**NZTA/Waka Kotahi SH5 Tarukenga to Ngongotahā - stakeholder update – APRIL 2021**

This email is to provide an update on the safety improvements and roundabout upgrade work.

Firstly, thank you to those of you able to come and see us at the Bowling Club the other week. There was a good turn out and it was great to chat face to face. We certainly didn’t come away thinking things were perfect. We also understand how frustrating this work and the delays can be. We can assure you we are doing our best to keep things moving, while creating the least amount of disruption.

At the information day we heard many questions, including what the new roundabout will look like and how long things will take, so hopefully I’ve answered these, plus others, in the information below.

**Traffic delays**

Every morning and evening traffic queuing is monitored by site staff – either on the ground or in a vehicle. They are capturing and logging this information. Currently, morning delays vary from 10 to 20 minutes. Afternoon peak leaving Rotorua is heavy and can be up to 30 minutes, depending on the time.

To be honest, there is nothing consistent about the delays or days of the week the queues are forming. After monitoring queues, we usually have a good idea of delay patterns, but congestion at this roundabout varies day to day.

So, while we are doing our best to minimise delays, people can expect it to be congested between 7.30am and 8:30am and again between 4.30pm and 5.30pm in the evening, Monday to Thursday. On Fridays it seems to be building earlier from 3:30pm to 5:30pm. This may change again next week as it will be the school holidays.

**Upcoming changes – Western Road detour**

To start on the next phase of the roundabout upgrade we need to close a short section of SH36 to traffic and put in a detour for northbound traffic. People travelling from Rotorua to Ngongotahā Village, Hamurana and Tauranga will have to travel via Western Road.

Weather permitting, the detour will be in place from **Monday 3 May** for up to six weeks. When the detour goes in the new SH5/SH36 free flow (slip) lane will open to traffic. The detour does not affect southbound traffic heading into Rotorua.

While the detour is in place there will be extra traffic along Western Road. The detour will be monitored to ensure traffic is flowing and adjusted if necessary. A temporary roundabout will be installed in the Ngongotahā Village at the SH36/Western Road intersection to help with traffic flow. At times, we may include manual traffic control. We ask people to take extra care, especially the Ngongotahā Village end.

**SH5/SH36 Ngongotahā roundabout**

The roundabout is programmed to be finished and operational by the end of July.

Once again, thank you for your patience. Please don’t hesitate to contact Allen or me if you have any questions or concerns.

Kind regards

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