

## BY EMAIL

10 September 2024

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Mayors of the Wellington Region  
Chairs of Mana Whenua in the Wellington Region  
Members of Parliament in Wellington Region

Tēna koutou katoa,

### **\$134m Shortfall in National Land Transport Funding for Public Transport Services and Infrastructure in the Wellington Region**

Following NZ Transport Agency/ Waka Kotahi's 3 September release of final decisions on the 2024-27 National Land Transport Programme (NLTP), I am writing to brief you on the potential impacts on regional public transport provision, and what steps Greater Wellington will be taking to adjust to this new funding reality.

While the release of the final Government Policy Statement on Land Transport (GPS) 2024-34 indicated there would be significant reprioritisation in transport funding nationally and regionally, Greater Wellington is surprised and disappointed at the severity of these unprecedented, seemingly indiscriminate cuts to public transport funding in the NLTP.

Excluding a handful of already committed projects, nearly every one of our 40 plus infrastructure, service enhancement and community-based projects have had funding declined with little to no explanation. While we believe we have funding to cover most services as they stand today, we are heading down a path of managed decline where there is no money to replace ageing infrastructure or make the public transport network more accessible to our communities. We have seen the outcome of this approach to infrastructure investments when we look at our water services and rail assets around the country. We will be working hard to ensure this decline does not set in, but that may require some difficult decisions about how to prioritise investment over the coming years.

While we are still assessing the full extent of the under-investment from NLTP, we are estimating a **\$134 million shortfall** in funding over the next three years (2024/25 – 2026/27). We are also concerned about funding for metropolitan rail and expect to hear more about this separately in due course.

Greater Wellington continues to maintain that an effective public transport system generates sizeable benefits for both local and central government, whether it be reducing congestion on our roads, giving people access to employment or recreational opportunities or simply providing a low carbon, cost effective way to travel. This wholesale rejection of funding will inevitably have unintended consequences regardless of political priorities.

The Wellington region has the second highest per capita use of public transport in Australasia. We now have record high levels of bus use with reliability on our bus network at or above 99% for almost a year now. Unfortunately, these government funding decisions put the whole transport system at risk, regardless of whether you drive or take public transport.

What are we doing now?

Greater Wellington is working hard to mitigate the worst impacts across the \$134m of unfunded work programs. We are conducting a line-by-line review of all current and proposed public transport projects in the region to determine which projects can progress under local share funding only or which projects will require significant modification of scale and scope to cover the \$134m shortfall. With the recent significant rates increases we simply cannot attempt to cover any part of this shortfall through further rates increases.

Hence, I must advise you that we are now considering some tough and unpopular decisions which will be felt by communities across our region. Attached to this letter is a summary of some of the projects and services that have had funding declined under the NLTP and are now at risk. Please note we will also be considering other cost savings as a result, which may include reducing school and ferry services, rationalising high cost / low patronage routes and route duplications (e.g. road and rail) and further increasing fares (after our increase of 10% only 2 months ago)

Greater Wellington is also developing the draft Wellington Regional Public Transport Plan (RPTP) 2025-35 which we were planning to publicly consult on from late September 2024. I have asked for this work to be paused, while we reset our strategic priorities and ambitions to meet the new reality of our funding situation.

I will follow this letter with an update in approximately one month to give you the outcomes of that review and to inform you of the likely impacts to services and initiatives across our cities and districts.

Nāku noa, nā



**Daran Ponter**  
Heamana | Chair

CC:

Greater Wellington Regional Councillors

Territorial Authority Chief Executives

Mana Whenua Chief Executives

Darrin Apanui, Chair, Wellington Regional Leadership Committee

Hon Simon Bridges, Chair, NZTA

Cassandra Crowley, Deputy Chair, NZTA

Nigel Corry, Chief Executive, Greater Wellington Regional Council

**Attached: Unfunded projects and initiatives by City and District**

## Examples of unfunded projects by Territorial Authority

### Wellington City

- Golden Mile: Bus shelters and real time information infrastructure along the new Golden Mile redevelopment.
- Regional Busways Programme: Funding to work with WCC, PCC and HCC to develop high frequency, bus prioritisation corridors including roading and traffic signal changes.
- No. 2 Bus route: Roading and infrastructure upgrades to the route 2 to allow higher capacity Articulated Electric Buses (particularly out of Karori which is at maximum bus capacity).
- On-Demand: Future rollout of regional on demand services are now not expected to be continued. Funding for continued operations and maintenance of the Tawa app-based service under review.
- Johnsonville Transport Hub: Redevelopment Feasibility, Business Casing, and Design for a new Johnsonville Transport Hub and Interchange.
- Ngauranga Railway Station: Seismic Strengthening.
- Council depot and charging infrastructure implementation: required for future bus growth, fleet electrification and competitive tending of bus services.
- Johnsonville Stop D: To provide sufficient bus shelter capacity and parking capacity to meet current demand for additional bus services.
- Wellington Bus Layovers: Development for a CBD bus parking spaces required for bus charging and network growth.
- Lambton Quay Interchange: Intended Purchase of WCC assets to enable longer term. timely reinvestment in critical infrastructure
- Thorndon Road and City Street (Karori): Addition of new bus shelters.
- Driver facilities: Six additional toilets at key layovers across the city.
- Hospital Joint Transport Strategy. Funding for travel initiatives to and from Wellington Hospital.
- Buses Replacing Trains Infrastructure (BRT): Introduction of shelters, seating, lighting and roading changes at key bus stops used for train replacement services.
- New bus stop facilities: Shelters, seating and directional signage for customer access and security.

- Improving Network Accessibility: including Infrastructure upgrades / changes to the most inaccessible bus stops and stations, navigation aids for the blind, driver accessibility training and audio announcements at all stations.
- Total Mobility disability services: 'Ride Wise' system replacement of the end-of-life Total Mobility management systems and app.
- Park and Ride facility upgrades: Providing cycle parking facilities, roading changes, more spaces etc.
- New Metro rolling stock. Business casing, planning and early works for additional 'Matangi style trains' to increase frequency of train services.
- National Ticketing Solution (NTS) regional upgrades: Using the NTS to leverage other Metlink booking and ticketing systems (e.g. park and ride, on demand, business targeted products etc).
- Metlink technology programme: Modernising customer information and journey planning (e.g. apps, website improvements etc).
- Rail Station Infrastructure Improvements: Basic improvements to stations across the network including signage, accessways and seating / lighting.

## **Hutt City**

- Waterloo Station: Replacing the end-of-life station (including roof), development of a bus interchange, significant upgrades to station amenity and accessibility.
- Woburn Station: Seismic strengthening of end-of-life station including new station upgrades and/or replacement.
- Council depot and charging infrastructure implementation: required for future bus growth, fleet electrification and competitive tending of bus services.
- Regional Busways Programme: Funding to work with WCC, PCC and HCC to develop high frequency, bus prioritisation corridors including roading and traffic signal changes.
- Queensgate Interchange: Improvements for Central Hutt Interchange for customer security and experience.
- Route 110: Infrastructure change and improvements to enable higher capacity Electric Double Decker buses.
- Riverlink: Melling station land purchase for new station site.
- Driver facilities: Six additional toilets at key layovers across the city.

- Buses Replacing Trains Infrastructure (BRT): Introduction of shelters, seating, lighting and roading changes at key bus stops used for train replacement services.
- New bus stop facilities: Shelters, seating and directional signage for customer access and security.
- Improving Network Accessibility: including Infrastructure upgrades / changes to the most inaccessible bus stops and stations, navigation aids for the blind, driver accessibility training and audio announcements at all stations.
- Total Mobility disability services: 'Ride Wise' system replacement of the end-of-life Total Mobility management systems and app.
- Charge and Ride pilot: To allow EV vehicle drivers to charge their EV at Park and Ride facilities when they take the train.
- New Metro rolling stock. Business casing, planning and early works for additional 'Matangi style trains' to increase frequency of train services.
- National Ticketing Solution (NTS) regional upgrades: Using the NTS to leverage other Metlink booking and ticketing systems (e.g. park and ride, on demand, business targeted products etc).
- Metlink technology programme: Modernising customer information and journey planning (e.g. apps, website improvements etc).
- Park and Ride facility upgrades: Providing cycle parking facilities, roading changes, more spaces etc.
- Rail Station Infrastructure Improvements: Basic improvements to stations across the network including signage, accessways and seating / lighting.

## **Porirua**

- New bus route from between Cambourne, Plimmerton and Pukerua Bay.
- Regional Busways Programme: Funding to work with WCC, PCC and HCC to develop high frequency, bus prioritisation corridors including roading and traffic signal changes.
- Porirua Subway Ramps: Seismic strengthening of subway walls.
- Porirua Bus Hub: New bus interchange infrastructure and accessways.
- Buses Replacing Trains Infrastructure (BRT): Introduction of shelters, seating, lighting and roading changes at key bus stops used for train replacement services.

- Council depot and charging infrastructure implementation: required for future bus growth, fleet electrification and competitive tending of bus services.
- New bus stop facilities: Shelters, seating and directional signage for customer access and security.
- Improving Network Accessibility: including Infrastructure upgrades / changes to the most inaccessible bus stops and stations, navigation aids for the blind, driver accessibility training and audio announcements at all stations.
- Total Mobility disability services: 'Ride Wise' system replacement of the end-of-life Total Mobility management systems and app.
- On-Demand: Future rollout of regional on demand services are now not expected to be continued. Funding for continued operations and maintenance of the Tawa app-based service under review.
- New bus stop facilities: Shelters, seating and directional signage for customer access and security.
- National Ticketing Solution (NTS) regional upgrades: Using the NTS to leverage other Metlink booking and ticketing systems (e.g. park and ride, on demand, business targeted products etc).
- Metlink technology programme: Modernising customer information and journey planning (e.g. apps, website improvements etc).
- New Metro rolling stock. Business casing, planning and early works for additional 'Matangi style trains' to increase frequency of train services.
- Park and Ride facility upgrades: Providing cycle parking facilities, roading changes, more spaces etc.
- Rail Station Infrastructure Improvements: Basic improvements to stations across the network including signage, accessways and seating / lighting.

## **Upper Hutt**

- Route 110: Infrastructure to enable higher capacity Electric Double Decker buses.
- Buses Replacing Trains Infrastructure (BRT): Introduction of shelters, seating, lighting and roading changes at key bus stops used for train replacement services.
- New bus stop facilities: Shelters, seating and directional signage for customer access and security.

- Improving Network Accessibility: including Infrastructure upgrades / changes to the most inaccessible bus stops and stations, navigation aids for the blind, driver accessibility training and audio announcements at all stations.
- Total Mobility disability services: 'Ride Wise' system replacement of the end-of-life Total Mobility management systems and app.
- New Metro rolling stock. Business casing, planning and early works for additional 'Matangi style trains' to increase frequency of train services.
- Park and Ride facility upgrades: Providing cycle parking facilities, roading changes, more spaces etc.
- National Ticketing Solution (NTS) regional upgrades: Using the NTS to leverage other Metlink booking and ticketing systems (e.g. park and ride, on demand, business targeted products etc).
- Metlink technology programme: Modernising customer information and journey planning (e.g. apps, website improvements etc).
- Rail Station Infrastructure Improvements: Basic improvements to stations across the network including signage, accessways and seating / lighting.

## **Kāpiti Coast**

- Paraparaumu station building: Seismic upgrades and subsequent interior/exterior rebuild.
- Buses Replacing Trains Infrastructure (BRT): Introduction of shelters, seating, lighting and roading changes at key bus stops used for train replacement services.
- Improving Network Accessibility: including Infrastructure upgrades / changes to the most inaccessible bus stops and stations, navigation aids for the blind, driver accessibility training and audio announcements at all stations.
- Total Mobility disability services: 'Ride Wise' system replacement of the end-of-life Total Mobility management systems and app.
- New bus stop facilities: Shelters, seating and directional signage for customer access and security.
- New Metro rolling stock. Business casing, planning and early works for additional 'Matangi style trains' to increase frequency of train services.
- National Ticketing Solution (NTS) regional upgrades: Using the NTS to leverage other Metlink booking and ticketing systems (e.g. park and ride, on demand, business targeted products etc).



- Metlink technology programme: Modernising customer information and journey planning (e.g. apps, website improvements etc).
- Park and Ride facility upgrades: Providing cycle parking facilities, roading changes, more spaces etc.
- Rail Station Infrastructure Improvements: Basic improvements to stations across the network including signage, accessways and seating / lighting.

## **Wairarapa**

- Buses Replacing Trains Infrastructure (BRT): Introduction of shelters, seating, lighting and roading changes at key bus stops used for train replacement services.
- New bus stop facilities: Shelters or signage for improved customer comfort, security, and way finding.
- New Metro rolling stock. Business casing, planning and early works for additional 'Matangi style trains' to increase frequency of train services.
- Improving Network Accessibility: including Infrastructure upgrades / changes to the most inaccessible bus stops and stations, navigation aids for the blind, driver accessibility training and audio announcements at all stations.
- Total Mobility disability services: 'Ride Wise' system replacement of the end-of-life Total Mobility management systems and app.
- Park and Ride facility upgrades: Providing cycle parking facilities, roading changes, more spaces etc.
- National Ticketing Solution (NTS) regional upgrades: Using the NTS to leverage other Metlink booking and ticketing systems (e.g. park and ride, on demand, business targeted products etc).
- Metlink technology programme: Modernising customer information and journey planning (e.g. apps, website improvements etc).
- Rail Station Infrastructure Improvements: Basic improvements to stations across the network including signage, accessways and seating / lighting.