

**From:** [Information](#)  
**To:** [Infracom](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Late Infrastructure Submission  
**Date:** Monday, 5 July 2021 8:04:00 am

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Saturday, 3 July 2021 5:50 pm  
**To:** Information <info@infracom.govt.nz>  
**Subject:** Late Infrastructure Submission

Hi there, I'm Terribly sorry to send you a late submission to the infrastructure Commission, if it's still alright, I would be very grateful if our submission was included, below.

I apologize again for our lateness and thank you very much for your time.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]  
NZRP Admin

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#### Infrastructure for a Better Future - New Zealand Rail Party Submission (Draft)

1. The NZ Rail Party thanks the New Zealand Infrastructure Commission for the opportunity to submit on the proposed Infrastructure Strategy for New Zealand.
2. We note that there is little explicit mention of railways in this document, which is of great concern to the New Zealand Rail Party. Greater use of rail was a frequent theme in the Aotearoa 2050 Survey, with many participants suggesting that better railways could contribute significantly to the social and economic wellbeing of this country.
3. The New Zealand Rail Party notes that the New Zealand Infrastructure Strategy Consultation Document states:

“There is a significant gap between the infrastructure we need and what we can afford. It’s not just a case of building more. We must also do better with the infrastructure we already have if we are to meet the proposed vision for 2050.”  
(Aotearoa New Zealand Infrastructure Strategy Consultation Document, May 2021, p. 10)

4. The New Zealand Rail Party agrees we must do better with our existing infrastructure, especially rail. The New Zealand Rail Party advocates that the existing railways should be maintained to a much higher standard, and should be more extensively used. The current rail network is under-utilised and would require little investment to greatly increase freight and passenger transport. In addition, the network can be enlarged through key investments, giving greater coverage. The New Zealand Rail Party recommends that the railways should be used to carry more freight, and passenger services should be introduced throughout the entire rail network. Increasing passenger rail throughout New Zealand will also lead to a boost in domestic tourism and bring greater connectivity to regional New Zealand.
5. The New Zealand Rail Party would like to point out that the use of rail is more efficient and

produces less carbon emissions than any other form of transport. It was recently reported in The New Zealand Rail Plan:

“In the long-run, shifting freight off the roads and onto rail will have significant safety, congestion and environmental benefits. In terms of environmental benefits, on average every tonne of freight moved by rail delivers at least a 70 percent reduction in carbon emissions compared with heavy road freight.” (The New Zealand Rail Plan, April 2021, p.25)

6. Furthermore, The New Zealand Rail Plan states:

‘The electrified commuter rail networks in Auckland and Wellington also deliver emissions savings from the efficient mass movement of people and avoided car trips.’ (The New Zealand Rail Plan, April 2021, p. 12).

Despite this, rail has been hardly considered in the NZ Infrastructure Plan. This is highly disappointing, especially in the light that the Crown has recently declared that a climate emergency exists in New Zealand.

7. It is obvious that if the Government is serious about reducing fossil fuel use and carbon emissions, rail is the best way to achieve this. Since increased freight and passenger services on rail would reduce carbon emissions, rail transport should be subsidised to incentivise people away from other, more polluting, forms of transport. Increasing the use of rail for freight would also enable goods to be delivered cheaply, swiftly and with less pollution than on roading. The New Zealand Rail Party would like to emphasize that rail networks should be expanded to cities throughout New Zealand, as this would reduce congestion and pollution. Moving freight from roads onto rail will also reduce the number of heavy trucks on the roads, which will improve safety and reduce the road toll. To further reduce the dependence on fossil fuels, the New Zealand Rail Party recommends exploring the option that surplus electricity from the closing of the Tiwai Point Aluminium smelter be used to help electrify rail, and in areas which this is inappropriate, alternative fuels and on-board batteries should be pursued. In addition, railways are cheaper to maintain and build than roading per kilometre. This in itself saves on infrastructure costs, and reduces the environmental impact of transport. Finally, a reduction in fossil fuel usage will also have an economic benefit by reducing oil imports, which will lead to an increase in New Zealand’s GDP.

8. The New Zealand Rail Party notes that the Aotearoa New Zealand Infrastructure Strategy Consultation Document states that there was no standard approach to how the central government contributes to large-scale projects, such as Auckland’s City Rail Link (Aotearoa New Zealand Infrastructure Strategy Consultation Document, May 2021, p. 101). The New Zealand Rail Party recommends that the central government should standardize the approach to rail development throughout New Zealand instead of ad hoc planning. There should be one Government entity responsible for research and recommendations for rail throughout New Zealand, rather than replicating studies and research at a local government level. To achieve this, the New Zealand Rail Party recommends that rail infrastructure should be fully integrated into Waka Kotahi, as it is a ‘steel highway’.

9. The New Zealand Rail Party observes that railways are more equitable, as rail is more accessible to the elderly, disabled and those of lower economic status than other alternative forms of transport. Improving the rail infrastructure will ensure that the transport needs of people living in both urban and rural areas would be met. Subsidising passenger rail would also ensure equity. Railways can be easily and efficiently integrated with walking, bicycling and e-scooters, all of which are rapidly gaining in popularity and are environmentally friendly.

10. Transit-oriented development is generally more successful if it is focused on fixed-route public transport. It is well established that intensive development works particularly well near train stations and tram stops. This is not restricted to urban transport. Regional towns and settlements at the edges of metropolitan areas that have good train connections often attract additional investment and are more likely to be designed with low-impact transport options, such as walking and cycling. Passenger rail also gives access to a greater range of employment opportunities, including higher-wage jobs.

11. Part of any freight supply chain strategy needs to include consideration of mode shift. In particular, the strategy needs to outline ways in which more freight can be shifted from road to rail. This should include consideration of sidings, transfer sites, railway line (and crossing loop) capacity, and other infrastructure, whether publicly or privately funded and owned. In addition, other incentives to use rail need to be investigated. Railways can play a significant part in ensuring a sustainable

economy.

12. In conclusion, increasing and utilizing the existing rail infrastructure will lead to numerous benefits for all of Aotearoa New Zealand, including less carbon emissions, less congestion, less pollution, safer roads, economic savings, increased tourism and increased GDP. Railways are the future, and must be at the forefront of any infrastructure strategy.

The New Zealand Rail Party