

4 August 2025

Infrastructure Commission / Te Waihanga

Email: info@tewaihanga.govt.nz

Dear Sir/Madam,

DRAFT NATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN SUBMISSION BY URBAN TASK FORCE FOR TAURANGA

The Urban Task Force for Tauranga (UTF) appreciates the opportunity to provide this feedback to the Infrastructure Commission in relation to the Commissions Draft National Infrastructure Plan.

UTF is incorporated as a society with its purpose being to represent its members who are property professionals and funders, developers, iwi and hapu, and owners and managers of properties in the Bay of Plenty. UTF seeks to provide strong and informed leadership to local and central government, promote and foster productive local networks around property and related issues, and to advocate for the development industry by making submissions to both central and local government.

UTF is focused on the opportunities presented by growth and unlocking these opportunities by working collaboratively and innovatively across central government, local government, and the private sector to achieve positive outcomes. UTF advocates for connected planning, connected thinking, connected government, and strong leadership.

Tauranga has a severe shortage of infrastructure necessary to provide for anticipated growth. Poor past planning decisions has resulted in significant infrastructure underinvestment. The ability to deliver the necessary housing for future residents and spaces for businesses to invest in, has been severely impacted by this underinvestment. Therefore, growth in the Bay of Plenty has severely slowed, resulting in a significant housing supply and affordability crisis.

Having reviewed the Infrastructure Commission's Draft National Infrastructure Plan, UTF provides the following feedback and recommendations to the Infrastructure Commission.

1. UTF supports the Government adopting a 30-year National Infrastructure plan. The plan should be reviewed every 10 years as this is the typical planning period applied by local government.
2. The need for multi-party support for the National Infrastructure Plan is critical. UTF asks that all political parties put aside political differences and support the development of a National Infrastructure Plan which is enduring and which becomes a plan for long-term infrastructure investment rather than a plan which is reformed due to political cycles and agendas.

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3. UTF suggests that the Infrastructure Commission adopts an approach which prioritises infrastructure and sets a hierarchy for infrastructure planning. Large-scale infrastructure of national significance must be prioritised. It is critical that transport infrastructure investment supports transport efficiencies and outcomes and reduces travel times. Priority should be given to transport and wastewater projects which provide significant economic benefits and growth opportunities.
4. UTF support alternative forms of funding particularly the use of Public Private Partnerships. UTF has also been vocal in its support of alternative funding mechanisms including Special Purpose Vehicles and targeted rates. Our view is that Public Private Partnerships must have a greater and more defined role in the delivery of infrastructure in New Zealand and that they can deliver significant infrastructure more efficiently and effectively than Local Government.
5. UTF have concerns around Local Governments management of the development contributions (DC) regime under the Local Government Act and the related financial contribution regime under the RMA. Our experience in the Bay of Plenty is that DCs have risen at unsustainable levels largely due to poor project cost control. The results are unsustainable levels of DCs which act to stifle growth by making development unfeasible. The principle that "growth pays for growth" is inequitable. Alternative funding mechanisms such as SPVs and Targeted rates are needed to more fairly allocate the costs of infrastructure over the infrastructure lifecycle (including to future generations).
6. If Local Government is to be a key part of the solution to providing significant infrastructure via Council controlled organisations (CCOs) then central government oversight must apply to the model for delivering water services under the "Local Water Done Well" (LWDW) initiative. CCOs should have greater borrowing and investment capacity with debt-to-equity limits of up to 400%, but only where crown approval is first obtained.
7. UTF strongly supports the government's proposal to streamline foreign investment through actions such as the Overseas Investment Amendment Bill to attract suitable foreign investment and capital to support future infrastructure. A specific strategy to achieve this should be developed.
8. There is a danger that regulatory frameworks and Local Government control will remain as a constraint for the delivery of efficient and appropriate infrastructure. Although fast-track consenting processes are starting to assist with consenting delays and costs, further barriers to investment and delivery continue and RMA reform is critical to developing a more appropriate planning system to enable the delivery of infrastructure at pace. Planning reforms (including National Policy Statement (NPS) and National Standards) must contain appropriate directives to encourage and promote the development of infrastructure and avoid unnecessary planning barriers and delays. Separate and clear land use policies are recommended in all NPS documents to promote and prioritise the delivery of significant infrastructure (including through lower order planning documents).

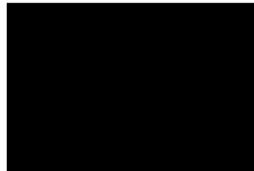
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9. The national standardisation of infrastructure design is required with less bespoke design needed to reduce costs. A “back to basics” approach is imperative.

UTF appreciates the ability to provide this submission to the Infrastructure Commission.

Yours faithfully



CHAIRMAN

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