Safer speeds in the Central City are critical to a zero carbon Wellington

Summary of submission:

Generation Zero supports:

1. A transport system bounded by the principles of sustainability, accessibility, safety, equity, affordability, and system resilience.
2. A sustainability themed hierarchy of transport modes that gives greatest priority to (1) active transport, (2) low-carbon public transport, (3) rideshare choices, as part of a well-integrated transport plan
3. Creating vibrant, people friendly spaces that allow in which communities can thrive
4. A 30km/h speed limit in the inner city
5. Physical traffic calming to achieve the posted speed limits
6. Streets staying at 50km/h need segregated cycle/scooter lanes immediately
7. Expanding this proposal to more streets in the city
8. A clear plan with tangible objectives and timelines

We would like to appear in front of Councillors to support our submission, whenever that may be via video link.
The pressure is on LGWM to decarbonise our transport system

Commitments by Central Government and Local Government, and public sentiment indicate that LGWM needs to seriously consider how its decisions will impact climate change:

- The Government has committed Aotearoa New Zealand to being zero carbon by 2050 by passing the Zero Carbon Act. **Meeting this target will require both Central and Local Government to take urgent action to reduce emissions**
- Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) and Wellington City Council have both declared a **climate emergency**.
- At the recent School Strikes for Climate March (27 September) approximately 40,000 people in Wellington marched to parliament asking for urgent action on climate change. According to the consultation on Te Atakura - First to Zero over **90% of people** in Wellington think that WCC needs to take urgent action on climate change.

Generation Zero supports the following:

1. **A transport system bounded by the principles of sustainability, accessibility, safety, equity, affordability, and system resilience**

The transport system should be designed for long-term sustainability. It needs to be accessible, safe, equitable, and affordable for everyone. It must be resilient, both to short term issues, like the recent bus driver strikes, and long term issues like sea level rise and more intense winds.

2. **A sustainability themed hierarchy of transport modes that gives greatest priority to (1) active transport, (2) low-carbon public transport, (3) rideshare choices, as part of a well-integrated transport plan**

Private vehicles are an inefficient method of transporting people, yet the current transport hierarchy prioritises private road vehicles. We need to flip this system to make it easier and more convenient for people to move around the city.

3. **Creating vibrant, people friendly spaces that allow in which communities can thrive**

Communities thrive in areas that prioritise people and are not blighted by traffic noise and emissions. This improves the social fabric of the city by creating more attractive ‘third places’.

**Recommendations 1, 2 and 3 should be the criteria by which we evaluate whether LGWM proposals are worthwhile.**

Generation Zero broadly supports the proposal, but _urges LGWM to go further._

4. **A 30km/h speed limit in the inner city**

**Safety**

Why is 30 km/h better? Because it kills and maims fewer people - speed determines the outcome of impacts. We are choosing between 80% death risk (50 km/h) and 10% (30
km/h): we think that trade-off is a simple one to make and makes good on our Vision Zero goal.

**Death and injury risk percentages**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMPACT SPEED</th>
<th>DEATH</th>
<th>SERIOUS INJURY</th>
<th>SLIGHT INJURY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Km/h</strong></td>
<td><strong>%</strong></td>
<td><strong>%</strong></td>
<td><strong>%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>26</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Image credit: Auckland Transport*

**Amenity**

People feel safer, so are able to enjoy public space more. In places where cars drive 50km/h in Wellington you are less likely to find strong pedestrian traffic and successful businesses. Cambridge Terrace and Kent Terrace are examples of this.

Traffic noise is reduced as speeds reduce. Our city centre is a place where an increasing number of people of all ages live, work, study and spend time, it should not be treated as a mere traffic thoroughfare.

**Mode shift**

Alternative transport choices are encouraged. If it is quicker and safer to ride a bicycle through the golden mile, more people will choose to ride a bicycle, as long as it feels safe.

Increased foot traffic results in significant increases in retail spend.

**Equity**

Many children, parents, the elderly and disabled, know more than anyone else that fast moving traffic makes their experience of the city dangerous and uncomfortable. We ought to be designing our city for everyone in our society.

Evidence from the redesign of central New York City has shown that restricting speeds has minimal effect on actual travel time. This is because people are travelling at a uniform speed, not constantly speeding up at bare stretches of road then slowing down when they reach obstacles like they are able to at present.
5. Physical traffic calming to achieve the posted speed limits

This is vitally important. A simple change in posted speed is almost useless.

LGWM *must* supplement speed limit changes with physical traffic calming.
- Narrowing road width with speed reduction mechanisms to reduce speeds and make crossing streets safer
- Alternative road surfaces to reduce speed and visually signal the entering of a 30 km/h zone.
- Raised tables and raised crossings
- Removing slip lanes

Trials can be implemented *overnight* with paint and moveable materials. It is important that WCC conduct trials before consulting on permanent changes so that people have a chance to experience the change. Permanent features can include art installations, planter boxes, trees and quirky implementation to beautify our streets.

*Image Credit: Plazoletas Bogotá inglés project, Bogota, Colombia. Photos by Bogota District Mobility Office*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Image</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>Medians create a pinchpoint for traffic in the center of the roadway and can reduce pedestrian crossing distances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinchpoint</td>
<td>Chokers or pinchpoints restrict motorists from operating at high speeds on local streets and significantly expand the sidewalk realm for pedestrians.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicane</td>
<td>Chicanes slow drivers by alternating parking or curb extensions along the corridor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lane Shift</td>
<td>A lane shift horizontally deflects a vehicle and may be designed with striping, curb extensions, or parking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speed Hump</td>
<td>Speed humps vertically deflect vehicles and may be combined with a midblock crosswalk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Way Street</td>
<td>2-way streets, especially those with narrower profiles, encourage motorists to be more cautious and wary of oncoming traffic.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Streets staying at 50km/h need segregated cycle/scooter lanes *immediately*

Any roads at speeds above 30 km/h must also provide segregated facilities for cycling and micro mobility. At these higher speeds, cycling cannot safely occur (and will not occur above a small number) if there are not quality segregated lanes. Bikes and scooters cannot mix with pedestrians as this is also not safe or equitable for vulnerable footpath users. These lanes must be protected from vehicles.

This is straightforward to achieve on many wide roads such as the waterfront quays and Taranaki St - space can easily be allocated from existing lanes or low-value parking space.
7. *Expand* this proposal to more streets in the city

The city centre should *only be the start*. Proper traffic calming in suburban centres, and other streets that feed into the centre city needs to also occur as part realising LGWM's goal of “moving more people with less vehicles”.

8. **A clear plan with tangible objectives and timelines**

Make sure the end goal is clearly defined from the start so that it informs all smaller decisions. Be transparent and make good on your deadlines.