

**Porirua Chamber of Commerce Oral Submission
to Porirua City Council
on the proposed Transport Bylaw
25 November 2020 at 10.25 am, by Zoom
Hamish Mexted, Chair**

- Kia ora koutou
- While our members disagree with the proposal to introduce paid parking, I want to acknowledge first that together both Chamber and Council share the same vision for Porirua, and that we all want what is best for our city.
- Right now, Porirua businesses, like all Kiwi businesses are facing immense challenges from the pandemic. We're concerned that this proposal comes at a time when businesses do not need further pressures, costs, or uncertainty.
- The question that Councillors and officers must ask and satisfy themselves of at this time is this: ***Does this proposal mitigate or exacerbate the impacts of Covid for businesses?*** I'll let you consider that.
- The Chamber believes that the proposal to introduce car parking charges will discourage and deter people from coming into the CBD, making the city an unfriendly place to meet and an unattractive destination to visit.
- **And that's the last thing we want for Porirua.**
- We note a majority of submitters were opposed to this proposal in the recent LTP.
- When there is a majority of ratepayers in opposition to a proposal, the onus on Council to prove why it is needed beyond a reasonable doubt. We do not believe this has been substantiated.
- Given we have limited time to speak – here's the highlights reels from our submission:
 - What's proposed is a blunt policy tool falling victim to perverse incentives that will push visitors away from Porirua rather than onto other forms of transport.
 - We are concerned about the associated equity and access issues. The Council's own comms described the new charges as "spare change". Unhelpful. Spare change to some can be an insurmountable barrier for the most vulnerable to access these valuable spaces in our community.
 - Our previous LTP submission raised issues about the lack of supporting detail, such as information on the current occupancy rates and turnover, capital investment costs, revenue projections, parking behaviours and costs. This again was missing from the

consultation documents.

- There was no analysis on similarly sized cities to Porirua, given the statement “We are one of the last places in New Zealand of this size that doesn’t have some form of paid parking.”¹ Of the five cities that make up the Wellington region, the two other comparable cities ‘of Porirua’s size’ – Upper Hutt and Kapiti - have no paid parking. Petone, another destination centre, also has no paid parking.
- I want to draw Councillors attention to the quote at the top of our submission, from Upper Hutt Council’s website “To encourage people to come and shop or eat at the variety of stores and cafes that Upper Hutt has to offer, there are no parking charges for parking within the city centre.”²
- Of the similarly sized cities to Porirua that do have paid parking a number have a ‘first hour free’ policy. We would like to see analysis from these councils to inform what is proposed for Porirua. The Chamber still remains to be convinced about the justification and workability of thirty minutes or hour free policies.
- We would encourage you to invest in monitoring, critical to the implementation of any changes.
- As this is a move to user pays, any additional revenue should be ringfenced and offset for city businesses, rather than placed into general rates take.
- Finally, I wanted to read you some of the comments we received from our members on this:
 - *That’s not how Porirua does things; do they want people to work in, shop in and visit Porirua or not? I understand [what’s] behind the concept, and that those who come up with these ideas... [they] won’t be affected but we already pay so much in rates and don’t get our voices heard, this is insulting.*
 - *At the moment in this covid situation globally it is not good, and it has done damage to local businesses in New Zealand. I think that our locals in Porirua income is not stable enough and with this charge of parking fees it will be a bad idea because less people will park in Porirua. So it will mean less customers will come and buy from local businesses in Porirua and this will negatively affect my business and others that are here.*
 - *Ridiculous idea just as we are becoming a vibrant city and bringing people for everywhere, would request council not to ruin it for us. Is the highest rates in the country not enough that we have to now pay for parking when we go to shop?*

¹ <https://poriruacity.govt.nz/services/parking-transport/transport-bylaw-consultation/#npgsgh8n>

² <https://www.upperhuttcity.com/Services/Roads-and-parking/Parking-in-Upper-Hutt#:~:text=in%20Upper%20Hutt-Where%20can%20you%20park,parking%20within%20the%20city%20centre.>

- *As a resident and business owner in Pukerua Bay, equidistant between Porirua and Paraparaumu, goes where I'll be shopping, meeting up and dining if Porirua City introduces paid parking. My many Wellington friends often come to Porirua to shop and meet up as parking and prices in Wellington have become so horrendous. I guess they'll now come to Paraparaumu with me.*
- *Claiming that Council believe it will make it easier to find a park is disingenuous and will make doing business in the city harder.*
- *As a Porirua city building owner. I believe this is a bad move. If Porirua city council wants to kill Porirua then charge for the parking. It will send people to the mall and kill the surrounding streets businesses.*

Thank you.