

Congestion Charging discussion with Tauranga

For decision: For noting:

Reason for inclusion in closed board meeting session	
1. Please state why this report is being considered in the closed board meeting as opposed to the open board meeting. Please refer to the 'reasons for confidentiality' and provide a direct reference to one of these reasons.	The report provides brief background information to support a verbal conversation with a Commissioner from Tauranga District Council on their experiences and lessons on road pricing. The conversation may cover material and experiences that are commercially sensitive to Tauranga District Council.
2. Please provide an estimated date for release of this report.	Wednesday 31 st May 2023

Te tūtohunga / Recommendation

That the Auckland Transport Board (board):

- a) Note that Tauranga is currently considering a road pricing scheme and Tauranga commissioners will attend the 30 May 2023 Board meeting (closed session) to discuss potential collaboration.

Te whakarāpopototanga matua / Executive summary

1. Tauranga City, currently under the administration of government appointed commissioners led by Hon Anne Tolley, has been investigating a strategic corridors road pricing scheme for Tauranga.
2. The city is looking to consult publicly on the scheme later this year.
3. Noting the similarity of challenges and opportunities in Tauranga and Auckland, there may be an opportunity to collaborate to accelerate government decision making. At the moment, there is no enabling legislation and the timeline for that is not known.
4. Tauranga commissioner Stephen Selwood will join the 30 May 2023 closed session of the AT board to discuss Tauranga's work to date and plans for the future.

Ngā tuinga ō mua / Previous deliberations

5. This is the first time that the Tauranga commissioners have engaged the Auckland Transport board.

Date	Report Title	Key Outcomes
December 2020	The Congestion Question	The board 'endorsed and confirmed its support for TCQ main findings and recommendations'
November 2022	Select Committee presents its findings to Parliament	Multi-party support for Road Pricing in New Zealand

Te horopaki me te tīaroaro rautaki / Context and strategic alignment

6. Between 2017 and 2021, Auckland Transport (AT) was party to the multi-agency (local government and central government) work conducted by The Congestion Question (TCQ).
7. That report included a longlist of 26 options that could reduce congestion in Auckland. These options went through various evaluations, and the report concluded that two congestion pricing options were the preferred schemes to investigate further:
 - a. a “city centre cordon” option, in which congestion pricing would be implemented in Auckland Central, with State Highway 1 and State Highway 16 acting as the borders where a congestion charge would be incurred.
 - b. a “strategic corridors” option, in which congestion pricing would be implemented on 220 km of state highways and main arterial roads in the wider Auckland region.
8. This work culminated in a Parliamentary Select Committee recommendation that the government implement a congestion pricing scheme in Auckland, including:
 - a region-wide strategic corridors scheme starting in the city centre;
 - an access charge that would apply once per journey in peak times;
 - the use of automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) technology to identify vehicles that incur a charge.
9. Noting that any form of direct pricing of existing roads in New Zealand is illegal (tolling of new roads is enabled), the Select Committee also recommended that the government progress legislation to enable New Zealand cities to use congestion pricing as a tool in transport planning.
10. Since the Select Committee’s recommendations were made, government has progressed various internal workstreams to understand the impacts of potential schemes.

11. AT understands that, after some delay due to concerns particularly around the equity impacts of congestion pricing, government is currently working again on enabling legislation.
12. Other cities considering direct pricing of roads include Tauranga and Wellington.

Ngā matapakinga me ngā tātaritanga / Discussion and analysis

13. Tauranga City Council is considering a “road pricing” system for the city. Their recommended solution, known as “SmartTrip”, focusses on the strategic network, and would see prices changing dynamically, with higher charges at peak period, and low or no charges off peak, in order to optimise traffic flow.
14. This option has similarities to the strategic corridors option recommended through the Congestion Question study. It differs in that Tauranga has proposed a stronger revenue raising focus than proposed in Auckland which is focussed on network management.
15. Tauranga describe their approach as “road pricing”, distinguishing it from other forms of direct pricing, including the congestion charging approach in Auckland, which has a stronger focus on congestion reduction.
16. Both the Tauranga and Congestion Question options require legislative change before further progress can be made.
17. Commissioners from Tauranga have been invited to discuss their model and potential future collaboration at the 30 May 2023 closed board meeting.
18. Key issues of interest for AT will include discussing opportunities for collaboration, including how AT and Auckland Council can work with Tauranga to accelerate enabling legislation.

Ngā tūraru matua / Key risks and mitigations

19. The discussion with Tauranga commissioners is for information sharing and there are no future obligations on AT.

Ngā ritenga-ā-pūtea me ngā rauemi / Financial and resource impacts

20. There are no financial impacts at this stage.

Ngā whaiwhakaaro ō te taiao me te panonitanga o te āhuarangi / Environment and climate change considerations

21. There are no environmental considerations at this stage.

Ngā whakaaweawe me ngā whakaaro / Impacts and perspectives

Mana whenua

22. Mana whenua perspectives have not been sought.

Ngā mema pōti / Elected members

23. Elected members have not been engaged.

Ngā rōpū kei raro i te Kaunihera / Council Controlled Organisations

24. Council Controlled Organisations have not been engaged.

Ngā kiritaki / Customers

25. Customer views have not been sought.

Ngā whaiwhakaaro haumarū me ngā whaiwhakaaro hauora / Health, safety and wellbeing considerations



26. There are no health and safety considerations.

Ā muri ake nei / Next steps

27. There may be an opportunity to collaborate with Tauranga on advocacy or other matters.

28. Upon receipt of draft legislation an update for the Board will be provided.

Te pou whenua tuhinga / Document ownership

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