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Joint Media Release from Kāpiti Cycling Action and Low Carbon Kāpiti

## Advocacy groups urge Council to support safe cycling in Waikanae

Local advocacy groups are calling on Kāpiti Coast District Council to support introduction of safe cycle lanes on the former SH1 at Waikanae.

The Council's original design for the revamped town centre, which would significantly increase the amount of parallel car parking available in this location and include cycle lanes, is in danger of being overturned, they say.

There are currently 22 car parks available immediately outside Mahara Place. The Council's original plan includes 32 carparks, cycle lanes and a buffer zone between them so drivers can safely open their doors.

The Waikanae Community Board, acting on a request from some local retailers, asked the council for an alternative option to be included. It replaces parallel parking with angle parking and has no cycle lanes. Option two creates only nine more carparks than option one.

Council is expected to decide between the two options on 15 March 2018.

Kāpiti Cycling Action and Low Carbon Kāpiti support option one, which they say is safer for cyclists while still creating more carparks than are currently present. Kāpiti Older Person's Council also supports option one, citing concerns about the safety of angle parks and difficulties people with mobility problems have using them.

Lynn Sleath from Kāpiti Cycling Action says while the retailers' request is understandable, it's important for councillors and residents to be aware of the potential human cost of creating angle parks in this location.

"We are not opposed to angle parking in locations where road space permits. There are plenty of examples in our region where this arrangement works perfectly well, such as Thorndon Quay in Wellington.

"We are, however, opposed to plans that place vulnerable cyclists at risk. A high percentage of Waikanae residents are senior citizens, many of whom cycle to local shops, businesses and the railway station.

"Introducing angle parking as proposed in option two is too risky. The limited road space remaining would leave no room for marked cycle lanes, forcing cyclists into the traffic.

Low Carbon Kāpiti Chair Jake Roos said cyclists need to be recognised as customers too.

"With more and more people taking to bikes and e-bikes to get around, businesses would be wise to support a cycle-friendly town centre, as represented by option one.

"More people would ride their bikes to town if it was made safer and more welcoming for cyclists. Reduced competition for parking would also make it easier for drivers to go there."

The decision was a no-brainer, he said.

“If councillors vote for option two they will soon be asking ratepayers to cough up to put things right, once reversing accidents inevitably occur. They should save themselves and the community grief by voting for the safer option one.”

Mr Sleath said this was not just the view of a few passionate cyclists.

“Around 8000 cars and trucks still use the road through Waikanae each day. The New Zealand Transport Agency’s own design guide for cycle facilities recommends the provision of cycle lanes for this level of traffic flow.

“Both the NZTA and New Zealand Police have said publicly that they do not favour angle parking at this location.”

“Low Carbon Kāpiti wants to see the district implement climate change solutions that bring additional benefits to the community,” said Mr Roos.

“Cycling is good for our health, our environment and our town centres too. Council must not make the mistake of rejecting this approach in Waikanae Village.”

ENDS

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***Photo Caption – Supporters of Option 1 assemble in Mahara Place to call for safer, more welcoming facilities for Waikanae Town Centre visitors.***