



**Submission to Greater Wellington Regional Council  
On the proposed Regional Public Transport Plan 2011-2021**

**From Kāpiti Coast District Council**

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**For further information**

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## Introduction

1. Kāpiti Coast District Council appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback on the Regional Public Transport Plan (RPTP) 2011-2021. The Council wishes to speak in support of this submission should there be an opportunity to do so.
2. The Council acknowledges the commitment by Greater Wellington Regional Council and the region and wishes to express its clear appreciation for the level of funding that has gone into the extension and improvement of rail services to the Kāpiti Coast over the last few years. The Council will continue to make comments on and seek further changes and improvements to bus and rail services on the Coast; such comments should not be seen as failing to acknowledge that investment but as Council ensuring that it continues to advocate for its sustainable transport vision and public transport goals for the area.
3. The Council acknowledges the difficult funding environment that is impacting on public transport provision. These conditions make forward planning ever more imperative, in this case extending out 10 years, to be in place when conditions change as they inevitably do.
4. The Council understands that there has been substantial uptake of patronage on the newly available rail services to Waikanae and it is clear that people are looking for affordable alternatives to private vehicle travel. This is pleasing and the Council supports plans to ensure that capacity meets demand and that greater choice is available.
5. The Kāpiti Coast District is composed of a number of communities with a high number of residents commuting out of the district to work every day. We have a large retired population (23% over age 65) who have specific travel needs. The nature of our geographically separated centres of population means that local connections between communities are particularly important.
6. The Council's submission focuses on the following themes:
  - flaws in the use of the layered network approach;
  - implications of this for forward planning and allocation of funding;
  - detailed comments on rail and bus services.

## Integrated public transport network framework

### Flaws in the layered service approach

7. The Kāpiti Coast District Council supports and appreciates that there is a need for a comprehensive integrated network approach to guide optimal public transport investment. It supports the layered network idea used in the proposed plan which has the effect of providing a detailed prioritisation framework. However, it believes that the way it has been used is significantly flawed and should change.

8. The Network Plan set out on page 31 of the document is described as the future Network Plan. This implies that it has been developed to describe a desired future state. However, Eastbourne for example is shown as being part of a Quality Transit Network layer and Ōtaki is not. This strongly suggests that the ‘future network plan’ has been developed on the basis of what services currently exist. It also suggests that the Future Network Plan has been presented in this way in order to contain expectations around public transport investment.
9. If this was a future network plan, it would have taken the associated landuses and strategic direction of these surrounding towns and activities into account and indicated the desired future system. That is, land-use and transport planning should proceed in an integrated way. The table below contrasts Ōtaki with Eastbourne.

Location	Landuse Characteristics	Likely strategic direction within next 35 years
Eastbourne	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential</li> <li>• Population 4,708</li> <li>• Employment 1,675 (GW figures Appendix 5)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will remain residential</li> <li>• Access at risk from climate change – unlikely to significantly grow</li> </ul>
Ōtaki Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential, industrial, commercial, wānanga</li> <li>• second largest retail sector on the Coast</li> <li>• largest remaining area of industrial land on the Kāpiti Coast</li> <li>• strong iwi presence</li> <li>• Population 8,288</li> <li>• Employment 2,878 (KCDC figures for Ōtaki area, compared with population 6,208 and employment 1,675 GW figures Appendix 5 )</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identified as major urban growth area on the Kāpiti Coast</li> <li>• Strong education growth</li> <li>• Focus for growth of innovative technology</li> <li>• Likely to be major focus area for iwi investment</li> <li>• Major associated development potential linked to rural productive potential and local food economy concepts</li> </ul>

10. It is difficult to see given the strategic focus on Ōtaki, that a future network plan could argue that this area should have the ‘other’ category applied to it. It is also important to note that this classification system hides the fact that the Wairarapa towns have a rail service within this ‘other category’.
11. The Kāpiti Coast District Council has advocated for a number of years that there should be a long term strategic plan for the region which clearly focuses on achieving full passenger transport linkages to Ōtaki. A frequent response to this on the part of the Regional Council has been that there is insufficient funding to provide for this and at any rate, the Coast has recently received significant investment.

12. However, the Council and community have been at pains to point out that it does not expect immediate investment, or even medium term investment. What is wanted is acknowledgement that it is a legitimate strategic goal to achieve access to an integrated functioning passenger transport system over time for that community, of at least a Quality Transport Network. Funding and investment decisions would flow separately from this and would obviously be subject to consideration across all regional needs and priorities.
13. If in the view of the Regional Council it is not appropriate for a community of this size, make-up and need to have access to such a service at any point in the future then this needs to be made explicit. Certainly at first glance this is what the Future Network Plan suggests.
14. However the Kāpiti Coast District Council assumes that the Regional Council trying to manage short and immediate term resource demands. It suggests therefore an amendment to the Public Transport Plan as follows:
- provision of a 'future strategic network plan' which sets out the desired integrated passenger transport system without consideration of investment constraints or pressures;
  - inclusion of a 'staged passenger transport network plan' which applies to the 10 year span of the Passenger Transport Plan which identifies the nature of the layers that are broadly intended in that period. This would it is presumed be closer to that plan which is currently provided in the draft document.
15. The classification of the Waikanae to Ōtaki section of the Greater Wellington public transport network is not satisfactory. Ōtaki falls outside the classification of Quality Transit Network. It does not even appear to qualify as a Local Connector Network and is classed as "other." This is not acceptable. The layered classification system is designed to work well for high population and high demand metropolitan areas but is totally inadequate when providing public transport connectivity for smaller populations with high need like Ōtaki.
16. The Kāpiti Coast District Council does not agree with the classification of the future network plan as it applies to Ōtaki. It is unclear what a Local Connector network is and why Ōtaki is classified as "other". The Council wants the connection from Waikanae to Ōtaki recognised, as at least a Quality Transit Network, as is the case for example for Eastbourne. Ōtaki is growing strongly and should be regarded as a Regionally Significant Centre alongside the likes of Johnsonville. This is a 10 year plan and with significant infrastructure being planned and built on the Kāpiti Coast, not least the Expressway, growth distribution is projected to push further north of the District.
17. Regional economic priorities have stimulated the development of the Clean Technologies Centre in Ōtaki and sustainable transport options to get there should be planned to be in place to support this. The Council has a major focus on Ōtaki and is working on significant economic development and future employment growth there.

18. Kāpiti Coast District Council has consistently advocated for an improved public transport system for Ōtaki, providing local access to centres and facilities. Ōtaki already has a large and growing educational institution Te Wānanga o Raukawa, and is a thriving retail destination. As a result of the public transport review currently underway it is hoped that there will be an improvement in accessibility both within Ōtaki and with the rest of the district and beyond via public transport. The RPTP must reflect this in its strategic and 10 year outlook.

## Rail

19. Access to and the extension of the passenger rail service is seen by all Kāpiti Coast communities as essential to:

- reduce the current reliance on private vehicle commuting to Wellington;
- improve accessibility for the northern communities, particularly access of the Ōtaki community to facilities and employment in the south and health services to the north.

## Bus

20. The Kāpiti Coast District has a two fold need from its bus services:

- a bus service which links efficiently to commuter rail services; and
- provision of bus services to residential areas linking people to services, within the District and between towns in the District.

21. The bus services need to act as feeders into the rail service and to centres providing connections between communities where there are no passenger rail connections. This is particularly important with the bus services both to the north and south at Ōtaki.<sup>1</sup>

## Achieving minimum standards

22. The bus service review undertaken by Greater Wellington in 2009 in Raumati, Waikanae and Paraparaumu went some way to an increase in route coverage and services. But the loss of the bus services between Waikanae and Paraparaumu, and Ōtaki and Paraparaumu continues to disadvantage these communities. The Council requests reinstatement of bus services to link these communities.

The introduction of a direct bus route and an increase in frequency of buses between Paraparaumu Beach and Paraparaumu Railway Station has improved convenience for passengers taking advantage of the Kāpiti Plus scheme. This needs to be replicated between Waikanae Beach and the Waikanae Railway Station, with a direct and frequent service at peak times

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<sup>1</sup> *Towards a Sustainable Transport System, KCDC (2008)*

23. To back these changes up the Council requests a review of the Waikanae bus service because the recent review took place just before the impact of the rail upgrade. The Council would also like to see an evaluation of the route changes in Paraparaumu that were made in 2009, to see if they were effective in increasing bus use to the railway station. If so then it would justify doing the same in Waikanae.

## **Public Transport in the Wellington Region**

24. The Council continues to have concerns about the lack of rail network capability to provide passenger services on the Western Corridor to Ōtaki. It is imperative that Greater Wellington continues to work with Horizons and Kiwirail to ensure inter-regional cooperation regarding rail services between Palmerston North and Wellington. This should be mentioned in the proposed plan and will go some way towards contributing to improved rail connectivity for Ōtaki.

## **Delivering Public Transport services in this Region**

### **The role of public transport and Greater Wellington's role in funding public transport**

25. The emphasis on access in providing a basic network is acknowledged, but on the Kāpiti Coast a basic transport network is still to be achieved. The recent network review of Raumati, Paraparaumu and Waikanae, by Greater Wellington attempted to provide cover for some areas that have previously had no service. However, this meant cuts to frequency and routes in other areas. This has not been popular, particularly with older members of the community, some of whom have to walk longer distances to a bus stop, and have longer journey times as a result.

### **Transport Disadvantaged**

26. Kāpiti Coast District Council welcomes the retention of policies that include planning and provision for those termed transport disadvantaged.

27. Hard data is not forthcoming on the Super Gold card from transport providers, on the grounds that it is commercially sensitive information. It is clear that elderly people in Kāpiti are taking advantage of the Super Gold concessions to travel off peak for free by public transport. This contributes to social wellbeing by extending discretionary travel and it is hoped that central government continue to fund it after the current review. The Council strongly supports Greater Wellington continuing to administer the scheme.

28. Kāpiti Coast District Council commends Greater Wellington for its commitment to making targeted, demand responsive services available in both Paekākāriki and Otaihangā. Greater Wellington staff have worked hard with the Council and

Community Board over several years to develop and maintain these services, responding to the particular public transport needs of people in these locations.

### **Comments on proposed minimum and target service levels**

29. The Council understands that the Regional Rail Plan will be reviewed this financial year and requests that the decision about provision of the Raumati Railway Station is made. There continues to be strong support in the Raumati South community for the station to be built into the Kāpiti Coast rail network. It is noted that accommodation for the railway station has been included in the Expressway planning by the NZTA Alliance.

### **Appendix 4: Targeted services**

30. We strongly support Greater Wellington providing the Total Mobility service which is important to many people in the Kāpiti Coast District.

31. It should be mentioned here that with the assistance of the Red Cross the Kāpiti Community Shuttle Service has been in operation between Kāpiti Coast, Kenepuru Hospital and Wellington Hospital for 2 years. It is based on the model run in the Wairarapa which is subsidised by Greater Wellington. Likewise Ōtaki now has a service up and running because of the extreme difficulty people have there of accessing public transport to health services. The Council would like to see these services supported by Greater Wellington in the same way as the Wairarapa service.

### **Conclusion**

32. Kāpiti Coast District Council is not satisfied with the new layered classification approach in the proposed Regional Public Transport Plan.

33. The Council appreciates that the RPTP has to take into account statutory requirements and is constrained by the direction of the Government Policy Statement and reduction in Funding Assistance Rates.

34. The Kāpiti Coast District is experiencing a number of far reaching developments that will substantially impact on its transport network and demographics. The Council believe that the Regional Public Transport Plan should be able to respond to these changes in a way that satisfies the needs of our public transport using communities.

35. The Council continues to be concerned about public transport provision for Ōtaki and would like to see some significant improvements to services there as a result of the Ōtaki Public Transport Service Review currently underway, followed by future planning in this Regional Public Transport Plan.

36. There is still a pressing need for efficient bus links to railway stations to alleviate pressure on park and ride facilities and to enable people to take advantage of the Kāpiti Plus integrated ticketing scheme. The more direct rerouting of bus services

from Paraparaumu to the railway station supported the introduction of Kāpiti Plus. We believe that the lack of a direct service at Waikanae explains why it has not yet worked well in that area.

37. The Kāpiti Coast District Council looks forward to continuing to work closely with Greater Wellington on improving the public transport network and services on the Kāpiti Coast.