

# Tawa Community Board Roading Working Group

## Evaluation of Potential Traffic Improvement

### Lincoln Avenue Tawa



October 2009

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## **Background**

Council has received requests from local residents and local businesses in Lincoln Avenue, Tawa to see if improvements to the current roading layout can be made to improve perceived safety issues and parking issues. A meeting held in September 2009 organised by the Tawa Community Board members met with nine residents and businesses in respect of traffic safety issues. This report is to investigate the suggestions made by residents at the meeting and to look at the overall efficiency and safety of Lincoln Avenue. As part of the investigation site visits were undertaken during the week and on weekend activity. Traffic data has been collected showing vehicle numbers and speeds and traffic crash history has also been reviewed as part of the traffic safety assessment.

## **Residents and Tawa Community Board Members' Suggestions**

An initial request to install broken yellow lines on the southern side of Lincoln Avenue from Main Street to Roy Street has been declined by Council's traffic engineers. The reasoning behind declining these requests was on safety grounds, as by removing parking from one side of the street it would increase the speed of motorists creating an unsafe environment for vehicles exiting driveways and, more importantly, pedestrians.

Several recommendations from the meeting with residents were forwarded to Council officers to investigate and report back on their suggestions:

- Install parking bay roadmarkings to improve safety of vehicles exiting driveways and install broken yellow lines where on-street parking space does not comply. Legally, on-street parking spaces must be 7 metres, 5 metres for vehicle and 1 metre either side of a driveway.
- Parkwise officers to include Lincoln Avenue on enforcing correct parking
- Create angled parking on Main Road between Tawa Mowers and Samoan church
- Create drop off zone outside gymnasium on southern side of Lincoln Avenue
- Look into traffic calming measures in Lincoln Avenue
- Provide current data on speeds in Lincoln Avenue

## **Site Visits**

Site visits have been undertaken during the past six months by Council officers. Particular attention was taken on the drop-off and pick-up of children at the gymnasium, traffic flow and speeds on Lincoln Avenue, on-street parking on Lincoln Avenue and surrounding streets and pedestrian demand.

## **Parking Issues**

- It was observed during site visits that on average 2 vehicles per hour parked too close to existing driveways in Lincoln Avenue.
- On-street parking on the weekend when the gymnastics club was operating was generally full, but on-street parking spaces were available during weekdays.
- On-street parking spaces during week days being taken up by park and ride commuters due to the close proximity to bus stop.
- Double parking occurred occasionally on Lincoln Avenue to drop-off and pick-up children during gymnastics activity.
- Limited parking spaces available along Main Road Tawa. It was observed that during working hours many on-street parking spaces in Lincoln Avenue were being taken by workers wishing to park close to businesses along the Main Road, Tawa frontage.

Officers have looked into the request to create angled parking along Main Road, Tawa from Tawa Mowers to the Samoan church but do not recommend this on traffic safety grounds. At this intersection, the safety concerns relate to vehicles southbound. When a vehicle is in the right turn bay wanting to get into Lincoln Avenue, motorists travelling southbound manouvre left of that stationary vehicle. If angled parking were to be installed, the southbound traffic and vehicles reversing out of the parking spaces would not have sufficient road space. This would result in either delays to through traffic and/or a greater likelihood of crashes occurring than currently exists.

## **Traffic Issues**

The Annual Average Daily Traffic on Lincoln Avenue is approximately 1,600 vehicles per day, with a weekday peak hour flow of approximately 156 vehicles between 4pm and 6pm. The tube counts that were carried out in March 2009 show that the 7 day mean speed on Lincoln Avenue, outside 12 Lincoln Avenue, is 46km/h. A comparison has been made with comparable streets in Tawa to see what their speeds are and found Lyndhurst Road has 1,330 vehicles per day and a 7 day mean speed of 49km/h. Victory Crescent has 2,500 vehicles per day with its mean speed being 52km/h. These speeds are typical of local roads in Tawa, where the posted speed limit is 50km/h. Council has previously consulted on lower speed limits (40km/h) for Tawa, but met with resistance to change to lower speeds from residents.

During officers' site visits it was observed that:

- Traffic speed slowed during weekend peak, but no observed delays in getting out of Lincoln Avenue or on side roads
- Traffic speeds were lower than posted speed limit between Roy Street and Main Road. Speeds coming down Lincoln Avenue were on average 46km/h.
- On-street parking in lower Lincoln Avenue created a narrow carriageway width, creating motorists to have to stop and give way to one another to pass safely. No safety issues were observed with motorists and it created a slow speed environment.

### **Traffic Calming**

The Council has received requests from local residents for traffic calming in Lincoln Avenue, expressing a desire to have speed humps installed. We do not recommend speed humps on Lincoln Avenue.

Speed humps do slow vehicles speed, but the downside of installing them is that they result in more noise, damage and wear to cars, significant installation cost, increased potential for loss of control crashes which would divert driver's attention from real hazards. For these reasons, speed humps on public roads are primarily used to discourage drivers from taking shortcuts rather than as a means of slowing them down.

With the recent monitoring of vehicle speeds along Lincoln Avenue, the speeds of vehicles were below the legal speed limit of 50kph. The road environment and vehicles parking on-street also contributed to the lower speeds.

### **Crash History**

The crash history along Lincoln Avenue and the surrounding streets was analysed over a five year period between 2004 and 2008. The New Zealand Transport Agency and New Zealand Police Crash Analysis System shows that there were two reported crashes over the five year period. Of the reported crashes there have been none involving pedestrians, both crashes involved vehicles u-turning and both were non injury crashes. This is a good indication that motorists are aware of the narrowness of the carriageway in lower Lincoln Avenue and drive according to the conditions.

## Recommendation

We would recommend only minor changes to the current roading network (see diagram below) to improve safety to all road users along Lincoln Avenue. These improvements are:

- Dedicate a drop-off/pick-up area 'P5' next to the entrance of the gymnasium (2 parking spaces) to help parents safely drop-off and pick-up and reduce the amount of drop-off and pick-up of children on the northern side of the street.
- Consulting with Harcourt's Real Estate and other affected business to see if the 3 on-street parking spaces can be changed to time restricted parking.
- Install roadmarkings demarcating parking spaces for on-street parking up to Roy Street. Where parking spaces between driveways are less than 5 metres, install broken yellow lines to reduce the occurrence of vehicles parking over driveways.
- Parkwise include Lincoln Avenue on its regular patrol route of Tawa.



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