

23 March 2021

Transport Team
Northland Regional Council
Private Bag 9021
Whangarei 0148

Via email to: info@nrc.govt.nz

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Draft Regional Land Transport Plan

Please find attached a submission on the Draft Regional Land Transport Plan.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require any further information on this submission.

Yours sincerely



Sarah Cameron
Senior Policy Analyst

TO: Northland Regional Council

SUBMISSION ON: Draft Regional Land Transport Plan

NAME: NZ Kiwifruit Growers Inc (NZKGI)

ADDRESS: PO Box 4246, Mount Maunganui South, 3149

1. The kiwifruit industry in New Zealand

The kiwifruit industry is a major contributor to regional New Zealand returning \$2 billion directly to rural communities in 2019/20. There are ~3000 growers, 14,000ha of orchards, 10,000 permanent employees and up to 25,000 jobs during the peak season. Approximately 80% of New Zealand's kiwifruit crop is grown in the Bay of Plenty and the industry is expected to grow its global sales to \$4.5 billion by 2025 which is an increase from \$3.1 billion in 2018/19.

2. Kiwifruit in Northland

Northland's kiwifruit production covers 467 hectares and returned \$76 million to local Northland communities. Europe and China are the region's biggest export markets (taking about 70 percent of the crop) while Japan takes about 25 percent. It is also sent to countries such as Hong Kong, the United States and Taiwan. Packing generally takes place in Kerikeri, or fruit is trucked to packhouses in Auckland or the Bay of Plenty

3. Freight movements in Northland

Northland's 2019 kiwifruit harvest produced 5.1 million trays and predictions for the 2021 harvest correspond into the following freight movements:

- 66% of fruit picked in Northland will be trucked to Marsden Point and loaded directly onto dedicated service lines
- 31% of containers are trucked to Auckland Metroport and then put-on trains down to the Port of Tauranga to be loaded onto container vessels
- 3% are trucked to the Port of Tauranga.

From Whangarei to Kerikeri, Northland's kiwifruit industry is steadily increasing which will result in increased freight movements on the state highway network and local roads.

4. Route resilience and route security

Northland's roading network is susceptible to adverse weather events which cause slips and road closures due to the regions unstable geology. Having a roading network that is operational and resilient during peak times for the industry is essential to deliver on freight shipping times at both ports.

NZKGI understands that a large number of bridges on rural roads are unsuitable for large vehicles. NZKGI would like to see investment in this area to ensure the resilience of the rural road network. Further to this, NZKGI supports the proposed projects that will improve resilience and reduce flooding on Northland roads.

5. Road Safety

60% of Northland's road crashes occur on the state highway network compared with 40% for the rest of New Zealand¹. NZKGI supports the proposed state highway and local road improvements that have been identified in the regional plan. NZKGI also supports measures to reduce driver fatigue and to set appropriate speeds.

As 3481km of Northlands local roads are unsealed, NZKGI supports the development of the Regional Dust from Unsealed Roads Mitigation Framework that will look at dust mitigations on Northland roads however would like to see this work prioritised. Airborne dust created from unsealed roads can cause health issues as well as deposit unwanted particles on kiwifruit. The fruit does not get washed as they are picked without a stalk attached and if the picking wound gets wet, the fruit will rot.

6. Regional and National Connectivity

NZKGI supports investment on the state highway network between Whangarei and Auckland including the Puhoi - Wellsford motorway upgrade and the Whangarei to Port Marsden Highway intersection four laning.

7. Conclusion

NZKGI supports a resilient network that is safe and appropriate for the volume and type of traffic now and into the future.

¹ <https://www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/planning-and-investment/arataki/docs/regional-summary-northland-august-2020.pdf>