

# REPORT

**TO:** Members, Engineering Services Committee

**FROM:** Chair, Trevor Norriss

**DATE:** 03 June 2008

**SUBJECT:** **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – MAY 2008**

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Once again welcome to today's meeting.

The news regarding the completion of the coastal highway or Ruby Bay Bypass (as it is known) is great. This project has been top priority for this Council for the past 11 years and to see it finally get the go ahead will be very satisfying to all involved. I wish to express thanks to previous Mayor John Hurley and CEO Bob Dickinson who spent many hours in Wellington lobbying for this project. Also thanks to the Mapua & Ruby Bay District Community Association and especially Hugh Gordon who has lobbied over many years. Council's Engineering staff and Transit NZ have also done an enormous amount of work behind the scenes on this project. I believe we should have a sod-turning ceremony when work starts and invite all those involved.

Engineering Manager, Peter Thomson and I spent a very informative day in Wellington attending a meeting of local government representatives of Regional Land Transport Committees being briefed on proposed changes to legislation etc. and will have an update at today's meeting. I find it unbelievable that after just getting Transfund and Transit NZ split into two entities, we are amalgamating them again into the New Zealand Transport Agency. It goes to show that Government doesn't get everything right!

I have been speaking to members of the Bus and Coach Association who are also facing dramatic changes which will see huge increases in costs (many for no practical reason) that will see things like the provision of school bus services skyrocket.

I read in last night's paper the new exhaust standards which are aimed at boy racers but watch this space – classic car owners, car clubs and many other members of the public will also be caught up in this rubbish. Surely if exhaust systems are sold to anyone and are fitted by reputable tradesmen that should be the end of it – it seems pretty simple really. Many standard exhausts may not comply! Enough said. Councillor Dowler can give us an update.

The proposed Top of the South Transport Forum is being set up to lobby for major roading projects in our area and after talking to Marlborough and Nelson representatives attending the meeting in Wellington, we have their support. The first meeting needs to be reasonably soon as we found that under the new administration regimes being proposed for the New Zealand Transport Agency we may be in Canterbury rather than Wellington as we are now. We need to investigate the pros and cons of each option.

I would like to congratulate Council's contractor responsible for the Murchison/Lakes area road maintenance. I spent some time in the area recently and drove a number of rural unsealed roads that were in exceptional condition. Well done.

By the time of this meeting Councillors will have attended the Annual Plan submission meetings. To new Councillors who may find this process rather daunting, remember to ask questions and get the correct answers as any decisions you make may affect the funding rate.

Regards

Trevor Norriss  
**Chair - Engineering Services Committee**