

28 April 2023

Committee Secretariat  
Transport and Infrastructure Committee  
Parliament Buildings  
Wellington

Lodged via: [Land Transport Management \(Regulation of Public Transport\) Amendment Bill Submission - New Zealand Parliament \(www.parliament.nz\)](#)

Dear Members of the Transport and Infrastructure Committee

### **Submission from the Manawātū District Council on the Land Transport Management (Regulation of Public Transport) Amendment Bill**

The Manawātū District Council (MDC) thanks the Transport and Infrastructure Committee for the opportunity to submit on the Land Transport Management (Regulation of Public Transport) Amendment Bill.

MDC recognises the key role that public transport plays in community wellbeing, particularly for the transport disadvantaged, and in getting people from A to B. A highly functioning public transport network is also critical to achieving emissions reduction goals. Horizons Regional Council is responsible for providing public transport services for the Manawātū District. Currently there are two bus services operating within Feilding – the commuter service between Feilding and Palmerston North and the Feilding Orbiter that operates within the urban area of Feilding.

#### **Sustainable Public Transport Framework**

MDC supports the proposed establishment of the Sustainable Public Transport Framework (SPTF). In particular, MDC supports the increased flexibility and control that the SPTF gives local authorities over how public transport is planned and delivered, including the option to own assets and operate services in-house rather than outsourcing them to an outside provider. MDC agrees that such flexibility encourages innovation in how services are delivered.

#### **Preparation of Regional Public Transport Plans**

MDC supports the proposed amendment to section 124 that requires regional councils to take into account the views of the territorial authorities in the region when adopting a regional public transport plan. MDC agrees that a collaborative approach to preparing regional public transport plans is necessary to enable the development of services and infrastructure that best meets the needs of passengers.

#### **Support for On-demand Public Transport Services**

MDC is very supportive of the proposed amendments to the definition of public transport to include unscheduled (on-demand) public transport services and shuttle services. MDC supports the proposal to regional councils to procure, contract and deliver on-demand

services separately to timetabled services, removing the requirement for every unit to be contracted on an exclusive basis.

There are currently no public transport services for the rural villages of the Manawatū. MDC provided funding through its Community Development Fund to the Manawatū Rural Transport Initiative Steering Committee for the preparation of a business case on the provision of a regular public transport service for rural communities within the Manawatū District. Using this funding, the Manawatū Rural Transport Initiative Steering Committee prepared their “Manawatū rural community transport service proposal” that was presented to Horizons as part of their consultation on the Regional Public Transport Plan. MDC submitted in support of the proposal and advocated to Horizons to increase the priority placed on the provision of rural transport services.

MDC has provisionally agreed to a request from Neighbourhood Support Manawatū for funding to contribute to establishment costs of a rural community transport service to be launched on 1 July 2023. MDC considers that the lack of flexibility within the current Act has been a barrier to the establishment of on-demand public transport services and a reason why there are not more such services already operating, particularly in rural areas of New Zealand.

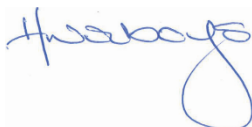
### **Public Transport Decarbonisation**

MDC understands that this Bill enables regional council to operate public transport services in-house or to continue to outsource the operation of services. The explanatory note for the Bill suggests that increased flexibility for public transport service delivery will contribute to improved terms and conditions for employees for public transport, and decarbonisation of the bus fleet.

In line with Central Government’s decarbonisation targets, Objective 3 and Policy 3.2 of Horizons Regional Public Transport Plan 2022-32 seek to reduce carbon emissions and improve air quality through decarbonising the public bus fleet. Horizons is proposing to adopt a phased approach to transitioning to a zero-emission fleet based on the re-tendering of contracts (or sooner if required by government). MDC supports those changes that remove barriers to public transport decarbonisation, as this is consistent with central government objectives and targets.

MDC does not wish to speak to this submission.

Yours sincerely



Helen Worboys

**Mayor, JP**