



2 October 2024

3-EP-3-8

NZ Transport Agency - Waka Kotahi
Private Bag 6995
Marion Square
Wellington 6141

Submitted via: [NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi Toll proposal for Te Ahu a Turanga: Manawatū Tararua Highway consultation \(qualtrics.com\)](#)

Submission from the Rangitikei District Council - Toll proposal for Te Ahu a Turanga: Manawatū Tararua Highway

The Rangitikei District Council (RDC) thanks the New Zealand Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA) for the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposal to toll the new 11.5km Te Ahu a Turanga: Manawatū-Tararua Highway.

RDC supports the submission from Tararua District Council where they **do not** agree that tolls should be a mechanism for funding the Te Ahu a Turanga: Manawatū-Tararua Highway.

RDC agrees that there needs to be a more sustainable model for funding our roads and that tolling may have its place in future roading projects. But RDC **does not support** the tolling proposed for Te Ahu a Turanga: Manawatū-Tararua Highway for the following reasons:

1. Tolling was not proposed as part of the original business case. The project would have been assessed as economically viable prior to its implementation.
2. RDC notes that Te Ahu a Turanga: Manawatū-Tararua Highway is a replacement road for the closed State Highway 3 through the Manawatū Gorge so is not classed as a new road, but a replacement for a State Highway that is no longer fit for purpose and was closed by Central Government's transport agency.
3. The proposed toll for Te Ahu a Turanga: Manawatū-Tararua Highway is 59.2% higher than the proposed toll for the southern 15km of Ōtaki to north of Levin (Ō2NL) (\$2.70 for light vehicles and \$5.40 for heavy vehicles) this does not appear to be equitable.
4. There is likely to be a significant impact on those who commute between the Manawatū and Tararua Districts for work purposes, with projected tolls being over \$40 per week, which is likely to be unaffordable for some households in a struggling financial climate.

Decisions sought:

1. That NZTA reconsider the decision to impose a toll on the Te Ahu a Turanga: Manawatū-Tararua Highway.
2. RDC further suggests that, if tolling goes ahead, a discount be considered for regular / high users of the Te Ahu a Turanga: Manawatū-Tararua Highway, where either the use of a preloaded toll reader can be remotely scanned, or number plate recognition is used as a mechanism to discount regular users. There are good overseas models where these systems work efficiently and do not hold up traffic movements.

General feedback on the tolling of roads

While RDC supports, in principle, tolling to improve roads across New Zealand and fund **new** State Highways as RDC recognises that there needs to be a user-pays model to improve our roads across the country (a model councils are used to implementing), this support is contingent on the following:

1. Tolling forms part of the business case at the outset of the project.
2. That once toll revenue has covered the cost of the road, that any future revenue be invested by NZTA into other key transportation projects within the region from which it was collected.
3. An ability for high / regular users to pay a discounted toll rate.

RDC also submits in support of the submissions prepared by the Manawatu District Council and Horowhenua District Council.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andy Watson', is positioned above the printed name.

Mayor Andy Watson