** Transferable
- **Fleet standards:** Alpine Code
- **Network traffic counters:** Data to make informed decisions
- **Signs:** The extent of the park

Group 2 programme

Plan: Years 1- 3

- Parking management Plan

- Communications Plan

- Visitor information portal - VMS

- Fleet standard

- Public transport system

- Better agency cooperation

Group 2 programme

Risks, challenges and opportunities

- Legislation including settlement
- TNP management plan
- Lack of funding and resources
- Peak demand - Demand management
- Economic viability
- Behaviour change
- Dual world heritage

Group 3 programme

Plan: Years 1- 3

Year 1

- Demand pricing
- Hypothecated pricing
- Electric Vehicles
- Differential pricing

Year 2

- Parking strategy
- Area wide
- Public Transport
- Memorandum of understanding

Year 3

- One voice communication plan
- Demand responsive
- App

Group 3 programme

Risks, challenges and opportunities

Year 1

- Social disruption
- Commercial disruption

Year 2

- Consistency
- Funding policy and mechanisms
- Memorandum of understanding
- Stagnation

Year 3

Group 4 programme

Year 1

- Traffic counters
- Parking management plan
- Central visitor information portal
- VMS
- Parking occupancy monitoring
- Walking trail monitoring
- Communication Plan: Inbound operators as well as ones here
- Governance Structure: To develop long term plan/vision etc.

Year 2

- PT system
- Fleet standards
- Parking strategy
- Parking and occupancy pricing

Year 3

- Trains – long term
- Central visitor hub
- Culture centre
- TAC Pass

Group 4 programme

Risks, challenges and opportunities

Opportunities

- Understand visitor profile

- Parking pricing – more expensive closer to field

- Ride share from hub

- Updates as you get closer

- Prioritise busses going up to keep the system moving

- Long term vision still being developed

- Customer experience management on peak days

- Pricing of skier days

- Comms that go out live

- Being aware of broader implications for each decision and coordination and relationships between different agencies

Risks

- Need for absolute certainty

- Long term vision still being developed

- Being aware of broader implications for each decision and coordination and relationships between different agencies

Draft programme for consideration

The following are the interventions considered to have commonality between the groups which were highlighted within the group programmes. The next few slides will provide more information about the contents and features of these interventions.

Year 1

- Parking strategy and management plan
- Communications plan
- Stakeholder and agencies integrated approach
- Fleet standards
- Network data collection

Years 2-3

- Visitor information system (portal, app, signs)
- TAC Pass
- Integrated Public Transport System
- Central Visitor Hub and Cultural Centre

Parking strategy and management plan

Parking Strategy

Develop strategy and approach to define the role of parking in a sustainable transport system and set direction for the management and supply of parking:

- Technology for Parking Management

- Parking Management Plans

- Consideration of dynamic, demand based, pricing

- Park and Ride provision and pricing

- Integration with Public Transport and Shuttle operators

Environmental and Social considerations

Aim to provide a level of equity for all users of the transport system and emphasis on indirect and longer term impacts on the environment.

Further Considerations

- Legislative Requirements

- Funding

- Hypothecation of revenue

- Congestion / demand pricing

- Risk Management and wider system dependencies

Parking strategy and management planning
continued

Approach to Parking Strategy

- **Analyse existing data**

Quantify supply and demand, and understand consumer behaviour

- **Demand Forecast**

Forecasting future demand, revenue and wider system dependencies

- **Strategy Development**

Balancing objectives, constraints and prioritising interventions

- **Consultation**

Local decision making informing process and building consensus

- **Design**

Detailed design of interventions to deliver strategic objectives

- **Delivery**

Implementation of strategy and detailed designs

Communication plan

Communications Plan

A communication plan aims to provide an approach to providing stakeholders with information. The plan formally defines who should be given specific information, when, and how that information should be delivered.

- Understand and align partner organisation communications
- Development of a communications plan in a collaborative manner
- Combine knowledge and expertise
- Includes both internal communication within partner and external communication with stakeholders at a wider local, regional, and national level
- Defines and refers to the communication with external audiences
- Establishes protocol for communication including communication tools such as meetings, social media, media, email lists etc.

Stakeholder and agencies integrated approach

Integrated approach

An integrated approach to planning and transport system design will benefit all parties involved through providing greater clarity of future planning and outcomes sought to enable greater efficiencies between those involved.

Short-term: Memorandum of Understanding

Consider development of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) as a formal agreement between parties to establish or recognise partnerships.

- Not necessarily legally binding but founded on mutual respect
- Can be simple and take a short time to implement
- Formally signals an intent to work collaboratively

Medium-term: Governance Structure

Develop multi-party governance structure

Fleet standards

Fleet standards and operations

Fleet operation is the core business for companies that operate a vehicle fleet for hire or reward, such as taxi, shuttle and other passenger services, truck and tow-truck operators and vehicle rental companies.

The Conservation Act 1987 requires that all operators using a conservation area for gain or reward must have a concession.

In New Zealand all Passenger Service Vehicles must meet the requirements under the Land Transport Rule: Passenger Service Vehicles (1999).

NZ Bus and Coach Association have also developed an Alpine Vehicle Specification and Code of Practice, voluntarily adopted by some operators.

Short-term: Enforce alpine vehicle specification and code of practice as the minimum standard for fleet operators within the National Park. Seasonal variations need to be considered.

Longer-term: Develop broader minimum standards for vehicles operating within the National Park e.g. electric vehicles.

Visitor information system

Customer and Visitor Information Systems Plan:

Development of a customer information plan to determine approach to providing a system for customer information. Consideration of:

- App based (centralised) information platform
- Variable Message Signs (VMS) for critical information at decision points around the transport network
- Integration / consideration of technology strategies
- Integrated with development of communications plan
- Incident and event management

Next steps

Follow up workshop to agree draft programme and progress development of:

- Parking Strategy and Management Plan

- Communications Plan

- Stakeholder and Agencies Memorandum of Understanding

- Fleet operator standards

- Visitor information systems

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