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RE : Supporting the August 2015 Cycle Action Waikato submission to the Ruakura Variation of the Hamilton City District Plan

We would like to restate that “CCS Disability Action is one of the largest disability services providers in New Zealand. We have been advocating for people with disabilities since 1935.

The 2006 Disability Survey states that an estimated 660,300 New Zealanders reported having a disability, representing 17% of the total population approximately 3% of whom use a visible mobility aid. (Statistics New Zealand, 2006).

Hamilton’s resident population at the 2006 Census was estimated to be 141,615. Using the percentage of 17% of people having a disability from the 2006 Census, potentially there are 24,074 people in Hamilton living with disability and 4,248 using a visibly identifiable mobility aid.

We all experience different levels of mobility; sometimes due to temporary causes such as injury, pregnancy or illness or permanently due to impairment. Accessibility issues affect everyone at some time in their life. 45% of people aged over 65 self-identified with some degree of disability in the 2006 census (Statistics New Zealand, 2006).

People with disability typically have less independent access to private motor vehicles than non-disabled people. An estimated 6,100 adults with disability have modifications made to a private motor vehicle so that they can drive it. An estimated 3,900 adults with disability have a modified private motor vehicle so they can travel in it as a passenger (Office of Disability Issues and Statistics New Zealand, 2009).

This is a small percentage of the estimated 660,300 individuals living with disability in New Zealand. As a community this makes people with disability particularly reliant on safe, accessible pedestrian routes and public transport.

As an organisation we are putting considerable effort and resources to ensuring that people with disability can safely live in their communities and participate in everyday activities.”

The point also needs to be made that although regular vehicle counts are performed on the roads and streets surrounding the Ruakura development, currently the pedestrian component of journeys in New Zealand are not well understood. The demographics of surrounding catchment areas, income levels and whether or not people have independent access to a vehicle will all impact on their ability to safely access destinations in the area.

We suggest that the decision whether or not to install a push button traffic light crossing on Ruakura Road, at the Agresearch entrance should include consideration of population demographics of the catchment area, including vulnerability of the population such as age and predicted rates of mobility aid use. Students and people without independent access to a vehicle living in the area are more likely to walk through Agresearch to access the University, currently crossing the road poses a significant hazard to their safety.

We continue to strongly support key points made by Cycle Action Waikato in their August 2015 submission. We believe that all suggestions should be implemented in final decisions made regarding the Ruakura Variation of the Hamilton City District Plan.

To mitigate both current and future dangers and barriers to people walking, cycling, and the mobility impaired, including University students and staff, AgResearch, the Business Innovation Park, and the Tainui Knowledge Zone, Train/Transport Station, and all of the Ruakura Residential and Employment Zones, we are asking HCC to make a commitment (through the Ruakura District Plan Variation) by providing the following cost-effective transport infrastructure:-

- **Providing a safe pedestrian and cyclist push-button traffic-light crossing of Ruakura Road (at the AgResearch entrance).**
- **Widening the pedestrian-only footpath (South-side) of the Ruakura Road (between Wairere Drive and Knighton Road) to 3.0m shared-use pedestrian/cycle path.**
- **Providing the missing link, a (North side) Ruakura Road 3.0m pedestrian/cycle path, to be continued onwards along the grass berm (East from Wairere Drive) to join the Tainui pedestrian/cycle path at the boundary between Transpower and the Business Innovation Park.**
- **Providing a safe pedestrian/ cycle crossing of the Wairere Drive shared-use pedestrian/cycle path at the intersection of Wairere Drive and Fifth Ave Extension.**

Thank you for the opportunity to support Cycle Action Waikato's submission.