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Committee Economic Wellbeing Committee  
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## **Feedback to NZ Transport Agency on proposed Cobham Drive to Buckle Street Transport Improvements**

### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to seek the Committee's approval of a submission on the NZ Transport Agency's (NZTA) *Cobham Drive to Buckle Street transport improvements - Public engagement*.

### **2. The decision-making process and significance**

The matter requiring decision in this report has been considered by officers against the requirements of Part 6 of the Local Government Act 2002.

#### **2.1 Significance of the decision**

Officers have considered the significance of the matter and recommend that the matter be considered to have low significance in terms of the Council's significance policy and decision-making guidelines.

This decision relates to approval of a submission, providing feedback from this Committee to the NZ Transport Agency proposals on which the agency will make any final decisions.

Officers do not consider that a formal record outlining consideration of the decision-making process is required in this instance.

### **3. Background**

NZTA carried out public consultation and engagement on the proposed *Cobham Drive to Buckle Street transport improvements* during July and August 2011.

The closing date for public submissions was 26 August 2011. Around 2000 submissions were received within the submission period.

NZTA agreed to allow both Wellington City Council and Greater Wellington an extension until October, to allow some consideration of the wider community feedback prior to submitting their views.

Greater Wellington officers were able to look through the feedback from the 36 stakeholder groups, together with an overview of the public transport, walking and cycling themes from the wider submissions, provided by NZTA.

## **4. Comment**

The proposed submission on behalf of the Council is included as **Attachment 1** to this report.

### **4.1 Ngauranga to Wellington Airport Corridor Plan**

The Ngauranga to Wellington Airport Corridor Plan provides the agreed framework for a multi-modal approach to transport improvements through central Wellington.

The corridor plan aims to strengthen four key transport elements in the city:

1. a high quality and frequency passenger transport ‘spine’
2. highly accessible and attractive ‘activity’ or shopping streets
3. a reliable and accessible ‘ring’ or bypass route for vehicles
4. inter-connected and convenient local street, walking, cycling and passenger transport networks.

The current Wellington Public Transport Spine Study, being lead by Greater Wellington, will investigate the feasibility of options to deliver the high quality and frequency public transport spine element of the plan in the medium to long term. Other public transport improvements are already in place or underway to improve public transport quality along the spine in the short-term – eg. the Manners Mall alignment project, bus priority measures and Real Time Information.

Improvements to the Basin Reserve to separate north-south from east-west traffic flows and to enable a dedicated public transport corridor to be implemented without significantly worsening traffic congestion, is a key action of the corridor plan.

Investigating and constructing improvements to the State Highway 1 route (by duplicating the Terrace and Mt Victoria tunnels and four-laning Ruahine Street and Wellington Road) are also identified in the plan to contribute to the reliable and accessible ‘ring road’ approach. We understand that NZTA has included additional lanes along parts of the route to accommodate likely future demand, particularly around intersections. Timing of these elements is signalled to occur after the Basin Reserve improvements.

## 4.2 Feedback sought through the consultation

NZTA sought feedback on the proposed improvements as a whole, but more specifically on:

- The preferred location of a bridge (to provide grade separation) north of the Basin Reserve. Two options were provided – Option A, which would be located approximately 20m north of the Basin, and Option B, which would be located approximately 65 metres north of the Basin.
- The type of separation between the proposed pedestrian and cyclist facility in the new Mt Victoria tunnel. Two options were suggested – separation by a safety barrier only or full separation by a wall with windows.
- The design of the proposed pedestrian and cycle path and intersection upgrades along Ruahine Street and Wellington Road.

The NZTA consultation document and submission form are set out **Attachment 2** to this report.

## 4.3 Key messages in the submission

The key points set out in the attached draft submission include:

- General support for the overall proposed improvements from Cobham Drive to Buckle Street, which are consistent with the Ngauranga to Airport Corridor Plan.
- Support for Option A, of the two proposed options for grade separation at the Basin Reserve.
- Support for the Basin Reserve improvements to be progressed as soon as possible.
- Support for future proofing the design of the preferred option to allow for the possibility of a tunnel to be built under Memorial Park in future should funding become available.
- Support for inclusion of a ‘clip-on’ pedestrian/cyclist facility on the proposed bridge structure north of the Basin Reserve.
- Support for the option with a full wall (with windows) separating pedestrians and cyclists from general traffic in the proposed new duplicated Mt Victoria tunnel.
- Ongoing involvement sought in the future development of these proposals, particularly in terms of how they integrate with existing and future public transport networks.

## 5. Communication

The final submission will be forwarded to the NZTA for consideration.

## 6. Recommendations

*That the Committee:*

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the content of the report.*
3. *Agrees to the submission set out in **Attachment 1**.*

Report prepared by:

Report approved by:

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Attachment 1: *Submission from Greater Wellington on the NZTA's proposed **Cobham Drive to Buckle Street transport improvements**.*

Attachment 2: *Consultation Brochure – **Cobham Drive to Buckle Street transport improvements***