

STAFF REPORT

TO: Mayor and Councillors
FROM: Gary Clark, Transportation Manager
DATE: 29 July 2009
SUBJECT: **TRANSPORTATION REPORT**

1 ROAD MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS

Downer EDi Works have started maintaining the road network for the Tasman and Waimea contracts. They have been doing a very good job with the winter frost and ice sites being well monitored. From my perspective they seem to have the right mix of CMA and grit. The amount of grit being used on the road being noticeably less than with the previous maintenance contractor while still addressing the issue of frost and ice.

There have been minor issues with regard to some recent grader work on unsealed roads which has been brought to their attention. The matter related to the grader driver cutting too much material from the edge of the road and leaving large rocks on the driveable portion of the road.

The road benchmark project is almost completed and will provide the baseline condition of the road network that will be used to audit Downer Edi Works over the contract period.

There are some remedial works to be completed by Fulton Hogan under the previous maintenance contract 491. I have already circulated a list to Councillors. The roads that have experienced problems include the following:

- Greenwood Street, Motueka
- Lodder Lane, Riwaka
- Wharf Road, Motueka
- Neudorf Road, Dovedale
- Korere-Tophouse Road, Kikiwa
- Tadmor Valley Road, Tadmor
- Dominion Road, Mahana

Due to these works being reseals, any action to address the chip loss problem will have to wait until it is warm enough to seal the road. This work is being carried out at Fulton Hogan's cost with all sites expected to be fixed by December 2009.

The Murchison and Golden Bay contracts carried out by Fulton Hogan are progressing well with no reported issues.

As an aside I attended the latest unsealed roads training course which provided some interesting insights into how gravelled roads should be maintained. As some of the committee will be aware, drainage is the most important aspect of gravelled roads and this

is something that is not typically done well in New Zealand. Poor drainage often leads to greater maintenance costs over time. Other interesting material related to road construction, dust and the use of suppressants. I will provide more information of these issues at the next committee meeting.

2 TRANSPORTATION END OF YEAR COSTS

We are now starting to complete the end of year costs and claims for Council and NZTA for the last financial year. Our preliminary assessment of the costs for the 2008/2009 financial year shows an over-spend of around 4%. This is mainly due to the additional costs associated with the application of CMA and grit for our unusually cold winter to date. The amount of material being applied to the road so far this winter is more than the whole of the colder period for the last year and the year before. The timing of the financial year makes it very difficult to manage budgets when cold winters are experienced. With CMA being a very expensive product, it is easy to have budget surpluses and deficits as we try and gauge how much money to set aside for these colder periods. I will be discussing this matter in greater detail with NZTA and endeavouring to have these winter works treated like emergency works and have them funded at a higher financial assistance rate by central government. It is my view that this type of work cannot be considered simply as maintenance as there are too many variables and it is weather dependent. I confess I don't like my chances of succeeding but I consider it worth the debate with NZTA.

3 TALBOT STREET / SALISBURY ROAD TRAFFIC LIGHTS

Our first set of traffic lights were officially switched on at the intersection of Talbot Street and Salisbury Road. After a short set up phase, the lights went live with a noticeable improvement to vehicles flows out of Talbot Street. This is important for the implementation of the ring road around the town centre. I am expecting a few minor teething problems in the first three months where modifications to the cycle times will be made to optimise the performance of the traffic signals. Some additional road markings may be required at nearby intersections to better manage intersection behaviour.

The planting themes and landscaping in this area reflects the Sundial Square works and provides a consistent urban design element to the Richmond Town Centre.

Overall I see the completed project as a success with the integration of both hard and soft engineering to provide a positive outcome which places a corner stone to the town centre. Having all the works completed when the traffic signals were made operational shows how a successful project can be completed in a coordinated approach from the various departments.

4 FORWARD WORKS PROGRAMME

Engineering staff are in the process of finalising the new works programmes for the upcoming year. As previously discussed with the Committee I am applying a matrix-based approach to prioritising the works. The matrix will include such elements as safety, traffic volume, public consultation and level of service. This matrix will rank each project against others and provide a robust forward programme list for the future. It will include projects that are identified in the Ten Year Plan.

The matrix approach will be applied to the following work activity areas:

- Footpaths
- Road slips
- Bridge repairs
- Minor Improvement works

In addition to the above activity areas, I also propose to use this method on the reseals and pavement rehabilitation works. These two activity areas are also subject to pavement modelling to set priorities. Accordingly a slightly different matrix will be used for these work activity areas.

I will also be developing a forward work programme that includes Ten Year Plan projects with a view to having a complete list prioritised and ready for construction as funds allow. This will allow Council to be more flexible over individual financial years and pull projects forward should there be a need to. In addition if a project strikes a problem such as land purchase then we will be able to move projects with relative ease and complete them before the end of any financial year.

I have attached draft programmes that provide an indication of the works planned. I will report back to the committee with the final work programmes for their approval at the next Engineering Services Committee meeting.

5 Road Safety Coordinators Report – August 2009

Motorcycle training courses

A trial motorbike/scooter training course was held at Waimea College on 17 June. This was a free 2-hour condensed course which gave students some basic safety tips and advice. There was positive feedback from all the students, the trainers, the teacher from the college and we had extensive media coverage. Other colleges in Tasman/Nelson have been contacted at the start of this term so more courses can be run as a joint project with ACC.

The next whole day courses are on Saturday 8 and Sunday 9 August to be held at ENZA.

Intersection campaign

A 20-page tabloid was published in June with 58,000 copies printed and distributed. The tabloid included intersection information and additional pages on other road safety issues. A researcher was commissioned to evaluate the tabloid reach. The sample size was 400 and 67.8% of the random sample surveyed recalled seeing the tabloid and 70% of those had read it.

A “spotter’s campaign” for Nelson and Tasman District Council ran at the same time over six days and focused on compulsory stops and red lights. As a result over 900 vehicles were observed failing to stop and approximately 700 direct mail letters were sent out.

Safety map

This map has been designed and produced by Tasman District Council, Nelson City Council, ACC, NZTA and the police will be ready for distribution any day now. The map will be distributed via a range of different outlets and in conjunction with the newly printed fatigue vouchers.

School Travel Plans

Two Walking School Buses are now firmly established at Wakefield School with up to 50 children regularly taking part. One of the buses has now also started in the afternoon. Work is about to begin at St Paul's School with respect to the Salisbury Cluster School Travel Plan. The second working party at Brightwater School will also take place in the next few weeks with the hope that their School Travel Plan will be launched by the end of Term 3.

Fatigue voucher campaign

This project started in October 2007 and in July 2008 a nationwide telephone survey was undertaken to gauge awareness of the project. This survey shows a very positive response to the project. Some of these responses include:

- driver knowledge and concern about driver fatigue as a road safety issue was high - 78%.
- 84% of respondents who had stopped at one of the cafes found it helpful.
- 55% of respondents reported some form of behaviour change to manage or avoid driver fatigue in the last couple of years.
- 65% of respondents remembered that the message was about avoiding or managing driver fatigue.
- of those respondents who could recall at least one alternative fatigue campaign 57% said they thought the voucher system was more effective than the other campaigns they recalled.

6 OVERWEIGHT SUBMISSION

Council has lodged a submission of the proposed Transport Rule labelled "Dimension and Mass Amendment (No2) 2009 - Rule 41001/5". Our submission provided support for intention of the rule change however we identified areas where insufficient thought and consideration had been undertaken. These areas mostly related to the maintenance of our roads, the additional costs associated with the increased loadings and effects on our bridge structures. I have attached a copy of our submission to this report.

7 NATIONAL LAND TRANSPORT PROGRAMME

As the Committee are aware the National Land Transport Programme is currently being considered within NZTA. NZTA have provided some indication of the expected changes to funding as a result of the new Government Policy Statement and the likely impacts to our district. The NLTP is due to be approved by 31 August 2009 and we would expect information and impacts shortly after this date. I will report back to the Committee about the effects on our funding streams at the next meeting.

8 RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council receives this report.

Gary Clark
Transportation Manager