

Submission on Palmerston North Speed Limits Review

BACKGROUND

Thank you for the invitation to make a submission on the Palmerston North Speed Limits Review 2013.

TRAFINZ (The New Zealand Traffic Institute Inc) represents a wide grouping of NZ local authorities, covering the majority of the New Zealand population. Its membership includes regional councils, the major metropolitan cities and smaller provincial authorities as well as private sector and non-local government members.

TRAFINZ' Executive is comprised of elected councillors and officers, drawn from a cross section of the membership, together with senior personnel representing its key government partners and supported by a number of senior technical staff from transport consultancies that volunteer their services pro bono.

The Institute's primary focus is on sustainable transportation planning, traffic management and road safety. It provides specialist advice to member authorities on traffic and safety issues by drawing from the depth of expertise available through its members. It also acts as a conduit for local authorities to respond to the NZ Government on new transport policies and legislation.

TRAFINZ' VIEW

This submission has been prepared after discussion by the Trafinz Executive.

Background:

The New Zealand's Road Safety Strategy sets the long term goal for New Zealand road safety vision which is **“a safe road system that is increasingly free of death and serious injury”**. Achieving the establishment of this strategic focus for NZ has taken Trafinz and our safety partners some 15 years to achieve.

The Institute is working with safety partners collaboratively to achieve this vision through creating safe road environments, safe road users, safe vehicles and safe transportation speeds which are the four pillars of the safe system approach. The Safe System Principles are based on extensive

research and transportation study and requires road users, system owners, designers, land use integration and vehicle manufactures to understand that:

- **We need to recognise that people make mistakes and crashes are inevitable**
- **Our bodies have limited ability to withstand crash forces without being seriously injured or killed**
- **System designers and the people who use the roads must all share responsibility for creating a road system where crash forces do not result in death or serious injury**
- **We need to improve the safety of all parts of the system – roads and roadsides, speeds, vehicles, and road users so that if one part fails, other parts will still protect the road user**

Trafinz supports initiatives to introduce appropriate speeds in relation to land use integration, multimodal accessibility and human survivability. Research shows that by doing so as a community we will create a safe transport system that will provide a transportation system for communities that promotes health, accessibility, environmental sustainability and prosperity as well as ultimately a system that does not fail by killing or seriously injuring road users.

Comments:

Trafinz believes that ‘local people solve local problems’ and that ‘one size fits all is not an appropriate approach in terms of transportation for communities’. Many RCA’s have Speed Management Polices and we would recommend that PNCC include this into their proposal.

The use of 40kph speed zones around school areas as an incremental step into community education and enforcement is a safe system approach that is demonstrating successful outcomes in a number of Councils throughout NZ and should be considered by all RCA’s at least initially.

Variable speed limits are a special tool, introduce significant extra maintenance costs and may only be appropriate in very limited site locations. The speed limit displayed needs to closely reflect the temporary speed environment at the time. If used in this way, this tool enables road users to intuitively recognise the speed environment that reflects the use and functionality of the road as it varies over time.

TRAFINZ appreciates the opportunity to make this submission and are able to provide further clarification if required.

For more information please contact:

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