



Building resilience: The value of community values assessments in transport projects

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ABSTRACT

Transport projects make important positive contributions to our quality of life and the economy. They too can have a variety of negative impacts on people and the natural environment. The assessment of the effects of transport typically goes through the well-established AEE/EIA process, often with a focus on the science and what can be quantified and measured. The effects on people and communities has often found itself buried into planning assessments, consultation feedback, or at best through a social impact assessment relying heavily on quantitative demographic data or material drawn from other specialist assessments subsequently viewed through a 'social lens'. Baseline assessments provide the foundation for assessing change and impact and are recognised best practice for understanding the natural environment. However, when it comes to understanding the effects of projects on communities, baseline assessments are often weak or non-existent.

To fully understand how a community might be affected by a project, a baseline assessment is needed. This has been recognised by the Transport Agency who are developing and trialling a process described as Community Values Assessment (CVA). This process is initiated right at the beginning of a project before major decisions and investment is made. As the name suggests, Community Values Assessment (CVA) is a community-led process, with the purpose of identifying and understanding what is important to a community, tangible and intangible, what they value about where they live, work, learn, play and shop. Understanding the relationship between potential transport projects and what a community values lead to better outcomes that are responsive and resilient. A CVA's value is that it provides a community baseline upon which to meaningfully inform decision making from the outset.

We are only at the beginning of understanding the value of CVA's and so far the CVA process has been applied to a few of the Agency's recent projects. The Old Mangere Bridge replacement, Otaki to Levin and the Whangarei to Te Hana Programme are three examples. Informed by the communities themselves the CVA's have influenced the option assessment, selection and design development outcomes well before the AEE and consenting phases have even started. This paper shares the approach the Agency is developing and some of the unique grass-roots tools and techniques used to work with communities to understand what is important to them at the start of the project journey.

INTRODUCTION

Our roads and transport activities affect the daily lives of so many people. It is therefore important that community values are integrated into the Transport Agency's business.

The process of capturing how a community might be affected by a project has been labelled Community Values Assessment (CVA) by the Transport Agency. By understanding what is important to people and communities, we get better decision making on projects. CVA's have influenced aspects of projects like what to avoid and what to include (e.g. cycleway), connectivity to adjoining communities, design elements to reflect a community's heritage and character; urban design and effects mitigation. Three recent case studies demonstrate the influence and value of CVA's in project decision making and outcomes.

CASE STUDY 1: OLD MANGERE BRIDGE REPLACEMENT

The Old Mangere Bridge, built 100 years ago to connect the communities of Mangere and Onehunga is coming to the end of its life and needs to be replaced. For hundreds of years Maori have been crossing the harbour in the vicinity of the old bridge and for early European settlers too, the bridge provided an important connection between northern and southern settlements. To today's community it is much more than just a bridge connecting A to B - it is a destination reflecting the area's rich heritage.

The CVA process

Given the community's strong and 100- year connection to the Old Mangere Bridge, it was apparent from the outset that any design for the replacement bridge would need to reflect community values, developed by the community themselves. Working with the community started well before the scope of the design had been determined. This meant engaging much earlier than usual through an inclusive design process, asking the community to identify what they liked and didn't like about the old bridge, and what they would like to see in a new bridge. This community-driven early design process initiated what is now referred to by the Agency as a Community Values Assessment (CVA).

A range of engagement activities involving families and children, and specific engagement with mana whenua helped us understand community values. This was a game changer for the Transport Agency, being the first time we had sought to specifically understand community values, and the first time a mana whenua panel was established to reflect cultural values in project design.

How the CVA influenced outcomes

Community values from the CVA process fundamentally shaped the bridge design and is reflected in the consent conditions to ensure the community values are 'locked in' and are not just aspirational. The bridge design is wider than originally planned to accommodate fishing pods, rain gardens to treat stormwater, and traps to prevent rubbish blowing into the harbour.

The heritage and cultural significance of the bridge is reflected in the arch design, representing the association to volcanic cones either side of the harbour; as well as providing the ability for a wider span for small craft such as waka ama to move underneath at all tides. Mana whenua values will be incorporated through Pou whenua recognising the many Iwi who have associations with the area.

Children's stories will be reflected through interpretative panels on the deck of the bridge bringing the bridge to life for current and future generations to come.

CASE STUDY 2: ŌTAKI TO NORTH OF LEVIN PROJECT

The Ōtaki to north of Levin project (O2NL) forms the northernmost section of the Wellington northern state highway corridor. The O2NL project is currently in the early investigation phase, and is utilising the CVA process to help understand what is important to a community to inform the option selection process. This is illustrated by initiatives such as including community representatives in the multi-criteria analysis process, enabling them to influence the weighting and prioritisation of various social, environmental and economic criteria.

CASE STUDY 3: WHĀNGĀREI TO TE HANA

Whāngārei to Te Hana is a long-term programme of investment in transport which sets out to provide safer, easier, and more reliable journeys, reduce the cost of travel for the freight industry, and improve the ability of Northland to attract investment and tourism. It includes a combination of projects across the 80km long corridor to deliver an upgraded carriageway and safer alignment of State Highway 1 over the next 30 years. The corridor is divided into two sections:

- Whāngārei to Port Marsden Highway (SH15)
- Port Marsden Highway (SH15) to Te Hana.

Initial engagement on a short list of options for 4-laning Whāngārei to Port Marsden Highway (SH15) has recently finished, while options for the recommended programme from Port Marsden Highway (SH15) to Te Hana (where the route meets Ara Tūhono – Pūhoi to Wellsford Road of National Significance) are under development.

Engagement on the Whāngārei to Port Marsden Highway section of the project has been undertaken very early in the project development process, with a key piece of research being to develop a community baseline through a Preliminary Social Impact Assessment (SIA). Through SIA-focused activities at Public Information Days, focus groups with existing community-based organisations, site visits, and desktop research, an understanding is being developed of how people value their communities and current way of life.

An 80km long corridor with many towns, settlements and communities; urban and rural environments; and a delivery timeframe that spans decades, means there is a diverse and fluid social environment. Understanding that environment, how communities have developed, how they are continuing to evolve, and what is important to people within those communities, gives us a social baseline which can be benchmarked and developed over time as projects within the 30-year programme are developed and implemented. This knowledge will help better understand the potential impacts of projects on communities within the project area and improve project decision making.

CONCLUSIONS AND KEY LEARNINGS TO TAKE FORWARD

CVA represents an evolution of best practice merging elements of social impact baseline assessments with meaningful community engagement. Just as we do with the physical and natural environment, it's important we understand the social environment and how projects can change this, and also identify opportunities to achieve project outcomes that are so much more than might have been anticipated at the outset.

Still a long way to go but the outcomes are beginning to speak for themselves.

The Value of Community Value Assessments in Transport Projects

EIANZ Conference 2017

Rebekah Pokura-Ward and Sarah Cronwright (NZTA)



Overview of Presentation

1. NZTA's Social and Environmental Responsibility
2. CVA 's - The What; The Why; The How
3. Case Studies
 - Old Mangere Bridge Replacement
 - Otaki 2 North of Levin Expressway
 - Whangarei 2 Te Hana
4. Learnings so far

We seek to responsibly manage our interactions with New Zealand's people, places and environment

Emissions from road transport are estimated to comprise approximately **17%** of New Zealand's greenhouse gas emissions.

There are over **2,000 kilometres** of state highways located in urban areas, which can affect the connectivity, character, business, social and cultural aspects of our communities.

Over **200 kilometres** of the state highway network is located within ecologically sensitive conservation areas managed by the Department of Conservation.

The state highway network can affect our public, commercial, residential and recreational places.

The Transport Agency operates and maintains over **3,000** bridges and **10,000** culverts, which can change the quality and character of our harbours, estuaries, rivers, streams and watercourses.

New Zealand's themed highway system traverses more than **4,000** kilometres of our unique scenic landscapes and natural areas.

The state highway network can change local access and movement patterns.

There are more than **300** registered heritage sites within **200 metres** of the roads of national significance.

Nearly TBC kilometres of state highway are located within **100 metres** of our coastlines, potentially affecting our coastal and marine environments.

State highway operation and improvement can change natural habitats and affect native flora and fauna.

The state highway network can change people's mode of travel, including cycling, walking and public transport.

In **2016** the Transport Agency holds **90** archaeological authorities for capital projects across New Zealand

Approximately **22%** of the total health and social costs associated with man-made air pollution is attributable to motor vehicle emissions.

In **2015** there were over **50** plans in place to manage potential environmental and social effects of the construction and maintenance of the state highway network.

In **2016** the Transport Agency holds over **3,000** resource consents and other environmental permits related to operating and improving the state highway network, including for discharges to air, water, and land.

Every year the Transport Agency receives more than **100** complaints related to road-traffic noise and vibration.

The Transport Agency maintains over TBC hectares of vegetation along the state highway

In **2015** over **40** billion kilometres were travelled on New Zealand roads.

Every year there are spills of potentially hazardous substances on the state highway network.

Maintaining and operating the state highway network consumes resources, including approximately **50,000** tonnes of bitumen, **1.5 million** tonnes of aggregate and **7** gigawatt hours of electricity each year.

NZTA's Social and Environmental Commitment

Land Transport Management Act – shall exhibit a sense of social and environmental responsibility

NZTA Environmental and Social Policy –

- We promote an accessible and safe transport system that contributes positively to NZ's economic, social and environmental welfare, and we are committed to acting in an environmentally and socially responsible manner.
- We are committed to protecting and enhancing the natural, cultural and built environment, enhancing the quality of life for NZer's by improving community liveability.

NZTA's Social and Environmental Commitment

To implement our Policy we will:

- Continuously improve performance in the management of environmental and social impacts.
- Actively and meaningfully engage with affected and interested persons and organisations.

Community Values Assessment CVA

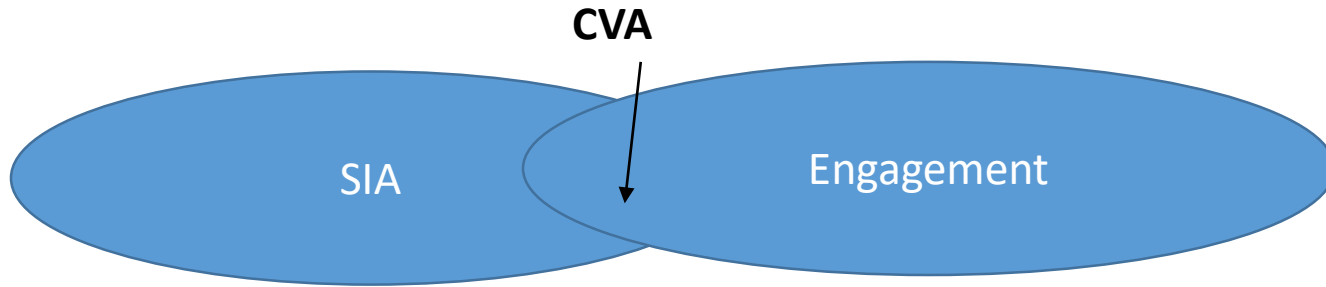
What is it ?

Why do it ?

How do you do it ?

CVA - What is it ?

Process to develop a baseline of community values to inform decision making



Merging of SIA and Community Engagement

CVA's Key Features

- Community Lead – community tells us what's important.
- Initiated early.
- All values included (tangible and intangible).
- Influence decision making – GO/NO GO, what to avoid, what to include.

Why do CVA's ?

- Risk management – save time and cost later on.
- Know what to avoid and what to include.
- Where and what compromises can be made.
- Community-generated solutions and ideas.
- Develop long-term relationship with the community.

The HOW

Case Study 1 : Old Mangere Bridge Replacement

Case Study 2 : Otaki 2 North of Levin Expressway

Case Study 3 : Whangarei to Te Hana

Old Mangere Bridge Replacement

More than just a bridge



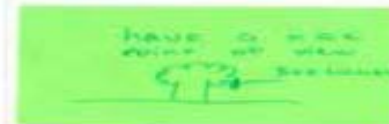
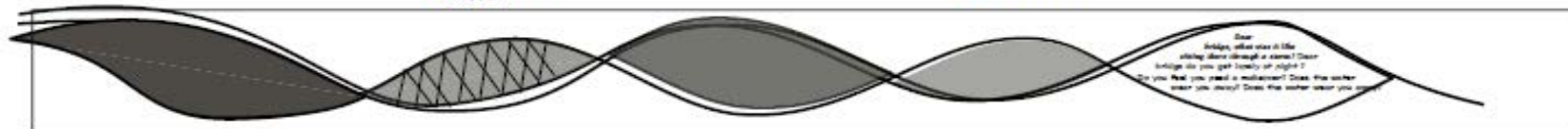
Youth Involvement



Sense of Place



Are you sick of getting gas in your mouth? Do you want a friend? Are you bored being here? How many boats have crashed into you?



Otaki to North of Levin





7 open day events



1,676+

people attended open days, drop in sessions and community meetings in June and July 2017



553

pins and stickers on the maps



6 ways to give feedback

- Verbally at events
- Paper feedback form
- Online feedback form
- Emails to the project inbox
- Comments on the discussion boards
- Stickers or pins on the maps



217 feedback forms completed



2 newsletter languages

- English
- Te Reo



300 sausages eaten at Family Fun Day

Otaki to North of Levin



Otaki to North of Levin



ŌHAU



Longest East & West Motorway Rd



Lake Horowhenua



SPORT & RECREATION



BUY & SELL



LEVIN



Overpass over Green St East



Whangarei to Te Hana



MAP INFORMATION

What local areas and places are important to you?

There are elements that we need to consider when planning and constructing Whāngārei to Te Hana this includes the areas and places that are important to the community.

We would like to know the areas and places are important to you to understand how the project could impact them, both positively and negatively.

[View more »](#)



ADD A PIN

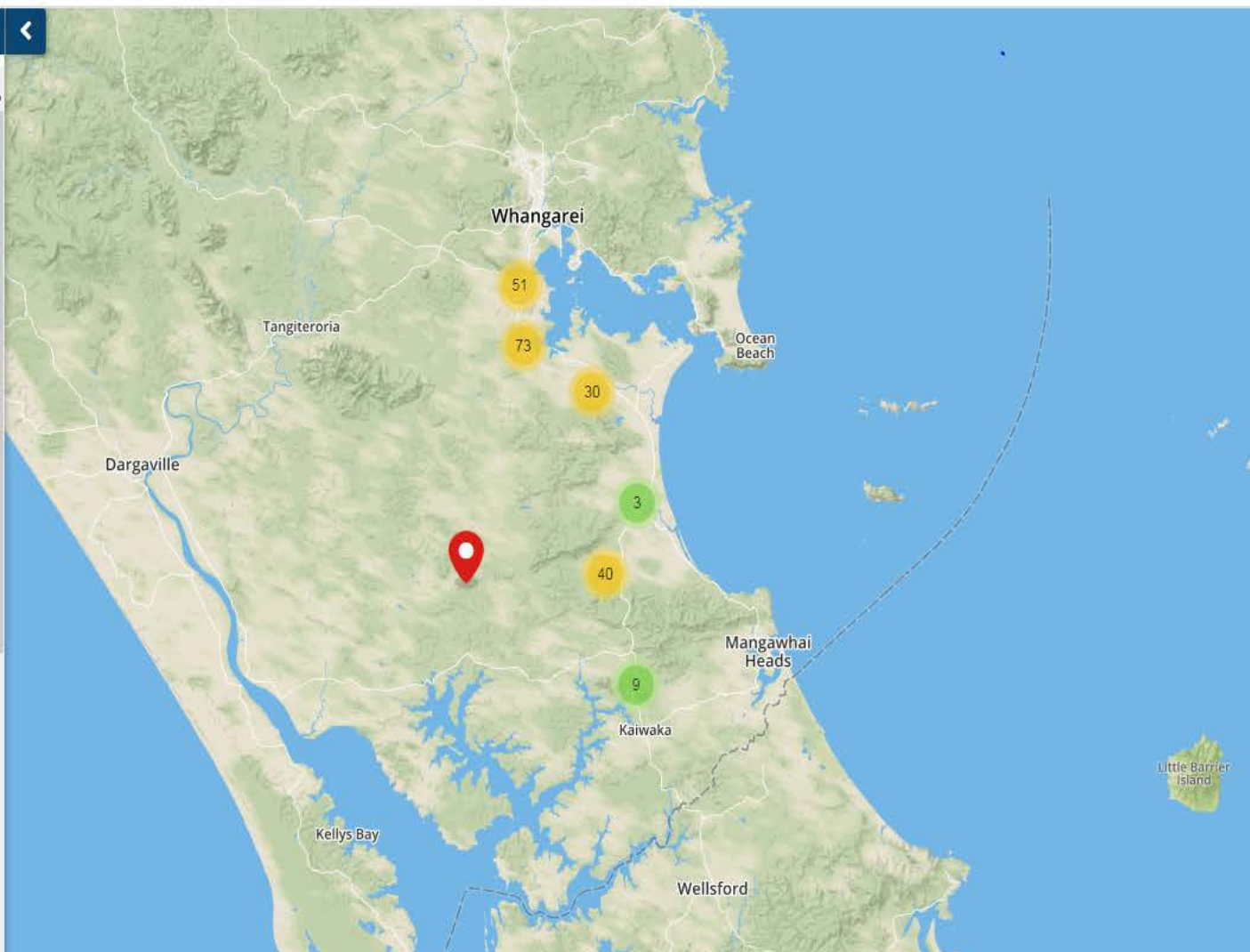
Select a pin below and drag it on to the map

 Farming (animals - sheep, cattle, diary)

 Farming (crops)

 Hiking/tramping/walking

 Swimming



Feedback Snapshot

ENGAGEMENT IN NUMBERS



812

Responses received from individuals and organisations.

Of these,



431

Feedback forms and letters arrived by Freepost.

and



381

Completed feedback online or sent an email to the project team.



17,655

Visits to the Whāngārei to Te Hana webpages between 7 August – 12 September.



500

Attended three public information days in Kaiwaka, Mata and Whāngārei.



9,750

Newsletters printed and distributed to households and displayed at seven community locations between Te Hana and Whāngārei.



186

Visitors have used our interactive map to tell us about local areas of importance.



1,407

Visitors clicked through to our engagement pages.

Learnings and Call for Action

- Involve our communities early.
- Small steps in improving and adapting best practice can have big benefits

Questions