**How Nelson-Tasman Doubled Bus Patronage in Three Months**

Good public transport has and will continue to have an important role in Aotearoa’s journey towards a more sustainable transport system with a reduced carbon footprint. But what does a ‘good’ public transport system look like, and what encourages people to use it?

In 2019, Nelson City Council and Tasman District Council recognised that their joint public transport system could contribute more to meet the environmental and social goals for the region. A review of the region’s public transport was undertaken with Stantec's assistance. The review recommended three stages of improvements focused on the route network, service levels, facilities, vehicles, fares, brand, and information. NCC and TDC implemented Stage 1 of the improvements in August 2023, and in just three months patronage had doubled.

How did Nelson-Tasman achieve this significant uptake in customers, and what can other regions learn and apply to their own networks to promote mode shift to sustainable transport? This paper and presentation will outline the principles applied to Nelson-Tasman’s public transport system, and how and why they were implemented. It will then present the performance of the improvements to date, including unintended outcomes. It is expected that many of the same principles could be applied to other centres in New Zealand with similar results.