

24 July 2019

Wellington City Council  
101 Wakefield Street  
Wellington 6011

**Re: Smarter Parking**

Tēnā koe Helen,

Thank you for meeting with RPH and for the opportunity to provide feedback on Wellington City Council's Smarter Parking options.

**Regional Public Health (RPH) would like to register their support for improved management of city car parking and the prioritisation of active and public transport by WCC.**

RPH is the public health unit for the greater Wellington region. We work with communities to make the region a healthier and safer places to live. We promote good health, prevent diseases, and improve the quality of life for our population, with a particular focus on children, Māori, Pacific and low income households.

Transport planning decisions have a significant impact on health and wellbeing, by influencing traffic crashes, vehicle emissions, physical activity, access to services, and mental health.<sup>1</sup> Evidence suggests that effective transport pricing can have large benefits for safety, pollution reduction, physical activity and reducing congestion. Less surface parking has been associated with a stronger sense of community<sup>2</sup>, with one study finding that young people living with less traffic and car parking were more likely to have positive perceptions of the safety, friendliness, appearance and helpfulness of the people in their local area.<sup>3</sup> By adjusting the parking availability and the pricing structures WCC has the opportunity to improve the health and wellbeing of its population.

Convenience and accessibility are two key factors in work-related travel behaviours<sup>4</sup>. The first steps to influence and change work-related travel behaviour requires public transport to be perceived as being affordable and accessible (within a 200-metre radius of a residence, arrival coinciding with work place hours), coupled with restrictions on car parking around worksites. The changes to parking pricing needs to be implemented closely with Greater Wellington Regional Council and their public transport improvements, to ensure that parking changes are associated with the provision and promotion of viable, affordable travel alternatives.

---

<sup>1</sup> Litman, T. (2013). Transportation and public health. *Annual review of public health*, 34, 217-233.

<sup>2</sup> Francis, J., Giles-Corti, B., Wood, L., & Knuiman, M. (2012). Creating sense of community: The role of public space. *Journal of environmental psychology*, 32(4), 401-409.

<sup>3</sup> Mullan, E. (2003). Do you think that your local area is a good place for young people to grow up? The effects of traffic and car parking on young people's views. *Health & place*, 9(4), 351-360.

<sup>4</sup> Badland, H. M., Garrett, N., & Schofield, G. M. (2010). How does car parking availability and public transport accessibility influence work-related travel behaviors? *Sustainability*, 2(2), 576-590.

While the promotion of walking, cycling and public transport through changes to parking pricing has benefits for many there may be some who are negatively affected. It is important that equity is considered and that those who might already be struggling are not unduly punished through these changes, for example those living with disabilities, those who do not have easy access to public transport and shift workers. **RPH encourages** WCC to ensure they have engaged with people who may be disproportionately impacted by changes to parking, and have a plan to mitigate negative impacts.

There is some evidence that life stage impacts on travel behaviours, for example young families tend to use vehicles more than individuals<sup>5</sup>. Further investigation needs to be carried out into the impact life stage has on travel behaviours and explore the development of specific strategies to target at-risk life stage population groups.

Finally, RPH recognises the importance of reviewing the current parking usage, restrictions and pricing in Newtown and commends WCC on prioritising this growing and thriving suburb. Partnering with workplaces provides the opportunity for further gains in promoting active and public transport while reducing negative impacts and disruption to business services. **RPH recommends** that any changes to parking in Newtown be carried out in partnership with the Capital & Coast District Health Board (CCDHB) and Wellington Hospital as the biggest employer. This also provides the opportunity for employers to provide and promote viable travel alternatives. CCDHB recently ran a workplace travel survey (in conjunction with GWRC). This survey may provide useful information to barriers and enablers to active and public transport, which may be useful when considering parking reforms. RPH recommends that the parking team meet with the CCDHB Senior Sustainability Advisor, Jay Hadfield (Jay.Hadfield@ccdhb.org.nz), to identify positive ways forward when considering Newtown parking.

The point of contact for this letter is:

Anna Robertson-Bate  
Public Health Advisor, Policy and Analytical Team  
Email: Anna.Robertson-Bate@huttvalleydhb.org.nz

Naku noa, na

Dr Elinor Millar  
**Public Health Medicine Specialist**

Peter Gush  
**Service Manager**

---

<sup>5</sup> Scheiner, J., & Holz-Rau, C. (2007). Travel mode choice: affected by objective or subjective determinants?. *Transportation*, 34(4), 487-511.