

13 November 2024

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Chair
Greater Wellington Regional Council

Tory Whanau
Mayor
Wellington City Council

Vicki Hollywell
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Callum Katene
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Ref. NZT-10000

Dear all

Thank you for your letter of 6 November 2024 regarding the upcoming protest event which will see a hikoi travel from Auckland and arrive in Wellington on 19 November 2024, and your request for NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA) to provide funding support for the Public Transport Authorities (PTA) to offer free travel on that day.

NZTA will not be providing a cost scope adjustment for funding from the National Land Transport Fund (NLTF) to cover any revenue decrease from PTAs choosing to offer free travel on public transport. The decision of whether to offer free public transport fares sits with the Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC). Should GWRC proceed with providing free public transport fares on 19 November 2024, GWRC will need to bear the full costs of foregone fare revenue associated with this decision. I note that free travel may in fact induce higher demand for public transport services, which may run counter to the intention behind providing free fares as referenced in your letter, by attracting more people to visit the city or commute to work on that day via public transport, rather than working from home.

As you will know, the NLTF is under heavy demand over both the short and medium term. The 2024-27 National Land Transport Programme is investing \$3.7 billion into public transport services and \$2.6 billion in public transport infrastructure.

The NZ Police is the lead agency for management of the hikoi and NZTA is working with Police to coordinate an appropriate and effective response to managing the volumes of people and vehicles that could be expected, which as you note, are still uncertain at this stage.

If you would like to discuss this matter further with NZTA you are welcome to contact Richard May, Chief of Staff, by email to richard.may@nzta.govt.nz.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Bridges', written in a cursive style.

Simon Bridges
Chair – NZTA Board