

Greater Wellington Regional Council
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OraTaiao submission on GWRC annual plan 2017/18

Responding to climate change

- We are greatly encouraged by the GWRC's statement "we are committed to taking a proactive approach to managing the risks associated with a changing climate". However we note your mechanism to achieve this..... "by factoring climate change into our decision-making process". We believe that, in view of the possible and irreversible catastrophic effects of climate change that merely 'factoring in' is too little.
- We want a stronger statement of intent by GW to act against the major issue of our time. We request that you take the approach as recommended by the Global Commission on the Economy and Climate which states "*The challenge is urgent. The window for making the right choices is uncomfortably narrow because of lock-in of capital and technology and because of a shrinking carbon budget. The next 2-3 years will be crucial in bringing about a fundamental change of direction*". (http://newclimateeconomy.report/2016/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2014/08/NCE_2016Report.pdf)
- We urge you to make mitigating climate change in your policies as your number one priority. This will have the effect of making the impact of each policy on the climate a primary and urgent consideration. A safe climate is essential for a robust economy and a healthy nation.

Public transport

- Climate change fundamentally threatens human health and wellbeing; yet well-designed climate action can mean greater health and fairness now and in future. Transport is integral– with close links between transport, climate and health, e.g.
 - active and sustainable modes of transport (such as walking and cycling) positively affect health;
 - current private motor vehicle transport reliance has negative impacts on health through GHG emissions, road traffic crashes, air and noise pollution, and increased sedentary time.
- Investment in socioeconomically disadvantaged communities must be prioritised – often the most poorly served currently by public and active transport infrastructure, and with the greatest potential to benefit
- We applaud a transformational, world-class public transport (PT) system, integrated bus ticketing and fares, free transfers, off-peak discounts, and tertiary students fare discounts.
- However, increasing Wellington's urban motorway system will not be good transformational change. More motorway space attracts private cars, fails to relieve congestion and damages health and climate.
- An all-electric BRT system can work for GW's aims. But GW now describes its bus

proposed changes as a 'bus priority' system--publicly rejected in the PT Spine Study of 2012-13. This will not cope with the increased future required PT capacity.

- We want light rail (LR) for Wellington firmly on the PT agenda to provide this capacity. 'Protecting the route' with no time-frame for LR is insufficiently urgent.

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