

Submission: Draft Auckland Regional Public Transport Plan (DRPTP)

North Harbour Business Association

**Janine Brinsdon – General Manager and Brigid Rogers – Transport
Project Administrator**

P O Box 303 126

North Harbour 0751

Phone 09 968 2222 or 021 212 4942

Email: janine.brinsdon@nhba.org.nz

Local Board Representation: Upper Harbour Local Board

Signature: _____

Date of submission: 5 November 2012

Please note: We wish to make an oral presentation to this submission. We would prefer North Auckland as the location but are flexible if required.

Introduction:

North Harbour Business Association is an industrial BID area, representing over 2500 commercial property owners and businesses within the North Harbour area.

Our business comprise of a mix of Small Medium Enterprises (SME), multinational organisations representing sectors such as ICT, business services, specialist manufacturing and light – medium warehousing. In addition to the businesses, we have key educational institutions such as Unitec, Pinehurst, Kristin and Albany Primary schools – plus additional vocational institutions, all within an industrial estate which is on average less than 20 years old.

Our primary interests are those decisions within the DRPTP which:

- impact on access to both regional and localised transport hubs and therefore we support the \$7,081m investment across the 10 year period (2022).
- support or will restrict business growth opportunities
- impact on the cost of business – across a short to medium timeframe
- impact on economic development and the ability to leverage value from location
- impact on employers ability to attract and retain staff or learning institutions to attract students

- provide the scope to leverage natural assets for economic development across leisure and tourism sectors – enhancing Auckland’s reputation as the world’s most livable city.

Transport:

With transport being the number one priority for 70% of our 1300 North Harbour Businesses, the ability to move efficiently within the North Shore and across greater Auckland is not a luxury – it is a requirement for business growth, business investment, attraction, staff and client retention.

Working closely with Auckland Transport since 2008, we have developed an effective TMA region, focusing on the provision of diverse transport solutions for employees, students and visitors to the North Harbour BID area.

However the North/South divide is restricting our businesses to develop outside of the North Shore as congestion caused through inadequate public transport alternatives is impacting on business service and trade transport movements.

The current single Waitemata Harbour crossing is proving restrictive for the employment of key skills which is why we support Localised Economic Centres – supported by appropriate and sustained frequency of commuter services into these centres or hubs.

In addition to the local investment, we support the regional investment in the RTPIS system and the transformational shift in public transport objectives detailed in the Auckland Plan.

We support in principal the shift towards a simpler, more connected network, with expanded frequent services. (Fig.5-1: Page 19)

We accept that the purpose of this submission is to consult on the overall plan, not specific routes. However, in order to support, we do need to reiterate our concerns regarding the links from Constellation Drive and Albany Busway Park and Rides into the North Harbour Business Improvement District (BID) as being inadequate currently. Improved frequency of service to the main Public Transport (Bus) hubs will only result in changed commuter behavior if the connecting services reflect the needs of business commuters. Timetabling needs to reflect the hours of business and allow for staff to arrive at key times. Some major employers in our area start work at 6am so we need to have services that will cater for their staff or they will continue to drive and a service which arrives at 9.10am is too late for a receptionist who needs to be at work at 9.00 am.

Based on our current bus patronage, North Harbour contributes \$186k per annum in economic benefit. Through our Transport Management engagement and education programme, this could be significantly leveraged. However a 30 minute service will not engage sufficient volume to make a significant impact.

Therefore our support of the Rapid/Frequent/Connector model proposed is conditional on further

We support the proposed Fares and Ticketing Policy (Chapter 6.4) to streamline the commuter experience and to increase the speed at boarding.

A simplified and integrated ticketing system would also improve the perception of Auckland as an internationally competitive and efficient city.

We support the need for a fares and ticketing system which attracts and retains customers, reflects and rewards off peak/on peak choices, providing it balances user pay/contributions against public funding.

However, this support is conditional on appropriate and timely real time information and public transport facilities being made available throughout the BID area as well as in the main Public Transport Hub centres. Appropriate real time information will encourage confidence in the service; adequate shelter will ensure the services are used throughout the year, not just in the summer months.

Park and Ride facilities are not keeping up with demand. We recognize the recent investment into Albany Busway Park and Ride facilities; however Constellation Busway Park is at capacity. With the eventual completion of the SH18/Western Ring route, improved connectivity will result in higher demand. No investment is earmarked for an extended Constellation Busway until 2015/16 at the earliest, which is a concern for North Harbour.

Infrastructure (6.5 Page 37)

The links between Constellation Busway and North Harbour BID are restricted by the lack of a footpath (700 m from Caribbean Drive to Paul Mathews Road). This forces public transport patrons to walk on a grass verge alongside a dual carriage way as an alternative to waiting for a connecting bus. As stated (5.6 Page 39), integration with other modes of active transport such as walking and cycling are important to support Public Transport useage. This 'last mile' situation is impacting on our ability to change commuter behaviour.

We support the Public Transport Operating Model (PTOM) if this delivers cost savings across the network and supports local employment.

We support the implementation timetable (Pg 57), providing Northern Busway is the priority with associated linkages