

Summary of key submission themes and officer comments

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1. Regional Leadership

1.1 Climate Change

1.1.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 73, 102, 109, 115, 118,120, 256, 305, 321, 323, 336, 345, 350, 413, 429

16 submitters highlighted climate change as a significant issue for them, and one that GWRC should demonstrate commitment to, including:

- focusing on, and speeding up, actions to address carbon emissions (including setting regional emission targets, reducing PT emissions, and reducing emissions by encouraging the use of PT)
- encouraging solar & wind energy & harvesting rainwater
- OraTaiao suggested reviewing all GWRC activities and infrastructure programme in light of the Climate Change Strategy.

1.1.2 Officer comments

Climate change is a significant issue for the region and for GWRC and it impacts across nearly all areas of our work. As such we integrate climate change considerations into all our work programmes.

GWRC has recently called for submissions on a draft Climate Change Strategy, and is currently considering those submissions. The draft Strategy provides an overarching document that aligns and coordinates climate change actions across GWRC's responsibilities and operations. It aims to build on work programmes already underway, raise awareness of climate change drivers and impacts, and help co-ordinate regional effort through collaboration and partnerships. A further aim is to help strengthen information-sharing and integration across the GWRC departments, between councils, with central government, and with the community. The Strategy is intended to act as a guide for climate resilience activities across GWRC, and to provide clear strategic direction on GWRC's intentions and priorities in this respect.

The Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington Region (RPS) also has as an objective "the region's energy needs are met in ways that: improve energy efficiency and conservation; diversify the type and scale of renewable energy development; maximise the use of renewable energy resources; reduce dependency on fossil fuels; and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transportation'. This objective is supported by a range of policies and methods. The RPS also contains policies and methods promoting water collection, water demand management options, and water reuse and recycling measures.

An all-electric bus fleet in Wellington City is a long term goal of GWRC, with hybrid buses as a transitional step.

1.2 Economic Development / Wellington Regional Strategy

1.2.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 163, 301, 358, 375, 405

5 submitters provided support for increased economic development within the region, including:

- VUW supports GWRC to take an active interest in the development of a comprehensive regional education sector growth plan.
- Sport Wellington encourages the inclusion of sport & recreation in economic developing planning for the region.
- Wellington Civic Trust commented that there is no explicit mention in the document of WCC/GWRC shared role in region's economic development.

1.2.2 Officer comments

GWRC is committed to regional economic development through implementation of the Wellington Regional Strategy and the establishment of the Wellington Regional Economic Development Agency (WREDA), a joint agency of GWRC and WCC.

It is encouraging to note the development of comprehensive regional education sector growth plan. This is consistent with one of the focus areas of the Wellington Regional Strategy around education and work source development, and we are aware of WREDA's involvement in this initiative. We look forward to continued discussions on this matter as well as other initiatives that aim to grow the region's economy.

WCC and GWRC, along with the other councils in the region, work together and will continue to do so in supporting economic growth and development in the region. This is set out on pages 78 and 79 of the Supporting Information on the draft 10 Year Plan.

1.3 Transport Planning

1.3.1 Summary of key submission themes: Travel Demand Management

Submission Numbers: 3, 68, 91, 113, 144, 266, 363, 396

Nine submitters seek a reduction of private vehicle use, including through investment in walking, cycling and public transport, congestion charging, and reducing journeys to school by car.

1.3.2 Officer comments

The Regional Land Transport Plan 2015 recognises the importance of travel demand management as part of an optimised transport network and includes a Travel Demand Management action plan with a range of interventions proposed for the region.

The 'Getting out and about' programme in GWRC's LTP includes promotion of walking, cycling, public transport, car-pooling and car sharing as a direct response to this plan.

In addition, the Regional Transport Committee recently resolved to write to central government to seek legislative change to make available road pricing tools such as congestion charging. It also

supported an upcoming investigation of demand management measures with Wellington City Council and the NZ Transport Agency. GWRC supports these initiatives.

1.3.3 Summary of key submission themes: Improving cycling and walking infrastructure

Submission Numbers: 28, 32, 36, 41, 44, 58, 66, 67, 83, 94, 105, 106, 115, 129, 266, 307, 311, 312, 313, 319, 329, 331, 332, 337, 345, 346, 350, 352, 361, 362, 365, 414, 416, 425,

32 submitters wrote in support of more cycleways (often seeking dedicated facilities separated from traffic) as a priority. Submitters sought safe connections between cycleways and CBD areas.

The Wellington City to Hutt Valley Cycleway (Ngauranga to Petone), Great Harbour Way (including eastern bays facility to Eastbourne) were most commonly identified, with early completion sought for both.

Seven submitters wrote specifically in support of safe, easy, pleasant footpaths and walkways for pedestrians.

1.3.4 Officer comments

Providing improved infrastructure and facilities for cyclists is a key component of the Cycle Network Plan of the Regional Land Transport Plan 2015. The responsibility for providing these infrastructure improvements lays with the relevant 'road controlling authority', local councils or the NZ Transport Agency.

NZTA is the overall project manager for the 'Wellington City to Hutt Valley walkway/cycleway and resilience' project (including the section from Ngauranga to Petone). The project has been included in the Regional Land Transport Plan 2015 as the 5th highest priority project in the region among the significant activities. Coordinated projects and funding will be required from a number of the territorial authorities and GWRC has identified a funding contribution in its LTP towards this project.

Three local councils in the region have also put forward significant new cycleway projects as a response to the additional funding from the Government's new Urban Cycleways Fund.

GWRC is not a road controlling authority so does not build cycleways on or along the road network. However, GWRC promotes the use of cycling and walking for trips and coordinates programmes to increase the safety and uptake of these modes - a crucial component alongside infrastructure provision, as identified in the Regional Land Transport Plan.

1.3.5 Summary of key submission themes: Sustainable energy sources and light rail

Submission Numbers: 33, 64, 76, 109, 307, 319, 343, 345, 371, 395, 411, 413,

12 submitters provided support for light rail or electric public transport options.

1.3.6 Officer comments

Light rail was recently investigated as part of the Wellington Public Transport Spine Study completed in early 2014. This comprehensive study, involving significant stakeholder and public engagement

concluded that Bus Rapid Transit would provide the most effective and affordable solution for Wellington City. This was agreed by the Regional Transport Committee and Wellington City Council.

GWRC is proceeding with changes to its network design, bus fleet and ticketing systems to facilitate this option. An all-electric bus fleet in Wellington City is a long term goal, with hybrid buses as a transitional step.

Financial incentives for the uptake of private electric vehicles are likely to be primarily nationally focused and are appropriately the role of central government. Electric vehicle charging facilities would be provided by local councils as part of local road and parking infrastructure. Some early trials of these types of facilities are understood to be underway.

1.3.7 Summary of key submission themes: Roads of National Significance

Submission Numbers: 41, 42, 56, 57, 58, 78, 79, 337, 346, 362, 363, 411, 413

Eight submitters noted opposition to RoNS projects and large roading projects generally, including specific opposition to the Basin Bridge project (3). A new solution sought for the Basin Reserve area in the LTP.

Five other submitters supported RoNS and major roading improvements in the region, including Transmission Gully, Mt Victoria tunnel and Terrace tunnel duplication, Basin Bridge, and Petone to Grenada.

Some submitters called for investment in roads to be re-allocated to public transport, walking and cycling.

Support for better integration of transport with urban planning and climate change objectives.

1.3.8 Officer comments

The NZ Transport Agency is the responsible authority for RoNS projects and these are 100% funded from national sources. Most RoNS projects have been identified as priorities through the region's planning processes over a number of years to address important needs in relation to road safety, resilience, reliability, freight access and links between key regional destinations and the rest of New Zealand.

Finding a solution to traffic and congestion issues at the Basin Reserve intersection is still considered crucial for a safe, effective and efficient transport system through Wellington City. An appeal relating to the Basin Bridge proposal will be held in June 2015 and is expected to be completed by the end of 2015. Depending on the outcome of this appeal, alternative solutions may then need to be investigated through the joint governance group.

All of the other identified road projects supported by submitters are included in the Regional Land Transport Plan 2015. Transmission Gully is a committed project. Mt Victoria tunnel duplication (and Ruahine St/Wellington Rd upgrade), Terrace tunnel duplication, and Petone to Grenada Road are all included in the list of prioritised significant activities, for the purpose of seeking funding from the National Land Transport Fund.

The allocation of funding for different transport activities is set out at the national level in the Government Policy Statement (GPS) on Land Transport. The GPS allocates funding to the different activity 'buckets' and gives priority to funding the Wellington RONS. GWRC cannot move funding from one activity class such as state highways to another such as public transport or cycling.

The integration of transport with urban planning and climate change is covered by policies in the Regional Policy Statement and the Regional Land Transport Plan.

1.3.9 Summary of key submission themes: Horse Riding

Submission Numbers: 264, 341, 351, 360

Four submitters sought improved consideration of horse-riders alongside the needs of pedestrians and cyclists:

- need areas to remain accessible to horses, and more shared access with cyclists & pedestrians
- consider safety of horses on the road, they are legal road users but left out of planning

Support sought for proposals for a set of bridleways and parking opportunities which has gone to UHCC's LTP, and seeks float parking at GWRC facilities - e.g. Tunnel Gully, Maymorn.

1.3.10 Officer comments

Regional transport planning focus on strategic transport issues and networks for travel purposes. Walking (including running and scooting) and cycling are core transport modes that a relatively substantial proportion of people have access to for journeys to work, school and other trip purposes such as shopping or medical appointments. Consequently, these modes and public transport are the focus of 'Getting out and about' programmes. As a transport mode for these sorts of trips, horses are not an option, nor practical, for most people and are therefore of relatively low significance.

It is noted that any policies or programmes that seek to improve the safety of on-road cycling in rural areas (eg. providing adequate road shoulder width, lower speed limits, drink-driving campaigns, etc.) will often improve safety for horse-riders using rural roads.

Decisions on whether particular off-road paths or facilities are suitable for horse-riders alongside walking and cycling, or whether alternative bridle ways should be developed, are a matter for the relevant local council to determine.

GWRC recognises the value of horse riding as a recreational activity and this is provided for in a number of Regional Parks and we have a policy to work with other agencies and landowners to develop better linkages between existing areas or potential areas of open space. The issue of float car parking at Regional Parks is something that can be considered as part of the next review of the Parks Network Plan.

1.3.11 Summary of key submission themes: Freight

Submission Numbers: 114, 161

Two submitters sought bypasses for heavy freight vehicles, greater investment in and use of rail freight.

1.3.12 Officer comments

Freight bypasses for heavy vehicles is an issue identified through transport planning and projects included in the Regional Land Transport Plan (eg. Cross Valley Link, Lower Hutt; Transmission Gully Motorway; Masterton Eastern Bypass). The Regional Land Transport Plan also targets an increasing proportion of long distance freight moved by rail. However, a significant proportion of freight trips will not be suitable or effective for rail due to short trip distances and costs associated with double handling/transfer.

1.3.13 Summary of key submission themes: Other transport strategy issues

Submission Numbers: 11, 48, 54, 66, 89, 129, 139, 375, 421

9 submitters commented on a range of detailed transport issues, including allocation of road space, specific solutions, connections and projects, issues on shared paths, congestion/traffic jams, parking, and road surface quality.

1.3.14 Officer comments

These submission points cover a range of topics from high level policy issues to detailed local operational matters. They are generally covered to some extent in the Regional Land Transport Plan (developed by the Regional Transport Committee) or in local council transport plans, policies or asset management plans.

1.4 Sustainable Transport

1.4.1 Summary of key submission themes: Active Transport and Road Safety Promotion

Submission Numbers: 51, 80, 87, 91, 147, 307, 337, 349, 358, 369, 403, 410, 416, 405, 432; 116, 147, 369, 395, 413, 414, 416; 102, 307, 331, 332, 337, 346, 349, 365, 411, 429

24 submitters including KCDC, UHCC, Sport Wellington VUW & RPH, provided support for active transport programmes, including education & promotional initiatives. Some prefer the focus to be on recreation while others prefer the focus to be on transport / relieving congestion. In particular the school cycling education programme received strong support.

Seven submitters sought an increase in funding for walking and cycling generally, and in active transport programmes, in order to support achievement of the aims set by GWRC.

Ten submitters urged that targets around levels of active transport to be increased further, and to ensure that they are measurable. Suggestion that targets may be superseded by recommendations from the Regional Land Transport Plan hearing panel.

1.4.2 Officer comments

It is encouraging to hear that current partners Regional Public Health, VUW, CAW, Living Streets Aotearoa and councils look to continue partnering with us to achieve the sustainable transport outcomes proposed. The Regional Council is still in negotiation with NZTA on the programme of work and the level of co-funding for it.

It is encouraging to hear several submitters suggest more funding be allocated in this area. Also that Regional Public Health looks to continue to partner with us to achieve the sustainable transport outcomes proposed. The Regional Council is still in negotiation with NZTA on the level of co-funding for the programme of work it has submitted.

GWRC's LTP includes performance measures relating to walking and cycling. These relate to the performance of GWRC programmes described in 'Getting out and about' including the measure: 'Workplace and school travel programme participants increase their use of sustainable transport modes'. LTP performance measures are developed to be measurable and relevant to the programmes and services to be provided by GWRC.

The Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP) 2015 provides strategic targets for walking and cycling in the region, including targets for increased mode share (proportion of all trips), improved level of service, and increased use of active modes for journeys to school. These targets were developed by the Regional Transport Committee and are set at a level considered to be challenging, but also realistic and affordable. Contribution to achieving these targets involves GWRC, all local councils and NZTA.

The Draft RLTP 2015 included a target of 13.6% journey to work mode share by walking and 3.7% journey to work mode share by cycling - which equates to a combined walking and cycling journey to work mode share of around 17%. Following the submissions and hearings process for the Draft RLTP, the Regional Transport Committee agreed to increase the journey to work cycling mode share target to 4.6% by 2025, to reflect the potential from proposed additional investment in cycling – including new projects signalled for funding through the Urban Cycleway Fund. This means the combined walking and cycling mode share target has increased to around 18% and this will be reflected in the relevant commentary in the final LTP. This is equivalent to a 75% increase in actual cycling trips and a 26% increase in actual walking trips from the 2013 baseline data (census).

1.5 Emergency Management

1.5.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 21, 57, 58, 128, 362, 421,

Six submitters wrote with concern for issues regarding emergency management. Points made include:

- that the consultation document does not directly reference CDEM strategies
- transport plans for the region should include consideration of access following disaster.
- it is imperative that emergency centres are properly provisioned and organised for immediate use

- the reorganisation into WREMO has weakened the structure at local level and the community is more disconnected from the organisation

1.2.2 Officer comments

The consultation document section on new 'resilience' projects did not specifically refer to CDEM planning, as this is already an established work programme. The Civil Defence Emergency Management matters referred to, including the vital human element, are managed as an integrated package of plans and strategies for the region. Plans covering these aspects were developed and consulted with the public in 2013.

Documents in relation to the approach and deployment of these strategies and plans may be found at the link <http://www.getprepared.org.nz/> along with restoration and transport access reports. Base documents related to the three key utilities may be found at <http://www.getprepared.org.nz/sites/default/files/uploads/WelG%20Restoration%20times%20report%2020.13.pdf>.

A recent external monitoring evaluation of WREMO structure and programmes was conducted in February/March 2015. This found capability had increased by over 50% during the past three years. WREMO has also been the recipient of several International Association of Emergency Managers awards, specifically for its approach to connecting with local communities.

1.6 Wairarapa Water Use Project

1.6.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 118

One individual wrote in opposition to GWRC being involved in creating dams for farm irrigation (funding or proposing) as this results in serious conflicts of interest with its mandate to protect the environment.

1.6.2 Officer comments

GWRC promotes Quality for Life by ensuring our environment is protected while meeting the economic, cultural and social needs of the community. One of the GWRC's responsibilities is to the region's natural resources - land, water, air, energy that sustain our lives. We help people to use these resources appropriately and sustainably.

Easily available ground and surface water resources are now at a premium on the Wairarapa valley floor such that efficiencies need to be introduced to help meet "the economic, cultural and social needs of the community". One means of doing this is to store water during wet periods so it's available for use especially during dry periods. Rather than being just a potential commercial proposition, the investigations are being conducted from an integrated land and water management approach covering environmental, cultural and social considerations. As such, this work is being undertaken in parallel with the Ruamahanga Whaitua process as well as the Regional Plan review and the underlying science.

1.7 Warm Greater Wellington

1.7.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 52, 365, 387, 410

Four submitters (WCC, HCC, UHCC and one individual) wrote with support for the Warm Greater Wellington programme. WCC support continued involvement in the project, and ask that other energy and water efficiency initiatives and waste minimisation products be eligible for payment using this mechanism.

HCC & UHCC encourage reinstating the clean heating component of the Warm Greater Wellington Scheme with \$5,000 maximum funding. Consider inclusion of solar photovoltaic panel installation.

1.7.2 Officer comments

GWRC is encouraged by support for the Warm Greater Wellington programme which has assisted in insulating over 9,200 properties to date. The rationale for extending the clean heating component of the programme to just Masterton is that it is the only area in our region that experiences regular recordings of air pollution. GWRC also considers insulation as the best first in creating a healthy home, and other initiatives like solar are not yet financially compelling enough to support.

2. Public Transport

2.1 PT Infrastructure - Spending

2.1.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 26, 73, 55, 87, 95, 126, 132, 263, 266, 346, 358, 403, 410

Six submitters commented that the level of proposed investment in PT appears excessive, given that it cannot be / is not used by a portion of the public. It was felt that the significant investment requires more cost/benefit analysis and consultation as the marginal benefits are not clearly understood. If increased patronage is not guaranteed then the costs need to be revisited.

Four submitters provided general support for the proposed level of investment in PT Infrastructure, and one submitter suggested that major transport decisions for Wellington should be included in a stronger way as they are hidden by being split into separate transport plans across multiple authorities.

Three submitters support investing to improve PT reliability as a priority.

2.1.2 Officer comments

Public Transport is a recognised around the world as a key component of successful cities/regions. It is not intended to work for all trips - but forms a vital role in making the overall transport system work.

The Wellington public transport network is well established and provides good coverage across the region, but suffered from a period of under investment during the 1990's and early 2000s. While patronage increases can never be guaranteed, investment in rail has significantly increased reliability and quality, and as a result we are seeing excellent patronage growth. We expect similar benefits from proposed investment in the bus network and other projects that improve the experience for customers, such as integrated fares and ticketing.

All major investment projects are put through rigorous business case analysis before they proceed, and further information on most major projects is available on our website. Modelling of our proposed major projects does forecast patronage benefits. While there are direct benefits to users of the public transport network there are also significant benefits to users of the road network through reduced congestion.

Many of the upgrade projects aim to improve reliability so that trains and buses will run on time and more frequent services can be provided.

2.2 Review of PT Funding

2.2.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 108, 136, 267, 331, 353, 365,

Six submitters wrote with regards to funding of public transport (PT). Two provide their support for a review of PT funding arrangements; one suggests that the port business is funding the rail transport business and instead supports small annual increases in cost matched by similar increases in rail ticket prices; and three advocate for reduced subsidisation of long-distance PT travel, or private provision of PT with user pays.

2.2.2 Officer comments

The review of the formula behind the transport targeted rate is commencing in 2015, and will consider this feedback.

The public transport network is operated as a whole, with different services fulfilling different roles and requiring different levels of subsidy. Funding decisions are made taking into account the costs and benefits of the investment across the complete system. It is a simplification to say that buses cross-subsidise trains - it would be as meaningful to say that full services cross subsidise an empty one, but in fact the system works as a network - as an example, recent increases in rail patronage have enabled the Council to defer a planned increase in both bus and train fares.

The port business does not fund rail transport. The reference to the offset between the deficit in Greater Wellington Rail Limited and the surplus in CentrePort relates to the financial accounts of the GWRC's holding company, and does not relate to the funding of public transport operations.

2.3 PT Fares

2.3.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 11, 13, 51, 88, 133, 149, 155, 318, 321, 327, 336, 358, 365, 369, 371, 403, 404, 410

18 submitters commented on PT fares and made requests for reducing fares to increase affordability. Requests included:

- nominal \$1 fee for elderly
- free Saturday passes & reduced family tickets
- free bus travel 6-8am & 6-8pm to and from railway stations to reduce need for Park and Ride
- free trial bus transfers
- half price student fares
- Safer School buses
- reduced fares for children and off-peak
- existing discount bus fares retained until the new integrated fares come into effect
- WCC would like to partner with GWRC on trialling cheaper weekend fares, and believe reductions in fares could at least partly pay for themselves with increased patronage.
- Support for the zero fare increase.

2.3.2 Officer comments

For the second year running, public transport fares will not increase in 2015.

Future major changes to the fares and ticketing system aim to ensure a simple, easy to use system that provides better value for customers, including 'free transfers' where only one fare is paid for an entire journey regardless of whether you change onto a different vehicle, and where the total number of trips you pay for in a week is capped. This will enable many people to use public transport 'free' during the weekend. SuperGold card users will retain their right to free off peak travel, and a new off-peak discount will be available to everyone.

All of our modelling of our fare initiatives takes patronage growth into account but still shows the need for significant new funding to make up for the net loss of fare revenue.

2.4 PT objectives, measures & targets

2.4.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 301, 331, 337, 346, 365, 410

Two submitters suggest a new PT vision around providing a great service to users that serves their needs rather than about reducing car congestion.

Four submitters comment on patronage growth targets for PT, querying if the proposed projects will fundamentally shift user behaviour as described. Two submitters requests more ambitious targets around PT patronage, and one suggests that better integration of Rail & Bus will increase patronage.

2.4.2 Officer comments

Public transport does reduce severe traffic congestion. The vision for public transport is to provide a modern, effective and efficient integrated public transport network that contributes to sustainable economic growth and increased productivity while also providing for the social needs of the community. This will be achieved by continually improving the Metlink public transport network so that services:

- go where people want to go, at the times they want to travel
- provide competitive journey times
- provide value for money
- are easy to understand and use
- are safe, comfortable and reliable
- provide flexibility, allowing people to change their plans.

The target for public transport mode share is challenging but realistic.

Major public transport projects only proceed if there is a positive business case demonstrating that the initiatives will make a measurable difference.

Relative to its population, public transport use is already higher in Wellington than in most other Australasian cities. This factor explains why considerable investment is often required in order to generate what might appear to be a small change in public transport mode share. The target of 15% growth over the next ten years is considered to be challenging but realistic, given the high level of roading investment occurring over the same period. GWRC continually strives to improve the connection between bus and rail services in order to provide a more attractive service to customers and promote patronage growth.

2.5 PT Infrastructure - Integration

2.5.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 332, 365, 375, 413

Four submitted provided general support for integrating the transport (and other) networks:

- cycling / walking with PT
- WCC would like to more closely integrate the Cable Car into the regional PT network
- support for priority bus lanes, improved transition between rail & bus, and connections between PT & public venues
- integrated TA 10-year plans (e.g. urban development alignment with bus exchanges)

2.5.2 Officer comments

GWRC works hard to improve integration between transport modes. At a high level we plan for all transport modes in the Regional Land Transport Plan, and the Regional Public Transport Plan specifically addresses integration between public transport and walking and cycling.

As there are many organisations involved in making transport decisions. These come together through the Regional Transport Committee, which is administered by GWRC. For specific projects we establish joint governance arrangements with other local authorities and Government agencies.

Officers from GWRC will continue to work with WCC and WCCL to discuss the role of the cable car in the Metlink public transport network, including any implications that might arise from those discussions. The outcomes will be reported back to Council in due course.

2.6 Bike Racks / Storage

2.6.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 96, 102, 141, 307, 311, 346, 349, 352, 395, 404

10 submitters commented in support of bike racks / more cycle space on PT. Specific requests include:

- bicycles to be allowed on Matangi trains during peak hours
- faster implementation of bike racks on buses
- more bike storage on trains and the ability to carry bikes on buses replacing trains
- bike storage at train stations
- address issue of cyclists being left behind at remote stations (Maymorn) when baggage cars are full.
- Support provisions for wheelchair and pushchair users as a priority.

5 submitters wrote in opposition to increased bike racks / storage, preferring additional capacity to be provided for wheelchair and pushchair users as a priority. One submitter opposed any funding being applied to bike racks, as it is unlikely to increase bus patronage or cycling.

2.6.2 Officer comments

We support the integration of public transport with walking and cycling, and intend to trial the introduction of bike racks on buses shortly. On trains, bikes are carried free of charge and folding bikes can be carried at all times. In addition, subject to available space, bikes can be carried at all times on the Wairarapa, Johnsonville, and Melling lines and on Ganz Mavag trains, but bikes cannot be carried on identified peak time services when these services are operated by Matangi trains. This is an attempt to balance the needs of cyclists against the fact that bikes take up considerable space when services are crowded.

We will continue to provide bike storage at stations, and to look for ways to increase the supply. While there was a recent increase in capacity at Wellington Station, it has not fully met demand, and we will continue to investigate future options – however the carparks in the area are not controlled by GWRC and we can therefore not use that space.

Any introduction of bike racks on buses will be subject to a successful trial. While the use of bike racks on buses has already been successful in other cities, we need to check that they can be integrated into our network. For example, the addition of a bike rack will effectively increase the

length of a bus with consequential impacts on bus stop lengths, particularly if there are multiple buses at a stop concurrently.

All new buses must provide for wheelchairs, and we work with local councils to improve the accessibility of bus stops.

2.7 PT Information

2.7.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 110, 133, 352, 404, 411, 413, 428

Seven submitters requested improved PT information, including:

- audio announcements for blind & vision impaired on PT, and helpful staff.
- a PT timetable app
- improved timetable integration & timekeeping
- preference for arrival times, not timetabled times, on real time displays

Three submitters provided support for investment in real-time electronic displays, while one opposed it.

2.7.2 Officer comments

The RPTP includes a policy to make public transport more accessible. GWRC is currently assessing ways in which visual and audio announcements on buses could be made available – options include on-board bus systems and smart phone apps. In future, all public transport will be required to provide customer service and disability awareness training for all staff in regular contact with customers.

A public transport app is in development and is expected to be available in 2015.

We will continue to provide up to date timetable information at stops, stations, and terminals, with real-time displays at stations and major stops. Real time data is also available from the Metlink website and will be available from the app.

2.8 Integrated ticketing

2.8.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 90, 94, 312, 329, 331, 337, 346, 350, 358, 361, 365, 395, 403, 404, 411, 412, 413, 414, 416, 428, 432

18 submitters commented with general support for integrated ticketing for all PT, and early implementation of the project. WCC encourages GWRC to work with NZTA to determine how it might be possible to build on the smart card infrastructure currently available in a way that meets NZTA's standards requirements. Other requests include:

- support for free transfers as part of the integrated ticketing project.
- a nationally compatible system.

- that blind passengers retain the current Snapper card discount on buses in Wellington and in the Hutt Valley, travelling at the child rate.

One submitter opposes a system that requires ticket-gates on rail stations, and another opposes the proposed integrated ticketing system being for PT only. KCDC & KCGP oppose investment in integrated ticketing, preferring the funds be better spent on services.

2.8.2 Officer comments

The introduction of integrated fares and ticketing aims to ensure a simple, easy to use system that provides better value for customers, including ‘free transfers’ where only one fare is paid for an entire journey regardless of whether you change onto a different vehicle, trip capping, discounts for children and young people and for off peak travel.

The project is currently in the investigation stage, and a range of options are being evaluated in consultation with NZTA. This includes consideration of a variety of technical options for ticketing as well as covering issues such as the costs and benefits of installing ticket gates at rail stations. We are progressing the ticketing project as fast as is feasible, but it is important that the new system works correctly, is secure and easy to use, and enables GWRC to implement its fare proposals.

The IFT project is currently in the investigation phase. As part of this process GWRC will consider the technology options and preferred specifications for integrated ticketing, including the use of NFC solutions and generic payment cards such as credit or debit cards.

2.9 PT Services

2.9.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 323, 346, 350, 361, 362, 403, 404, 411, 413, 414

Nine submitters support the proposed improved PT services. Submitters provided requests for:

- improvement to services between Northern Suburbs / Tawa / Porirua & Hutt Valley
- more frequent & connected services, particularly during peak time from busy stations
- Sunday morning services
- better disability access
- advancement of Johnsonville train & bus depot

Specific praise was given for Metlink, PT upgrades and Airport Shuttle.

Three submitters provided support for improved PT connections including transfers at inter-changes, and an express bus service on the new RoNS highway. One requested that Paramata railway station exit be aligned better with the road layout.

2.9.2 Officer comments

Under current legislation, the GWRC is responsible for public transport within the greater Wellington region, and not for travel to cities outside the region.

No funding is currently allocated for major new direct services between the Northern Suburbs and the Hutt Valley, however integrated fares and ticketing will reduce the cost for people transferring between buses and trains at Ngauranga. The development of the Petone to Grenada Road would open new opportunities to explore public transport connections in the longer term.

More frequent and better connected services are a key goal of planned improvements to rail and bus services (particularly through the Wellington bus review and the introduction of integrated fares). Many Sunday services do commence much earlier than 10am, and more frequent off peak and weekend services are already planned for many routes.

We plan to focus on improving the integration of the Metlink network, including by improving interchanges, timetables, and introducing integrated fares, and providing more reliable services. We will work with NZTA on interchange design and access to stations - however their decisions have to balance many different factors and they may not always be able to accommodate our suggestions.

2.10 Bus Services

2.10.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 56, 111, 358, 366, 403, 413, 422, 424,

Five submitters requested improvements to bus services, including:

- more frequent, timely and reliable services
- increased frequency of buses at peak times, particularly #7&8, Paraparaumu Beach.
- a direct bus from Johnsonville to Hospital (Burma Road, Khandallah Road, Ngaio Gorge)
- change of #47 from a primary school timetable
- improved connections between VUW Kelburn and Newtown / Karori

Three submitters commented on bus contracts specifically, requiring protection of the local neighbourhood at their sites, and training and monitoring of drivers in multi-cultural issues and to be cognisant of persons with disabilities or who have difficulties using public transport.

2.10.2 Officer comments

Bus capacity in Wellington will be adjusted as part of the proposed new bus network from 2017 and more or higher capacity buses provided where required. At present, if specific services are identified we can investigate further to review capacity and the extent of any overloading. However, we expect some passengers to have to stand at peak times, as providing enough seats for everyone who needs to travel at the busiest times would be too expensive.

The Wellington bus network has been designed so that in future it will be easier for people to transfer between different services. It is not possible to provide direct services from all suburbs to the Wellington Regional Hospital.

In future, all public transport will be required to provide regular customer service and disability awareness training for all staff in regular contact with customers.

2.11 Bus Infrastructure

2.11.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 41, 46, 51, 63, 78, 110, 111, 114, 144, 147, 155, 159, 305, 311, 312, 321, 327, 331, 337, 343, 346, 349, 354, 365, 371, 395, 411, 413, 414, 416, 428, 429

Submitters provided support for removal of older diesel buses, and requiring modern fuel efficient vehicles, and support for the new bus network and increased bus sizes. There was a question about the need for Aotea Quay express bus route. One submitter voiced concerns around diesel emissions and requested monitoring / maintenance / driver training to reduce emissions.

Six submitter provided support and requests for more / improved bus shelters, specifically:

- outside schools
- at local stop adjacent to Arnold Grove in Martin Road for local pensioners
- at Belmont Regional Park

It was suggested that all shelters be compliant with the NZ Pedestrian Planning & Design Guide.

27 submitters oppose the decommissioning of the Wellington trolley bus fleet. The general preference was to retain trolley buses over hybrids, which are not a proven better option. It was requested that the priority be to phase out diesels first, and retain trolleys.

Wellington Cable Car Ltd recommended suitable funding to safely decommission the Trolley Bus Overhead Electrical Network and meet WCCL's health and safety obligations needs to be provided through a guaranteed funding stream.

2.11.2 Officer comments

Older diesel buses are being phased out over time. The new bus contracts will ensure that operators provide high-quality, low emission vehicles that comply with environmental standards, and require that the buses are well maintained. We expect new technologies to enable regular and real time monitoring of vehicle performance.

The requests for new shelters will be considered along with others received through other processes, as there is insufficient funding to meet all requests. New bus shelters may also be provided by local councils, particularly in the Wellington City area.

The Pedestrian Planning and Design Guide aims to improve New Zealand's walking environment, and was primarily intended for use by local councils who are the road controlling authorities. GWRC works in partnership with the road controlling authorities to ensure that wherever possible the guidelines are adhered to, and GWRC uses the guidelines when siting bus stop infrastructure such as poles and shelters. We also use the following when considering the siting and design of infrastructure:

- national guidelines for crime prevention through environmental design in NZ
- guidelines for public transport infrastructure and facilities (NZTA)

- the legal requirements for bus stops in the land transport: traffic control devices rule

A modern and environmentally sustainable bus fleet is integral to the future of Wellington's public transport. The decision to phase out trolley buses in 2017 (when the current operating contract ends) and replace them with modern hybrid buses was the subject of detailed public consultation in 2014. Older diesels will also be phased out. When tested electric vehicle technology becomes available on the market as a regular vehicle, we plan to start replacing vehicles with fully electric buses that will service the whole region.

While the current trolley buses (60 vehicles out of our total fleet of more than 500) certainly have environmental benefits, they are expensive to run and are limited in where they can go.

The existing power supply for the trolleys is antiquated and requires significant investment to remain viable. Modern hybrid technology is now proven and used in many places. Importantly for Wellington, hybrid buses would not be constrained by wires or tracks, and generate most power for their batteries on short stop-start runs such as ours.

The bus fleet reconfiguration will steadily increase the reliability and flexibility of the bus network and will significantly reduce bus congestion in the Golden Mile. This will help with a major concern around the current level of particulates in diesel emissions.

Officers from GWRC will continue to work with WCC and WCCL to discuss the decommissioning of the trolley bus overhead wires following the end of trolley bus services and the role of the cable car in the Metlink public transport network, including any implications that might arise from those discussions. The outcomes will be reported back to Council in due course.

2.12 Rail Infrastructure

2.12.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 40, 58, 62, 116, 128, 131, 329, 331, 337, 345, 346, 350, 395, 403, 413, 414, 416, 422,426, 433,

12 submitters provided support for the planned investment in rail infrastructure. Requests included:

- shelters for train users, particularly at Johnsonville & Melling.
- considering water use efficiency at stations - water wise landscaping etc.
- extending the electric train network north & east.
- the PT Strategy to better utilise Matangi's and complete train infrastructure upgrade.

One submitter questioned if there was a quieter system of braking than air-braking, and another suggested relocating the rail between Ngauranga and Petone to provide extra vertical and horizontal space to make improvements for motorist, pedestrians and cyclists and protection from storm surges.

Four submitters commented on rail services, requesting:

- improved services from Melling at night / weekends.

- increased peak time frequency of trains and later evening services
- support for services to additional stations & routes over the entire week

Specific requests for improved services to Otaki include:

- changes to #290 bus route
- express service to Waikanae train station
- one additional peak time bus
- consideration of Energise Otaki's services
- extend the rail commuter service to Otaki station, double-tracking not a priority.

2.12.2 Officer comments

The detailed plans for the development of the rail network are contained in the Regional Rail Plan. Improving protection from the weather at Johnsonville and Melling Stations are not identified as priorities, which are focused on increasing the reliability of services during the morning peak, with higher frequency services between Wellington and Porirua, Waterloo and Johnsonville resulting in shorter waiting times. There will be express trains from stations on the outer parts of the network, originating from Waikanae, Upper Hutt and Masterton. However, we will keep a watch on the shelter demands at Johnsonville and Melling stations in terms of our regular rail asset investment prioritisation process.

To deliver the planned rail improvements, we will continue upgrading the physical rail network through a series of projects including double tracking from Trentham to Upper Hutt, new turn back facilities in Porirua and Plimmerton, signalling and track upgrades through the Tawa basin, upgrading Upper Hutt Station and park and ride upgrades on the Kapiti and Hutt Valley lines.

KiwiRail is working to complete the government funded catch-up renewal programme which covers power, signalling, track, structures and platforms. This will make good a substantial proportion of the previously deferred capital maintenance, bringing the majority of the network up to a condition where it can be maintained at a constant and fit-for-purpose level by routine renewals. Unfortunately until this work is complete weekend services will continue to be disrupted on occasion.

While we support increased water use efficiency, waterwise landscaping at stations is not currently a priority.

Consideration of relocating the rail line between Ngauranga and Petone is part of the resilience project identified in the Regional Land Transport Plan as a significant priority that also considers the state highway and a potential cycleway / walkway.

Otaki bus services were last reviewed in 2012 and current patronage is not high enough to justify expanding the service. Extensions of rail services beyond Waikanae will be considered only after the current programme of work is completed (ie after 2020), and would be likely to consist of non-electrified shuttles or services running to Wellington.

2.13 Park and Ride

2.13.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 4, 64, 175, 301, 329, 331, 337, 346, 357, 362, 366, 395, 404, 411, 412, 414, 416, 432

16 submitters provided support for increased Park and Ride facilities. Specific requests include:

- more parking, including building parking above railway stations.
- convert 2 hour parking to Park and Ride
- more spaces at Takapu Rd station, and extension of CCTV monitoring to other Tawa stations to reduce crime
- more spaces at Paramata, Waikanae & Paraparaumu
- include more bike parking in plans, as well as bike rental at Wellington Station
- increased security at stations, particularly Hutt Valley stations
- covered walkways
- incentives such as free parking if using PT

Appreciation was provided for expanded Park and Ride at Tawa Station, but request for better advertising for those 70 carparks also available within Outlet City carpark.

One submitter noted that better integration with bus feeder routes would alleviate the need for increased capacity.

Two submitters opposed more Park and Ride facilities with one requesting that current facilities provide safer pedestrian access.

2.13.2 Officer comments

We have an on-going programme of expanding park and ride facilities at rail stations, and have identified priorities in the Regional Rail Plan. Further additional improvements to park and ride capacity will be made in line with land availability and available funding.

Opportunities to improve integration between bus and rail services (eg by providing feeder services) are investigated during service reviews. The integrated fares and ticketing project provides an opportunity to link free parking with the use of the Metlink network, but this would occur only after the majority of the projects other aims are achieved.

Opportunities to increase bike parking at stations are actively investigated by officers.

2.14 Capital Connection

2.14.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 372, 109, 138, 139, 140, 142, 143, 145, 148, 432, 153, 156, 157, 160, 260, 262, 263, 302, 310, 314, 315, 318, 320, 325, 328, 330, 335, 338, 339, 340, 342, 343, 344, 347, 355, 364, 366, 412, 432, 433

40 submitters wrote providing general support for continued funding of the Capital Connection service. In mid-May 'Save The Capital Connection Campaign' will present a detailed business case to GWRC and NZTA, KiwiRail, and Horizons Regional Council for moving the Capital Connection service into the Tranz Metro service.

In addition to the comments made in submissions, 573 forms were received from individuals advocating retention of the Capital Connection service.

2.14.2 Officer comments

KiwiRail has advised that it is projecting a cash shortfall (fare and catering revenue less operating and direct capital costs) on the service of \$6.2 million over the next 5 years. Horizons Regional Council has proposed providing funding of \$0.55 million over the same period, and the New Zealand Transport Agency has advised that the service falls outside the Agency's investment criteria. On this basis, for KiwiRail to continue to operate the Capital Connection, GWRC would have to contribute a minimum of \$5.65 million over 5 years (an average of \$1.13 million per year). The major beneficiaries of this expenditure would be the residents of Otaki and the Horizons Region, as alternate rail services are already available from Waikanae and Paraparaumu.

Additional capacity will be provided in future years on the Waikanae and Paraparaumu services as the higher capacity Matangi replace the old Ganz Mavag trains.

2.15 Other public transport issues

2.15.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 337; 84, 116, 337, 346, 403,

One submitter requested that bus stops & railway stations be smoke-free, with reminder announcements, and enforcement.

Two submitters requested that SuperGold hours be extended to 4pm.

Three submitters support increased Total Mobility provision, including additional wheelchair hoists, the user-pays component be reduced to quarter of the fare cost with GWRC making the difference, and for incentives to be provided only to operators of electric vehicles.

2.15.2 Officer comments

Legislation currently prohibits smoking on public transport vehicles and in passenger waiting rooms within enclosed terminals, but not on railway platforms, bus stops, or in bus shelters. GWRC does not have regulatory powers to ban smoking in these areas, but is able to declare areas within GWRC control 'smoke-free'. This is consistent with the approach recommended by public health authorities, who promote using public education rather than a regulatory approach when establishing outdoor smoke-free areas.

In most cases, control of stations and stops is shared between multiple parties, and declaring these areas smokefree would require agreement from all parties.

The SuperGold travel scheme is fully funded by the Government, who sets the rules around eligibility. The Government does not support any extension of the scheme. Therefore any extension of the scheme would require increases in rates and/or fares for other users, and officers do not consider that benefits of extending the period of free travel for SuperGold Card holders would justify decreasing the affordability of public transport for other users, or increasing rates. Extended hours would also put additional pressure on the PM peak which could require additional services or capacity with associated additional costs.

Increasing the Total Mobility van fleet is a priority for GWRC, and the number of vans being replaced or added to the fleet has recently increased. Limiting funding to operators of electric vehicles only would reduce the number of vans with hoists, adversely impacting customers. Increasing the Total Mobility subsidy from 50% to 75% would put the subsidy well out of line with other public transport services.

3. Water Supply

3.1 Fluoride

3.1.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 14, 31, 122, 152, 154, 268, 306, 322, 374, 376, 367, 368, 369, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 485, 486, 388, 389, 390, 391, 396, 398, 399, 402, 407, 408, 409, 415,

35 submissions were made on the topic of fluoridation of the bulk water supply – 33 in opposition and two in support.

Those opposing include NZ Health Professionals Opposing Fluoridation, NZ Fluoridation Information Service, New Health New Zealand Inc, Wellington chapter of the Weston A Price Foundation, Fluoride Free New Zealand, Fluoride Free Hamilton and 26 individuals. The themes were generally that the need for fluoridation is not supported by literature; it is imposed medication of the public; it poses a health risk to vulnerable sectors; and individual health symptoms are being experienced. An individual requested that the Medical Officer of Health to provide objective, verifiable, unbiased and valid research that shows that this substance is safe and effective for tooth decay prevention as claimed by those who say that it is. Submitters recommend that public discussion is opened.

Public Health Association and Regional Public Health support the continuation of community water fluoridation.

3.1.2 Officer comments

In response to the 2010 submissions on fluoridation GWRC requested feedback from the Ministry of Health regarding their policy and guidelines for the fluoridation of water supplies and the evidential basis for the fluoride levels set in the Drinking Water Standards.

In terms of policy, the Ministry of Health; 'strongly recommends water fluoridation as a safe, effective and affordable way to improve and protect oral health across the population. This position is adopted on the basis of a large body of historical and current research that confirms the safety of water fluoridation, within certain parameters'.

In May 2011 and again in August 2012 the Ministry of Health, Regional Public Health Service and the Wellington Medical Officer of Health presented to the Council the views of the Ministry of Health and District Health Board regarding recent publicity and current research about the risks and benefits associated with water fluoridation.

It is in light of this information that, by agreement with the four city councils, it is recommended to continue the policy of water fluoridation for the cities of Upper and Lower Hutt (excluding Petone), Wellington and Porirua.

3.2 Keeping the Water Flowing

3.2.1 Summary of key submission themes: Investment in Infrastructure

Submission Numbers: 87, 108, 116, 306, 358, 362, 410, 414,

Eight submitters commented on the level of proposed investment in bulk water resilience. Three submitters support the level of planned investment to secure an emergency water supply for the Wellington region. Five oppose stating concerns that:

- not all alternatives (or other risks) have been identified. What other 'resilient community' options GWRC could facilitate including a clear communications campaign noting the cost of a new water storage facility may go some way to reducing water consumption
- there is a lack of explanation around why this project package deserves four times the investment into public transport
- the commitment to provide bulk water supply of 20L p/p for 40 days undermines CDEM's drive to encourage the public to be self-sufficient
- new water demand should be funded by development contributions from new housing, and existing housing should only pay for maintenance.

3.2.2 Officer comments

Support for planned investment is noted.

Movement of the Wellington fault is the biggest foreseeable risk that will impact the water supply at some time in the future. Many alternatives, of varying cost, for the provision of emergency water supply were considered before the proposed projects were recommended. These projects would provide the minimum level of service required to prevent evacuation of large parts of the metro region.

GWRC is the supplier of bulk water to the four city councils and it is they who are responsible for the water supply service to consumers. We charge the City Council for water based on the amount used in their area and they on charge the end user. This includes development contributions.

3.2.3 Summary of key submission themes: Harbour Pipeline

Submission Numbers: 39, 102, 322, 326, 371, 410, 425, 429

Eight submitters commented on the proposed Harbour Pipeline - one in support, three questioning the earthquake resilience of the pipeline, and three questioning the cost/benefit of the pipeline. UHCC was also dissatisfied with the lack of pre-consultation with TAs.

3.2.4 Officer comments

Getting water into Wellington after a major fault event is critical. The regional council has assessed many options and whilst work is continuing this current year and next on the assessment and engineering solution of this, the pipeline is seen as providing the most viable and resilient solution to this risk.

The route being considered for the pipeline across Wellington Harbour avoids all known faults, including the Aotea Fault discovered by NIWA in 2014. The pipe would be polyethylene, a tough flexible plastic that has performed very well during earthquakes in other places. It would be buried beneath the harbour floor to protect it from anchor drag and Tsunami damage. GWRC is working in collaboration with the four metropolitan TA's and Wellington Water on the provision of resilient infrastructure across the network.

3.2.5 Summary of key submission themes: Dams / Reservoirs

Submission Numbers: 39, 85, 128, 322, 326,

Five submitters commented on bulk water storage, and particularly for maintaining upkeep of various dams and reservoirs. There was opposition to, and support for, a Whakatikei Valley dam. Support for a new dam in Upper Kaitoke and Porirua. One submitter preferred renewing old dams above creating new water supply options, and another supported prioritised reservoir upgrade in the southern suburbs that services the hospital to be prioritised.

3.2.6 Officer comments

A continuing downward trend in water use means that a new water source is not required until 2037, according to our computer modelling.

While providing similar benefits, constructing the Takapu emergency storage lakes and Pakuratahi raw water storage lakes is a more cost effective option than constructing the Whakatikei Dam, especially if a 'net present value' approach is taken. The first Pakuratahi Lake is not required until 2037, while the Takapu Emergency Storage can be built as soon as funding allows and land rights can be obtained. In contrast, to obtain the resilience benefits of the Whakatikei dam it is necessary to build the whole facility at a high cost. Also the Pakuratahi/Takapu option has considerably less environmental impact.

The Karori Dams were decommissioned because that sit directly on top of the Wellington Fault and any dam in this situation is very likely to fail if the fault moves. The Prince of Wales Park (Mt Cook) Reservoir is a Wellington City Council Project.

3.2.7 Summary of key submission themes: Water conservation

Submission Numbers: 6, 7 13, 26, 35, 51, 95, 102, 109, 331, 345, 356, 371, 414, 429

15 submitters provided a general preference for either household rainwater tanks to be required for emergency water supply or for increased focus on water conservation activities (education programmes, encouraging increased water harvesting by the public, and in focusing on water leaks) before / rather than GWRC investing in providing an increased emergency water supply.

There was strong support for increased encouragement to the public to harvest water, including incentives, support for consents, and regulating new builds. Several submitters were concerned about a lack of apparent commitment to managing demand for water except as a reaction when supply reaches set levels.

3.2.8 Officer comments

We are conscious that demand management offers an alternative to supply augmentation, and are focused on maintaining a programme of water-efficiency and conservation options that will continue to help offset population growth, to provide a cost-effective means to delay new borrowing for expansion and support the community's environmental aspirations. Note that Water Supply Authorities, including GWRC, have a statutory responsibility under the CDEM Act to maintain the water supply "to the greatest extent possible" following an emergency. It is unlikely that relying on voluntary measures would meet the requirements of this legislation.

A report to GWRC in 2011 (Report 11.01) examined the viability of on-site rainwater tanks as a substitute source of water to the public supply. The report found that on site water tanks were not cost effective, and likely to require topping up from the municipal supply at the end of a long dry period, at a time when the municipal supply is very likely to be under stress.

GWRC supports the use of on-site rain water tanks for emergency supply, and the GWRC website contains information about the use of rainwater tanks for this purpose (<http://www.gw.govt.nz/rainwater-tanks/>). WREMO, which GWRC co-funds with the city and district councils of the region, has partnered with a rainwater tank manufacturer to make a 200L tank and downpipe connector kit available for a heavily discounted price. Information on these can be found on the WREMO website <http://www.getprepared.org.nz/rainwater-tanks>).

We also support a range of educational water efficiency and conservation initiatives, including a school curriculum-linked teaching resource (see <http://www.gw.govt.nz/turning-on-the-tap/>), tours of our water treatment plants, a proactive summer-time media promotion of water efficiency and conservation tips for households, support for city council watering restrictions promotion and a trial partnership in household eco-home audits that include subsidies for water-efficient showers and tap aerators. This activity is guided by research about current actions and attitudes within the community.

In September 2014 we became a shareholder (with the Hutt, Porirua, Upper Hutt and Wellington city councils) in a joint council-owned organisation, Wellington Water, to bring a more integrated approach to managing the water services for the greater Wellington metropolitan area. Community education is signaled as one of Wellington Water's key areas of focus and we anticipate further enhancements to the delivery of water-use awareness programmes over the coming few years as a result of this alignment

The difference between the volume of water that we treat for supply and water supplied to Hutt, Porirua, Upper Hutt and Wellington city councils is consistently less than 2%, the standard for the accuracy of our flow meters, which indicates a very low level of loss from our network due to leakage. Each of the city councils that we supply funds annual leak detection and repair works on their local pipe networks. Water supply to the four cities has been reducing for the last eight years and leakage reduction is thought to be a main reason for this improving outlook.

Our water supply to the region's four cities has been reducing for the last eight years, and that is a major factor in the recent deferral of our projected need for new bulk water storage lakes (for day-to-day water supply) by more than a decade. Leakage reduction and water use behaviour trends are thought to be the main reasons for this improving outlook.

4. Environment

4.1 General

4.1.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 68, 108, 266, 361, 362, 370, 410, 414, 416, 418, 432

Submitters wrote with support for, and requests relating to, the monitoring of water quality; specifically:

- requests for improved monitoring & public communications about regional water quality with historical comparisons, and monitoring the run off into the Pauahatanui Inlet from the Transmission Gully Construction.
- the need for more effort in cleaning up the Hutt River so that cyanobacteria does not cause closure of the river in summer.
- UHCC support work done on Hutt River water quality & its tributaries, but questions evidence of impact. New activities should not be funded until the essential elements are addressed.

Submitters also wrote with requests for environmental policy, including:

- Maintaining water quality standards above bare minimum
- GWRC to work with others on the Wellington Conservancy Conservation Management Strategy, regional threat classification system, Nature Central and Restoration Day.
- the Environment & Water Quality package to preserve & restore the mauri of the region's waterways (minimum levels for nitrate and potassium and enforce stock exclusion from waterways).
- water quality to be addressed by treatments paid for by levying new developments post 1970.
- KCDC seeks commitment to work closely together via a joint working party on statutory plan development and implementation, with GWRC taking a leadership role in identification of coastal hazards, including setting aside funding and defining a work programme.

Support & appreciation was provided for land and catchment management activities, with specific requests for:

- subsidised plants for private landowners to protect their waterways
- that the target of 10 FEPs should be a minimum
- considering resilience in both hill country & dairy farming for our future
- increasing capacity and programmes for FEPs in the Porirua catchment area, where lifestyle property owners have limited knowledge of sustainable land management practices.

VUW offered support and would welcome partnership opportunities to contribute to the region's environmental improvement.

4.1.2 Officer comments

Monitoring of water quality:

The LTP proposal incorporates additional resources to assist in delivering more robust and applied science support to policy development, communities and associated GW information requirements. These additional resources that have been sought will enable better communication, collaboration and rigour. The proposed additional funding will address many of the concerns raised.

The Transmission Gully project's resource consents require stringent monitoring and adaptive management requirements. Data from baseline monitoring which has been completed is being used to develop water quality triggers to ensure that construction works are appropriately managed within a set of agreed environmental standards throughout the life of the project construction. In addition to this consent conditions require a high level of sediment control performance on site, and management plans will detail the sorts of mitigation measures that will be used to ensure effects are appropriately managed.

GWRC has both increased and expanded its existing monitoring in the harbour and catchment to inform the implementation of the Porirua Harbour and Catchment Action Plan and Strategy. A particular focus has been on monitoring sediment inputs to the harbour. Further monitoring will be developed as the Te Arawa o Porirua Harbour Whaitua process develops. Additional funding has been sought through the LTP to enable an increase in monitoring in response to the whaitua process.

GWRC has continued to increase its research and investigation efforts in the Hutt River catchment over the past few years, and Upper Hutt has been a key area of targeted water quality investigation, with a particular focus on identifying sources of nutrients in the catchment. The issues around cyanobacteria blooms are complex and nutrient inputs are only one part of the picture that needs to be examined. What influence river works may have is one area currently being investigated. Additional funding was sought in the LTP to facilitate information based decision making on these matters and to better inform the future whaitua process for this area.

Environmental policy:

The contents and status of the RMA is a matter for central government and not under the jurisdiction of GWRC.

GWRC does and will continue to work with others across a number of programmes, including the Wellington Conservancy Conservation Management Strategy, regional threat classification system, Nature Central and Restoration Day.

GWRC is working, through the draft Natural Resources Plan and a number of on-ground partnerships, to maintain and improve the Mauri of the region's waterways, over the long-term. The Council has established the Whaitua Committee process to set limits under the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management, including where appropriate limits on nutrients. The draft Natural Resources Plan has a policy and rule framework to exclude stock from identified waterways and rules to ensure stock do not degrade water quality or cause bank erosion in all waterways.

Council has a number of existing funding sources to ensure the maintenance and improvement of water quality outcomes over time.

The alignment of statutory plan development and implementation process is a region-wide issue that incorporates a number of matters that are of concern to all Councils and at the operational level this is co-ordinated through the Regional Planning Manager Group.

GWRC does and will continue to take a leadership role in the identification and management of Natural Hazards through the region, including coastal hazards. GWRC with assistance of other TA'S, including KCDC, is funding a clear programme of work around a Regional Natural Hazard Strategy, which incorporates steps to identify information gaps and develop programmes to address these in a regionally co-ordinated manner.

Land & catchment management

Two new programmes (Wairarapa Moana and Porirua Harbour) will have a focus on nutrient and sediment management. Within the context of these two initiatives will be advice and information for landowners, and financial support for qualifying works.

GWRC is enhancing its hill country programmes through a new relationship with MPI. GWRC's intention is to ensure that the issues arising from the use of land for farming purposes are focussed on environmental resilience.

Lifestyle blocks occupy a significant part of the Porirua Harbour catchment, as do more traditional farming enterprises (approx. 7,000 hectares). While the new programme is focussed on 'farming' enterprises' GWRC will continue to educate and assist all landowners in the catchment. The Porirua Harbour and Catchment Sediment Reduction Plan has specific priorities and interventions which align closely with the use of Farm Environmental Plans.

GWRC notes the interest shown by Victoria University in partnering with Council on environmental programmes, and will communicate this to relevant groups within Council.

4.2 Pest Management

4.2.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 6, 7, 16, 60, 86, 316, 322, 331, 401, 429, 432,

11 submitters provided support for pest management activities and for continued funding for pest control at a minimum of current levels. Specific requests include:

- Adding Canadian Geese to the RPMS
- Expanding the Tbfree programme for Project Aorangi to include multi-species pest control
- addressing the risk of dogs ingesting pest control pellets
- managing noxious plants (ivy, agapanthus etc) and Argentine Ants
- greater controls around domestic and feral cats.

In addition, there was a statement that GWRC should prohibit the use of glyphosate based herbicides where their toxic consequences will affect ecosystems, the environment and animal and human food sources.

4.2.2 Officer comments

Support for the pest management programme is noted. Pest plant and pest animal control is a real success story in the Wellington region, and the input and involvement of the community is essential to ensure that this can continue.

GWRC utilises the full range of pest control tools available according to the industry best practices and based on a long history of safe use of pesticides in the region. The Regional Pest Management Strategy (RPMS) is the document that guides our control work. The results of our comprehensive pest management programmes are reported annually in the RPMS Operational Plan Report and available from <http://www.gw.govt.nz/document-library-2/category/10>

GWRC plans to review the RPMS to align with the pending National Policy Direction, an outcome of the recent reforms to the Biosecurity Act. At the time of the review GWRC will consider both the species currently in the document and any others with the potential to become serious pests in the region.

4.2.3 Summary of key submission themes: Tbfree funding for 2015-16

Submission Numbers: 308, 417, 430

Federated Farmers & Wellington Tbfree Committee strongly oppose proposals to cease funding the regional share of the national Tb Plan from July 2015.

OSPRI seeks reconsideration of the decision to cease funding Tbfree programme. Seeks funding, on behalf of landowners, of \$600,000 for 2015/16 toward an overall programme in the region of \$4.8 million.

4.2.4 Officer comments

GWRC proposed ceasing a contribution to the Tbfree NZ programme in the region following the recommendations of the comprehensive funding review of the National Pest Management Strategy for Bovine Tuberculosis. There are other funding mechanisms available for Tbfree NZ to collect the regional share of the planned 2015/16 programme.

4.3 Biodiversity

4.3.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 266, 318, 359, 417, 432

Support provided for GWRC's leadership role in improving biodiversity, and for addressing biodiversity hot spots as a matter of primary concern. Specific comments include:

- reduction of high value biodiversity sites from 120 to 80, a request for improved wording that reflects the consequences of this decision, as well as funding to cover the 40 sites.
- budget cuts leading to reduction of pest control in Wellington. Makara Peak Supporters and Friends of Trelisick Park request continued support in KNE's. WCC states that losing 71% of funding creates an unsustainable situation for WCC.
- support for riparian planting and improved habitat, starting with Battle Hill Farm Park, water storage facilities and PT infrastructure.
- FF questioned why current levels of service remain the same, when GWRC had intended to actively partner with landowners in category one sites - this is not mentioned in the Plan.
- KCDC seeks a joint programme to align assistance programmes for biodiversity protection & enhancement, and a Nature Central pilot for Kapiti.

4.3.2 Officer comments

GWRC's Key Native Ecosystem (KNE) programme seeks to protect some of the best examples of ecosystem types in the Wellington region. In 2013, using current scientific knowledge including widely accepted criteria such as ecological representativeness, rarity and diversity, sites within the KNE programme were prioritised for management to ensure our limited resources were applied most effectively. As a result, some sites containing lesser biodiversity values were removed from the programme and the resources redirected to more adequately fund those higher value sites remaining in the programme. This reprioritisation was essential to ensure the biodiversity in our highest value sites was improved. We do not believe improvement is possible if funding is spread thinly over a large number of sites.

GWRC will continue to work with Territorial Authorities to further biodiversity objectives within their jurisdictions. In all cases, we will need to ensure that regional priorities remain at the forefront of our focus.

4.4 Whaitua Committees

4.4.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 266, 318, 359, 417, 432

Federated Farmers, supported by Sustainable Wairarapa Inc, cautions Council to not sacrifice quality for speed as it enables the Whaitua committees to complete their work faster.

KCDC seeks urgent commencement of Kapiti Whaitua.

PCC strongly supports the Whaitua initiative, particularly the Te Awarua-o-Porirua Harbour, and is committed to working with partners through the strategy implementation. PHCCT look forward to the results of the Whaitua process being incorporated into policy, plans and actions for the harbour and its catchment.

4.4.2 Officer comments

Support for the Whaitua programme is noted.

The current funding and resourcing for the Whaitua programme is sufficient to meet the additional demands of an accelerated programme. These additional resources have been allocated to the Whaitua process to ensure the quality of work is also improved.

While GWRC has allocated additional resources to accelerate the Whaitua programme the current available funding, expertise and community resources limits the number of Whaitua committees processes that can be successfully run at any one time.

4.5 Environment – other matters

4.5.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers 1, 331, 369, 392, 393, 401, 418

Two submitters strongly urge a precautionary approach clause /policies on genetically engineered organisms, and request GW consult on the issue through a section 32.

Five submitters support for the planned increased funding for the Enviroschools Programme. RPH request that the Programme be used to also address obesity through community gardens and nutrition literacy.

4.5.2 Officer comments

The presence or absence of genetically modified organisms in New Zealand is controlled at the national level. A policy in the Regional Policy would be unenforceable and not meet the section 32 test as being efficient and effective.

GW continues to be a strong supporter of the Enviroschools programme. We have increased our investment in the programme in successive Long Term Plans. Our staff works closely with Enviroschools representatives to ensure our programmes are aligned and maximum benefit is being derived.

5. Flood Protection and Control Works

5.1 General

5.1.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 26, 51, 59, 87, 266, 345, 356, 395, 403, 414, 417

Seven submitters wrote with general requests relating to Flood Protection, including:

- A personal request for a project timing review for Hutt Valley works at Mills St
- Management of upper catchment areas is equally if not more important than flood plain management as it limits flood problems at the source. Re-vegetation of areas such as regional parks can contribute substantially to both sustainable development and materially advance the flood protection objectives.
- that resilience to be increased to mitigating landslides
- better modelling & mapping

The Western Community Committee & FF provided support for continued flood protection works.

Five submitters wrote with support for targeted rates or partially targeted rates for flood protection works.

5.1.2 Officer comments

The consideration of the timing for implementing components of the City Centre project, of which the stopbank and channel works at Mills St are a part, will only be able to be made once an Integrated Concept design work has been completed later in 2015. At this time we would be able to consider the priorities for implementation and whether certain parts could be done in advance of others. We would seek guidance from Hutt City Council on their preferences given the complexities of the project and the interaction with the Making Places and Melling Gateway projects.

We are working closely with Porirua and Wellington City Councils on the land use matters as they relate to flood and erosion protection as these matters are primarily dealt with within their respective District Plans.

All new and updating of existing flood hazard information is done to the current best practice standards. This includes taking into account the local knowledge of flooding provided by residents.

The Regional Council currently funds flood protection works with up to 50% of the funding coming from a general regional rate and the balance of the funding coming from the direct beneficiaries. This mix is considered a reasonable balance between the benefits derived to the local community and the wider region. We will continue to work with Hutt City Council on the implementation of the works in the CBD to ensure the costs are affordable and appropriately spread over the community of benefit.

5.2 Proposed Investment

5.2.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 6, 7, 21, 26, 65, 107, 108, 331, 373, 397, 414, 416, 429,

Several submitters commented against more investment in flood protection with a preference for retreat from flood prone areas. Comments include:

- flood protection infrastructure should not focus on protecting flood prone environments

- development should not be allowed, and should never have been allowed, in flood risk areas
- concerns around canalisation of rivers, and preference for buffering as sustainable solutions
- works can create perverse incentives such as promoting development in unsafe areas

Three submitted opposed the cost of proposed works, stating that the Wairarapa should be removed, the Hutt City CBD upgrade was unnecessary, and insurance should pay for protection.

Three submitters wrote with requests for urgency in addressing Hutt River issues, particularly erosion of the river bank.

5.2.2 Officer comments

The Regional Policy Statement and the draft Regional Plan both place a significant emphasis on new development avoiding natural hazards. As time goes by it is intended that the policies and rules in these documents will reduce the community's exposure to flood risks. The mitigation of flood risk to existing communities is a more complex issue and frequently requires a more structural approach of building stopbanks to prevent existing development from flooding. The approach of "managed retreat" from at risk areas is certainly one of the options that will be considered in all projects.

Our floodplain management plans all include Structural and non-structural measures for flood risk management. The mix between these two approaches is often guided by the nature of the existing development and the communities of interest. With the development that already exists on the Hutt River floodplain it is difficult to take anything but a highly structural approach to managing the flood risk. The approaches finally used will be consulted on extensively to ensure they represent the community's desires.

Considerable time has been spent consulting with the community on the appropriate levels of flood protection for the different floodplains in the region. The Floodplain Management Plans that result from this consultation sets out what was agreed and Council is now in the process of implementing the outcomes of those plans which include a mix for structural and non-structural options. Council currently funds these works with up to 50% of the funding coming from the regional rates and the balance of the funding coming from the direct beneficiaries. This mix is considered a reasonable balance between the benefits derived to the local community and the wider region.

Council is working closely with both Hutt City Council and NZTA to ensure a coordinated approach is taken to implementing any works in the CBD so as to optimise the project of the respective agencies.

GWRC will continue to work with Hutt City Council to ensure the integrity of the erosion protection works along Port Rd remain secure. The whole area has been developed as a result of reclamation works undertaken in the 1930's and with climate change occurring over time we are aware that this task will become more difficult into the future. At this stage, however, it will be difficult to advance the timing of works in the Port Rd area because of the significant works and expenditure proposed in the City Centre reach of the Hutt River over the next 10 years.

6. Parks

6.1 General

6.1.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 60, 266, 306, 324, 341, 405, 425

Seven submitters wrote with requests relating to Parks, including for:

- prioritisation of funding towards Parks infrastructure and activities over public transport
- reduced farming in Belmont Park to revert the Park back to native vegetation
- all Regional Parks to be smokefree
- existing parks to be preserved from local councils rescinding their "reserve" classification
- all GWRC controlled farms to have waterways fenced
- opposition to new Muritai Park walking track

Sport Wellington thanked the Parks team and Councillors for the on-going development, provision & upkeep of the network of regional parks and the summer outdoor events programmes.

EHEA state that volunteer groups are struggling to keep up with work and that the Plan does not sufficiently address maintaining ecological values in the Park.

6.1.2 Officer comments

Funding for the regional parks and forests comes from the regional rate. GWRC is satisfied that funding levels are appropriate to maintain agreed levels of service while enhancing access for a wide range of people and supporting partnerships in parks. A 2014 survey of community awareness and usage of the regional parks showed a continued increase in visitation while maintaining satisfaction levels of over 90%.

GWRC has adopted a sustainable land management approach to the farmed areas of our parks; a key component of which involves retiring areas of unproductive and erosion-prone land. Over the next few months around 160ha of land in the Duck Creek catchment will be fenced and retired from grazing. Some of this area will be planted while other parts will be left to regenerate naturally, and there will be effective pest plant and animal control. In addition to this, a contract has recently been awarded to fence and retire 74ha in the upper Cannons Creek catchment from grazing.

GWRC regional parks are not managed as smokefree areas due to the difficulty in enforcing such a policy in large scale areas. We appreciate that some councils are implementing smoke free zones around playgrounds and sports fields, where smokefree areas are easier to define. In contrast regional parks are generally more remote, used for informal recreation and are generally not places of public gathering. Where GWRC hosts an event in our parks such as Arbor Day plantings or Great Outdoor Summer Events, we request people not to smoke.

The regional parks and forests are owned and/ or managed by the GWRC through statutory mechanisms e.g. Local Government Act, Reserves Act. GWRC has no plans to remove or reduce the current high levels of legal protection for our parks.

GWRC has adopted a policy of sustainable land management in relation to the farmed areas of our parks; a key component of which involves fencing off waterways. Since the policy was adopted we have made significant progress in fencing off streams, and retirement of the Korokoro Stream headwaters, upper Cannons Creek and much of the Duck Creek catchment will be achieved over the 2015/16 financial year.

The proposed walking track from Muritai Park to the Main Ridge will create an attractive loop into the Butterfly Creek valley. With an easier gradient and more even surface than the current tracks, it will improve access near the main road, village amenities and public transport connections. The track construction plan has fully considered and appropriately mitigates effects on the surrounding environment.

GWRC appreciates the ongoing support of Sport Wellington for our regional parks and our programme of events. We very much value our partnership with Sport Wellington and note that in 2016 we will celebrate 10 years of the highly successful Buggy Walks programme in the Wellington region.

GWRC, through its Key Native Ecosystem programme, has committed over \$200,000 per annum (excluding staff time) to managing and improving biodiversity in East Harbour Regional Park. One of the largest components of that work is the ongoing control of climbing asparagus (Snakefeather) in the park's northern forest. GWRC works with several volunteer groups in the park, and we appreciate and support their significant and growing contributions to all park values including enhancement of biodiversity.

6.2 Tracks

6.2.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 95, 106, 414, 416

Four submitters wrote in support of capital projects within parks, particularly Belmont Regional Park, with specific requests relating to:

- more collaboration with DOC e.g. GWRC maps to show DOC tracks
- promoting and marking wilderness & significant areas in Parks to attract tourism
- upgrading tracks as mountain bike attractions

6.2.2 Officer comments

GWRC has recently installed new information boards and directional signage at key road intersections in the Akatarawa Forest to improve visitor safety and provide basic information about the forest. GWRC has also improved all key information relating to the Akatarawa Forest, with a new map on the website and a new version of the forest brochure. The information boards at the forest entrances show the topography and elevations in relation to the main tracks. Both versions of

the new maps show the connections with DOC land at Whareroa Farm to assist park visitors in planning their trips through these areas.

GWRC has recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Belmont Area Mountain Bike Association (BAMBA), and is working with this group to improve mountain biking in the park. Shortly construction of the new family-friendly "Four Degrees" uphill track will commence, starting near the Stratton Street woolshed. GWRC has recently worked with the Friends of Belmont Regional Park, BAMBA and other groups to generate ideas and agree on the best way to improve recreational opportunities in the park, for all visitors. As a result it is proposed to build a new multi-use easy grade track from Hill Road to Old Coach Road and an easy downhill mountain bike track from Old Coach Road to Stratton St. Neither of these tracks will be accessible to livestock, which will help preserve the track surface and means that they will be open all year round.

GWRC would like to thank the Normandale Residents Association for their expression of support for these projects and the Friends of Belmont Regional Park for their considerable and very able contribution towards developing this programme of works to reinvest land sale receipts in Belmont Regional Park. We are confident that the projects will reinforce the connection that current users feel with the park and attract new visitors as well, all of whom will find due reward there for their walking and cycling activity.

7. Rates, financial strategy and investments

7.1 Rates

7.1.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 5, 24, 26, 38, 45, 54, 61, 62, 71, 76, 79, 82, 87, 101, 111, 123, 127, 136, 159, 318, 331, 353, 387, 410, 412, 413, 422, 431, 432,

25 submitters oppose the level of rates increase, with a common theme that increases should be no more than the level of inflation or average wage increase. PCC, HCC, UHCC & KCDC request reducing rates increase where possible, as they place an unsustainable burden on communities. Submitters request that GWRC:

- use zero base budgets
- justify any rates increases fully - doubling rates over the 10 Year Plan period is not prudent or justifiable
- consider the impact of the proposed rates on the region's economy
- review its own staffing and pay rates, and those of its Council-controlled organisations, particularly the CEO's and managerial salaries, to reflect the scope of services provided
- remove GST from rates
- Property Council suggests the use of more PPPs
- HCC requests a more balanced approach to demand forecasting, risk estimation, insurance and treasury practices, and strongly recommends a comprehensive review of proposed income,

expenditure and financial management practices with the aim of ensuring future rate and levy increases are reduced to close to the rate of inflation

- UHCC believes the 10 year rates average of 6.5% appears to be artificially reduced
- MVRA objects to the proposed water levy increase

3 submitters support the level of rates increase, based on the proposed projects to be delivered.

3 submitters oppose the rating basis, including:

- the current average rate being highest in Hutt, Porirua & Upper Hutt. Request to debate the basis of rating
- the widening of rates differential, and request for clarification for why downtown businesses are so much higher than other property types
- concern that ratepayers pay twice for WREDA

7.1.2 Officer comments

GWRC is very aware of issues of ratepayer affordability and the desire to keep rates increases low and all expense and revenue budgets are assessed every year.

Operational costs are increasing by a modest 1.1% next year. The majority of the increases over next year, and for the 10 years, are for the cost of bringing public transport infrastructure up to desired standards and to ensure that we are more resilient to floods, earthquakes and other events. In developing its budget for the next 10 years Council considered all opportunities to reduce spending in existing areas.

Capital investments are covered by borrowing, so costs will be spread over the longer term and applied to those ratepayers who benefit from the investment. GWRC has a low borrowing costs compared to most and we review this regularly. Even though the debt level will increase significantly, it remains well within the Local Government Funding Agency's very prudent borrowing limits.

The community has over many years strongly supported major improvements to public transport and flood protection and after Christchurch and Seddon earthquakes the major bulk water resilience projects are seen as critical. As these are new projects, rather than replacements there is a need to increase rates. As regional projects, the cost is also spread across all ratepayers in the region meaning in dollar terms a smaller increase than the percentage increase otherwise suggests. For the average residential ratepayer this is \$38 per year, less than a \$1 dollar per week.

Rates are higher in some areas due to the level of work undertaken or services provided in different areas. This is primarily driven by public transport services and new flood protection measures.

The higher transport rates for Wellington City CBD businesses results from the unchanged share of cost allocated to this sector for the funding of public transport services which are mostly into and out of the Wellington City CBD, there has been no change to council rating policies.

Ratepayers are not being charged twice for WREDA. The entities have been combined to get better economies of scale and to rationalise costs to enable more to be spent on delivering programmes from the same combined spend.

7.2 Debt

7.2.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 18, 26, 55, 123, 353, 413, 414, 429, 431

Eight submitters stated opposition to the level of debt proposed, and urged care with increasing ratepayer liabilities. Submitter requests include:

- debt to be consulted as an issue in its own right
- GWRC to ensure its borrowing results in inter-generational equity
- return on investment to be clearly articulated
- scrap or delay some projects to spread the borrowing beyond 2020/1

One submitter supported borrowing to fund PT projects.

7.2.2 Officer comments

Debt is used for all capital projects as this enables the cost of the project to be funded by ratepayers over the life of the asset, with a 30 year maximum timeframe to ensure it is paid off.

The public transport projects are large and expensive, but are in response to the community demands for more integrated public transport.

Flood protection is a multi-decade programme to provide flood defences throughout the region.

In bulk water the cross harbour pipeline and Takapu storage lakes are essential earthquake resilience projects to help ensure there will be bulk water available in the event of a major earthquake. These projects are funded by the four metropolitan cities and charged via their rates.

Whilst some projects could be delayed, the community has demanded these improvements and we firmly believe that we have spread these projects appropriately over the 10 year period to meet these needs.

It is worth noting that whilst the investment in regional assets and debt is increasing, debt and finance costs remains well within the prudential limits the Local Government Funding Agency sets to ensure councils remain in robust financial health. This is reaffirmed annually by the financial rating agency Standard and Poor's, and it remains so for all years of the long term plan.

7.3 Finance - General

7.3.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 267, 397, 410, 431,

Four submitters wrote with general enquiries relating to the Council's financials, including that information relating to holding companies is not sufficiently transparent. WECC suggested more information be provided, including a project by project assessment and ROI, funding apportioned with demonstrable benefit, explanation of how rates are determined, and how targeted rates are allocated against benefits received.

There was a suggestion that Flood Risk & Water Resilience packages should have been implemented decades ago with cost spread across generations, and a question about why a new Masterton office is being built in the context of the current regional government discussions.

The MVRA is concerned that the key objective for GWRC's CCOs/CCTOs is to ensure that the capital investment made in such entities is protected. Rather, the objective should be to ensure such organisations (Wellington Water Limited and Wellington Regional Economic Development Agency Limited) operate efficiently and in the best interests of regional residents. We are also concerned at the lack of public accountability as CCOs/CCTOs are accountable to their boards and removed from direct responsibility and accountability of staff to Councillors as public representatives.

One submitter would like forestry planting to be used for future funds while another would like to know if logging revenue is reinvested into the LTP.

7.3.2 Officer comments

The Local Government Act requires our consultation document to focus on the key issues, choices and proposals and is not allowed to be a full draft Long Term Plan. This has meant that certain detailed information had to be placed in our Supporting Information document, which is available on our website.

It should also be noted though that the majority of projects are a continuation of the existing capital programmes and that they are funded by borrowing so the costs are spread over many years.

The Masterton building remains in the plan, but no decision will be made until there is certainty regarding the makeup of the region's local governance structure.

The stated objectives for CCOs are in the context of the investment section. Each CCO has a publically available Statement of Intent and publically available annual and half year accounts. There are two methods for accountability, through the external board and through committees which are open to the public. They govern and determine the activity of each entity.

GWRC sold the cutting rights to the plantation forest after public consultation last year. These funds were used firstly to repay the debt associated with the forestry activities with the remaining amount being used to reduce debt, with some held as self-insurance funds to lower insurance premiums. Generally though any funding surplus or additional revenue from an activity goes into lowering the need for rates in the year it is expected to be received.

8. Other matters

8.1 Development of the Plan

8.1.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 13, 22, 55, 67, 68, 70, 76, 83, 85, 99, 108, 114, 132, 141, 158, 161, 162, 266, 302, 306, 324, 353, 358, 359, 369, 371, 395, 397, 410, 413, 414, 421, 425, 429, 431

In response to the question “Do you support our long-term strategy for regional infrastructure”, 150 submitters were in support while 46 submitters opposed.

In response to the question “Do you support GWRC keeping doing our existing activities”, 177 submitters were in support while 23 submitters opposed.

21 submitters wrote in support of the direction & the six projects proposed in the draft 10 Year Plan. Many suggested that all six of the projects are important and will benefit the region.

10 submitters wrote in opposition to the project packages proposed in the plan. Several opposed the level of additional spending, particularly on PT.

Submitters suggested improvements to the documents, including:

- a better system for submitters to indicate project / funding priorities
- increased transparency to assist the public to make informed decisions. Several submitters believe that it is difficult to obtain a clear overview picture of financial implications as important information is scattered through various documents, and the marginal benefit of packages not provided.
- background analysis on the risks and cost to health, communities and wellbeing from stopping one package in favour of another.

Some submitters found the consultation document easy to read and helpful, while others found it too simplistic to be useful and thought that the real information was in the supporting document.

UHCC were disappointed in the content of the CD, believing it to be misleading & lack transparency about why projects are necessary. They suggested it should have presented the actual rates percentage increases for each TA area (general and targeted) along with a clearer indication of the fees and charges that are being increased.

8.1.2 Officer comments

Support for the key elements of the 10 Year Plan is noted.

The content of the Consultation Document had to meet the specific requirements of the Local Government Act. This requires a focus on issues, choices and proposals and a public-friendly concise format. It is specifically required not to include a draft long term plan. There is always a tension between making a document easy to read and accessible for the public and providing detailed information to satisfy those who want to delve into more depth. There was a Supporting Information document available (and referenced in the consultation document) that provides much greater detail on all our activities - this was prepared in the format of the final 10 Year Plan. Each of the project packages proposed in the consultation document included details of the cost and rating

impacts and the summary of the Financial Strategy provided a whole of Council view on rates, debt and funding.

8.2 Regional sports strategy

8.2.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 405, 406

Two submitters, Sport Wellington and Sport Wellington on behalf of regional sports organisations, request support for a regional strategy for sport and recreation, with GWRC's annual financial contribution being \$25,000.

8.2.2 Officer comments

GWRC supports the development of a regional strategy for sport and recreation. We note that funding for the development of this strategy has been provided by Sport NZ until May 2017, and that GWRC officers have been involved in this work and supporting its development.

Discussions about financial support for implementation of the strategy will be appropriate when there is more certainty about the strategy's vision, objectives and actions, what the overall costs and benefits are, and GWRC's role in implementing the strategy.

GWRC notes our current partnership with Sport Wellington Region on the Pedal Ready cycle skills training programme to help fund delivery to school children and training and accreditation of instructors.

8.3 Integration of strategies

8.3.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 353, 369, 375, 412; 99, 100, 114, 126, 128, 135, 158, 265, 345, 366, 406, 425, 427, 432,

Four submitters wrote to encourage the use of specific strategies and policies to be incorporated within the GWRC planning processes, including:

- the AGE Friendly Communities Programme
- A 'health in all policies' approach
- WCC's 'Smart Capital 2040'
- better collaboration to achieve effective delivery of strategic infrastructure
- collaborative natural environment 10 year planning
- Smokefree NZ 2025
- people-centered environments & increased access to natural environments

8.3.2 Officer comments

The community outcomes that guide our 10 year plan cover a wide range of outcomes including a healthy environment and a connected community. In the preparation of the 10 year plan, Council

considered all its activities against a range of criteria to ensure our proposals were appropriate and to assist in prioritisation. However it is considered that the application of more specific guidelines and policies is more appropriate at the commencement of programmes and projects themselves. Our 10 year plan covers the whole region but does not represent a specific place-based strategy. We collaborate with a range of partners including local authorities and government agencies on a day to day basis.

8.4 GWRC's role & activities

8.4.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 74, 99, 100, 114, 126, 128, 135, 158, 265, 345, 361, 366, 406, 425, 427, 432

16 submitters, including KCDC and Sport Wellington, requested that the Council consider becoming involved in additional activities, including:

- assistance with earthquake prone buildings (interest free loans etc)
- open a GWRC office in Kapiti for resource consent applicants
- R&D in recycling options
- health support alongside services provided by the Health Boards and MSD
- supporting those at risk in our community
- improving the quality of housing and access to community facilities
- increase food security for the region
- helping young and disadvantaged people by offering work / volunteer positions
- support WCC's 150yr Wellington / CubaDupa etc
- safer environment - street safety, safety in the city at night, adequacy of policing,
- exercise spaces / green spaces / playing fields etc to get people involved in sport
- better consultation on issues affecting communities (2014 Muritai Track)

8.4.2 Officer comments

The activities undertaken and proposed for GWRC reflect our council community outcomes. Activities that fall outside of these outcomes are not considered. A number of additional activities sought are activities currently undertaken by or the responsibility of territorial authorities, whilst GWRC endeavours to work with territorial authorities on matters of joint concern it is not appropriate to duplicate functions. Council is required by the Local Government Act to consider the most appropriate way of delivering its services on a regular basis. We endeavour to use a variety of communication channels to engage with the community and will continue to adapt these as new technology is developed. At this stage there are no plans to develop a Regional Council office in Kapiti and it would be premature to consider this outcome pending the decision of the Local Government Commission on structural reform for the region.

8.5 Wellington Airport

8.5.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 83, 155, 321, 345, 350

Five submitters commented on the Council's support for the proposed extension to Wellington Airport, one in support and four in opposition.

8.5.2 Officer comments

GWRC notes the comments in relation to the extension of Wellington Airport's runway. The 'extended runway plan for Wellington' is a proposal in the Wellington City Council draft Long Term Plan and is not included in our 10 year plan.

8.6 Governance

8.6.1 Summary of key submission themes

Submission Numbers: 58, 90, 94, 100, 118, 125, 128, 155, 163, 313, 322, 345, 350, 356, 357, 371, 431, 432

11 submitters wrote in opposition to the Local Government Commission's proposal for local government amalgamation. 3 wrote in support of the proposal.

Common themes included provided general support for GWRC as it currently stands and the services it provides regionally, while others requested a more unified approach to governance amongst the current local councils with more shared services to reduce overheads.

8.6.2 Officer comments

GWRC notes the comments both in support and in opposition to local government reform, and the suggestions for change. While GWRC submitted an application for local government reorganisation in 2013, the Local Government Commission is the organisation responsible for the reorganisation process. The process that the Commission follow is governed by the Local Government Act 2002 (which was amended in late 2012).