



THE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

21 May 2024

Hon Simon Bridges
Board Chair
New Zealand Transport Agency

Please Quote
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Tēnā koe Hon Simon Bridges

Subject: Local access to New Zealand Transport Agency CCTV cameras

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing regarding a recent decision of Cabinet that impacts local access to New Zealand Transport Agency CCTV cameras, and will also affect local community safety initiatives in Rotorua.

In response to safety concerns within our community, our Council has had to increase investment in safety initiatives and we have formed an effective partnership with local Police.

A critical aspect of this working relationship is council's CCTV network which provides 24/7 surveillance of our city. On many occasions our team has been able to successfully provide CCTV footage to local Police to assist with investigations and prosecutions, ensuring those who choose to commit crimes are held accountable and caught either immediately, or within a short timeframe of the incident occurring.

Currently our CCTV network includes 19 New Zealand Transport Agency (Waka Kotahi) cameras. We have recently learnt that following a Privacy Impact Assessment, New Zealand Transport Agency will be resuming full operation of these cameras which means our Community Safety Team will no longer be able to access them or freely obtain footage from them to assist Police.

We appreciate the New Zealand Transport Agency has important obligations regarding privacy in relation to these cameras but would like to highlight that removing council's ability to access and monitor these cameras is removing a valuable tool from local crime prevention and community safety initiatives.

The decision to remove cameras in these key areas will leave a large gap in our CCTV network. To maintain community safety we will have to purchase replacement cameras and fix these new cameras to New Zealand Transport Agency's existing camera poles throughout the district.

This is currently estimated at around \$675,000 to replace and install 19 new cameras.

As this would be another significant cost to our ratepayers to address community safety, we are requesting that you consider an exemption regarding council's access to these cameras in Rotorua so we can continue effectively assisting Police to address crime. Alternatively we request funding support from the New Zealand Transport Agency to cover the cost of these replacement cameras.

Recognising the shared priority of safety for both Council and Government, your support will minimise significant costs to Council and ratepayers while also contributing to a safer community and benefitting our local Rotorua Police.

I appreciate you considering this solution and hope to hear from you soon.

Ngā mihi

Tania Tapsell
Her Worship the Mayor of Rotorua