

26 September 2025

Committee Secretariat
Justice Committee
Parliament Buildings
Wellington

Teena koutou katoa,

Submission from Waikato District Council on the Antisocial Road Use Legislation Amendment Bill

Introduction

Waikato District Council (Council) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed Antisocial Road Use Legislation Amendment Bill, aimed at curbing antisocial road use.

Council strongly supports initiatives that enhance public safety and empower New Zealand Police with the appropriate tools to respond more effectively to dangerous and disruptive behaviour on our roads.

While not many of the proposed changes directly impact Council's operations, we work collaboratively with our communities and Police to minimise the impacts of antisocial driving behaviours, and appreciate these measures to better enable liveable, thriving, and connected communities.

Council acknowledges the significant and growing impact of anti-social road use across both rural and urban environments, particularly from a public safety perspective. Reckless driving behaviours such as excessive speeding, dangerous overtaking, illegal street racing, and disruptive vehicle noise not only endanger the lives of road users and pedestrians but also erode community wellbeing and confidence in the safety of public spaces.

In rural areas, these behaviours pose heightened risks due to limited infrastructure, reduced visibility, and longer emergency response times, while in urban settings they contribute to increased collision rates and pedestrian vulnerability.

Council strongly supports legislative measures that address and deter anti-social road use, recognising the need to protect all road users and uphold the integrity of our transport networks.

Council advocates for a balanced approach that incorporates education, equity, and meaningful community engagement to help mitigate the concerns outlined in the Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) released by the Ministry of Transport 26 November 2024, specifically those noted on page 17 under Affected Parties, which highlight the likely disproportionate negative impact of the proposed legislative changes on Maaori.

Given that the Waikato District has a significant Maaori population and acknowledging our status as a provincial council where many residents live and work in areas with limited access to public transport, these concerns are particularly relevant. We consider it important that the policy is responsive to the Government's obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi, particularly Article 3, which affirms the principles of equity and active protection.

Endorsement of Enforcement Tools

Council supports the expansion of enforcement powers that enable Police to respond swiftly to antisocial road use, particularly with regard to illegal dirt bike activity and street racing/gathering.

These behaviours currently pose significant risks to public safety and community wellbeing in our district, being situated between Auckland and Hamilton. We believe that effective enforcement is a critical component of a broader harm prevention strategy.

Current Collaborative Activities with Police

Council is actively working with Police across both northern and southern sectors of our district to address antisocial road use through the following mechanisms:

- **Bylaw Enforcement:** Localised bylaws targeting areas more heavily affected by antisocial vehicle use are enacted and enforced in partnership with Police.
- **Community Reporting Channels:** Council promotes the use of reporting tools that empower residents to share concerns with both Police and Council, contributing to targeted enforcement.
- **Infrastructure Support:** Council has trialled deploying CCTV networks and traffic calming measures in known hotspots to deter illegal activity and assist Police intel and investigations.

Advocacy for Education-Based Prevention

Council urges central government to complement enforcement tools with robust public education initiatives. A purely punitive approach risks being reactive rather than preventative. We encourage engaging with community groups to promote safe road behaviour and build a culture of responsibility and respect on the roads.

Equity and Te Tiriti Commitments

Council acknowledges the importance of ensuring that our Maaori communities are not disproportionately impacted by enforcement measures. We recommend:

- **Equity Impact Assessments:** Evaluating the social and cultural implications of enforcement practices.
- **Iwi Partnership Models:** Co-designing intervention strategies with iwi and Maaori leaders.

Conclusion

Council supports the intent of the proposed legislation and welcomes the opportunity to work alongside central government, Police, and communities to ensure its successful implementation. We advocate for a holistic approach; one that balances enforcement with education, equity, and collaboration, to create safer roads and stronger communities.

We look forward to continued dialogue and partnership in this important area.

Further information

1. Should the Justice Committee require clarification on the submission or any additional information, please contact Maggie Ford on the email Maggie.ford@waidc.govt.nz

Ngaa mihi,



Jacqui Church
Mayor

Council Approval and Reference

This submission was approved by the Submission Forum on 22 September 2025