



SmartGrowth

Building our futures together

SmartGrowth leaders respond to highway campaigners

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SmartGrowth leaders acknowledge the hurt and frustration of people campaigning for safer roads in the western Bay of Plenty and have vowed to work harder to address the issues raised by State Highway 2 campaigners.

The two council Mayors and the Regional Chair said that “At present we do not have good alignment between the growth that is occurring in our sub-region and transport investment. We are committed to working together with the New Zealand Transport Agency and central government to find workable solutions for our sub-region.”

“The recent Government announcements around the Urban Growth Agenda provide a good opportunity for us to address these issues. A key focus going forward will be on getting a much better alignment and improved land use and transport integration.”

“We wish to be quite upfront that there are transport investment challenges that cannot be put to one side, which are integral to successful implementation of the Future Development Strategy for the western Bay that we’re about to consult on.”

Transport is the most complex and challenging form of infrastructure to integrate with urban growth. Anyone who has faced gridlock on Tauranga Harbour Bridge or beyond Bethlehem township understands that rapid population growth is placing some parts of our transport network under considerable strain. Investment is needed to sustain further growth, maintain quality of life for current residents and avoid constraining business growth.

SmartGrowth leaders will meet this month with the New Zealand Transport Agency board to present their united front and explore urgent ways of resolving the large transport issues here.

Work will focus on improving services in existing Tauranga urban areas, more road capacity and public transport for growth in the north, west and east, more investment in public and active transport and reviews of the State Highway 2 project.

Over time, the choices people make around where and how they live and move around will be influenced by these efforts. We don’t believe however that constraining growth is possible in places like Omokoroa as this would lead to increased land and house prices.

Ends

For more information contact SmartGrowth Independent Chair Bill Wasley 027 471 3006