

24 June 2024

Greater Wellington Regional Council
Wellington Regional Land Transport Plan 2021: 2024 Mid-term Review
gwrp@gw.govt.nz

Attn: Shan Lu

Wellington Regional Land Transport Plan 2021: 2024 Mid-Term Review

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comment on the 2024 mid-term review of the Wellington Regional Land Transport Plan 2021 (RLTP).

Transport infrastructure has a key role in moving people, facilitating economic growth, and supporting the future development and well-being of our communities.

With the recent Government decision to not progress *Get Wellington Moving*, we believe that there is an opportunity for funding to be redirected towards transport investment projects across the broader region, including Kapiti Coast District.

For the Kapiti Coast District, providing key connections and better public transport services across the district are fundamental to support current and future needs as follows:

- Our climate emissions reduction and emergency work: achieving our climate emission reduction targets is dependent on improving public transport options.
- Ensuring vulnerable people can access services: our large elderly population and vulnerable youth are dependent on public transport to access health services, training and education, and work opportunities.
- Improved interregional connection: an immediate and crucial need for connections across regional boundaries to connect our populations in the north of the District to necessary social, health, employment, and educational opportunities which can be in either Paraparaumu or Levin.

Our submission identifies increasing the priority of the Paraparaumu Metropolitan Centre Connections project, and providing for better public transport services across our district as three key moves that would enable Kāpiti to meet its needs and support shared regional and local growth outcomes.

Increasing the priority of the Metropolitan Centre Connections project

- The Paraparaumu metropolitan centre is located on an existing strategic public transport corridor, and a major growth node for Kāpiti. It is recognised as a regionally significant centre located in the western growth corridor which is projected to receive over 40% of the Wairarapa- Wellington- Horowhenua region's growth over the next 30 years. However, transport-oriented development is currently constrained by roading corridor capacity, particularly along Kāpiti Road in Paraparaumu.
- The RLTP recognises the importance of the Paraparaumu Metropolitan Centre Connections project for achieving regional and local outcomes, listing it at priority 20 out of 30 projects. However, we would argue that the project should have a higher priority.
- The project links State Highway 1, Ihakara Street, Kāpiti Road, and Rimu Road. It will:
 - a) relieve congestion, particularly on Kāpiti road but also around the wider metropolitan centre area and access to the expressway,
 - b) improve strategic access from west of the expressway to the town centre, railway station and vice versa, supporting better public transport connections, and
 - c) open up a large land holding adjacent to the town centre for further development in an area zoned for mixed use and medium density development.
- This 28ha project includes mixed-use zone of residential subdivisions, residential aged care development, commercial/ retail/ residential development, and an enhanced wetland, and general reserve. The developer is now working in partnership with Council to contribute towards improvement of the roading connection.
- Under the RLTP's strategic objectives assessment the project ranks: 'high' against all five criteria and will enhance access to social and economic opportunities. It is also more strongly rated across all the assessment categories than a number of other projects with a higher prioritisation. Further, it has a vital role in both the transport systems, and in also supporting urban and economic outcomes for the district and region.
- Council recommends that the project's priority is reconsidered and placed higher up the funding priority list. This would reflect its relative significance of Paraparaumu and the western corridor, and its ability to secure and deliver benefits for the district now.

Accessibility - Public transport investment in Ōtaki and Kāpiti

- Like housing, transport choice is of fundamental importance in delivering community wellbeing and outcomes. For our more vulnerable and constrained communities (the elderly and our youth) and isolated areas and communities, public transport plays a central role in delivering transport related outcomes.
- This is especially true for the northern part of our district, where improving public transport connections across the Ōtaki and Te Horo area will provide marginal communities access to core services and opportunities, across regional boundaries to Levin in the north and south to Paraparaumu and Wellington.
- The lack of public transport options and services is also recognised as a key factor identified in the Ōtaki Priority Development Area project, with current residents disadvantaged in their ability to access core social services, employment, and

educational opportunities. These pressures and inequalities are worsening as the area continues to grow.

- Council welcomes and supports the inclusion and commitment for the Lower North Island Rail Integrated Mobility programme and investment to the rail network from 2027/2028. An increase in this cross regional service will bring a reliable and more frequent connection and service to the northern parts of our district. However, increasing train services is only a limited solution, is still some years away, and does not resolve the issues faced by the Ōtaki community now.
- In our submission to the Greater Wellington Regional Council's Long-Term Plan we stressed the need for support and commitment to achieving an acceptable base level of service for Ōtaki before enhanced accessibility improvements were considered for the metro services. This could include commitment towards permanent or interim measures, such as a trial of on-demand public transport services.
- These could be at minimal cost within the scheme of regional land transport funding, and as noted above, the re-prioritisation and allocation of the Get Wellington Moving Funding to improve transport services to Ōtaki to an acceptable base level, would go some way to achieving the RLTP's Strategic Objectives 1 and 2 for our Ōtaki and northern communities. Such funding can provide:
 - a) a significant benefit to the community, meeting its needs and supporting positive community outcomes for an area that is acknowledged as having a lower socio-economic profile and higher support needs,
 - b) meet all the WRLTP investment priorities and reflect positively the "Economic growth and productivity" and "Value for money" priorities from the recently adopted Government Policy Statement, and
 - c) recognise the commitment of the Wellington Regional Leadership Committee and its supporting local and central government partners to the Ōtaki Priority Development Area.

Thank you for considering our feedback on this mid-term review of the Wellington Regional Land Transport Plan 2021. We would welcome the opportunity to continue to work with officers to plan and balance the current and future needs of the district and region.

Yours sincerely



Janet Holborow

Mayor
Kapiti Coast District Council



Darren Edwards

Chief Executive
Kapiti Coast district Council