

# WQ TMA

Wynyard Quarter Transport Management Association

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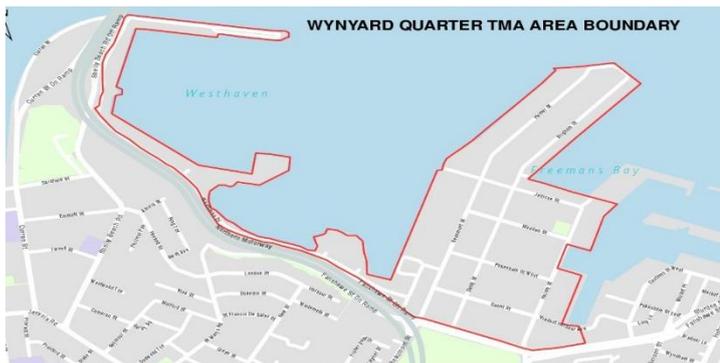
Submission in respect of: **AC ANNUAL BUDGET 2023- 2023**

Date: 26 March 2022

**Name of submitter:** Wynyard Quarter Transport Management Association ('WQ TMA')

## 1. Wynyard Quarter Transport Management Association - background

1.1 Wynyard Quarter Transport Management Association (WQ TMA) is an independent group representing developers, landowners, employers, the marine and fishing industries, and the arts and hospitality sector which collectively have, and continue to develop an environment to work, live and play. The former industrial area is now booming with offices, housing, and a vibrant entertainment sector. The area is home to some major employers including Air New Zealand, ASB, Datacom, Fonterra, Genesis, Kiwibank, Sanford, Southern Cross and has a reputation as the innovation hub for Auckland. The area currently is home to approx. 15,000 employees, and this number is set to rise. The map below shows the TMA area boundary:



1.2 The TMA was established under Part 14.9.3.10 (Wynyard Quarter) of the Auckland District Plan 2004. It was made a condition of the Planning Consent and Environment Court Order 2012. Trip generation ceiling targets were specified in the District Plan (DP) and are linked to the extent and timing of development permitted in Wynyard Quarter. The Resource Consent for Wynyard Quarter set a target of a 30:70 mode split by 2020. With 70% of all journeys being by sustainable modes. However, this figure has been anecdotally revised to a 20:80 or even 10:90.

1.3 The objectives of the TMA as outlined in the Rules are as follows:

- a to advocate to the Government, local authorities and/or persons, corporations or associations for the improvement of transport services and transport infrastructure to benefit the Wynyard Quarter community;
- b to promote and share information with regard to access and transportation in and around Wynyard Quarter; and
- c to do all things as are, or may be incidental to, or conducive to, the attainment of these objectives.

1.4 There are constraints on access to Wynyard Quarter. This has resulted in a heavy reliance on trip generation management, and restrictions have been placed on office activity under the

Auckland Unitary Plan<sup>1</sup> to ensure that vehicle traffic volumes entering and exiting the Wynyard Quarter are not increased. The mission of WQ TMA is to be the voice of the Wynyard Quarter: creating a thriving safe environment for business and community and fostering economic vitality by building partnerships, and delivering targeted transport initiatives.

- 1.5 WQ TMA recognise that the Wynyard Quarter area is being developed to become a unique waterfront location embracing a thriving economic hub, as well as playing host to major events (for example the America's Cup). WQ TMA understands that the regeneration and development of the area is ongoing. WQ TMA are keen to ensure that the area gets the very best transport infrastructure to support the ongoing economic growth of the area. This means well connected, reliable, and frequent sustainable transport options of high quality that ensures the safety and well-being of all users of the area.

## 2. Comments and observations

- 2.1 WQ TMA recognises that public transport has an important role to play in connecting more Aucklanders and in helping to reduce car dependency, both of which will help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- 2.2 It would appear that Auckland Council are proposing to introduce a substantial new targeted rate through an Annual Plan, which has had limited time for public consultation. The proposed Climate Action Targeted Rate (CATR) was not mentioned in the Long-Term Plan which was consulted on only a year ago.
- 2.3 WQ TMA have concerns over the timing and impact on businesses (and residents) who are trying to recover from the negative impacts of Covid -19. Due to Covid Wynyard Quarter has already seen several hospitality businesses close and others are working on reduced opening hours.
- 2.4 Auckland Council needs to look at ways to prioritise services/projects and not just add more financial burden to residents and businesses through the new CATR.
- 2.5 WQ TMA accept that business should contribute towards climate action targets, but not through a differentiated targeted rate.
- 2.6 WQ TMA is keen to understand how the funds generated by the Regional Fuel Tax (RFT) have been spent. Increased transparency around that would increase business confidence and dispel some of the negativity surrounding the RFT expenditure, which has been swirling around in the media.
- 2.7 It is noted that 43.4% of Auckland total emissions come from transport. That leaves 56.6% coming from 'other sources'. It is unclear from the Auckland Council Annual Plan what these other sources are and what steps might be taken to reduce emissions from such sources.
- 2.8 No one yet knows what the post Covid working environment and commuting patterns will look like. Working from home is likely to increase from pre Covid levels. If that is the case then it may be that less public transport might be required in some areas, and at certain times. It is key that planning is not based on how we worked prior to Covid 19, and is agile enough to take into account the new norms, post Covid 19.

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<sup>1</sup> Auckland Unitary Plan, 1214.8.2(2)(a)(ii) requires that restricted discretionary office activities in the Wynyard Quarter have to demonstrate that the activity, along with any other existing, permitted or consented activities do not exceed the following trip generation targets: 3650 vehicles per hour two way; 2500 vehicles per hour one way inbound or outbound during the weekday morning peak (7am to 9am); and 2500 vehicles per hour one way outbound or inbound during the weekday afternoon peak (4pm to 6pm).

- 2.9 Businesses in Wynyard Quarter are already paying a levy for being part of the local Business Improvement District. Businesses and commuters also contribute to the RFT. We want to encourage people back into the area and see businesses flourish again, not decrease disposable income and drive-up costs for businesses through a new CATR.
- 2.10 WQ TMA support the desire to increase the uptake of sustainable transport and reduce car dependency. We would support this being rolled out along the lines of the “Innovating Streets project’. Whereby trials/ pilots are undertaken before any final changes are made.
- 2.11 WQ TMA are keen to understand when the Congestion Charge for Auckland might be introduced. This would serve as a third additional transport levy for Aucklanders. Increasing the financial burden alongside the existing Regional Fuel Tax and the any new Climate Action targeted Rate.

### 3. Suggestions for consideration

- 3.1 Publish a detailed report on the Regional Fuel Tax, including what funds have been raised and how they have been spent.
- 3.2. Defer the introduction of any Climate Action Targeted rate until such time as the post Covid environment has settled back into the new normal, and business confidence has increased.
- 3.3 Before rushing into any large-scale capital expenditure detailed research into post Covid commuter behaviour in Auckland, should be undertaken. This should include looking internationally at the experiences of other cities. The research should identify gaps in service provision as well as the appetite for new services. Any new services need to meet the needs of commuters in terms of mode, timing, route and connections.
- 3.4 Customer safety perceptions around taking public transport could be addressed by an increase in services to allow for comfortable social distancing.
- 3.5 Target services where volume is greatest and when upgrades do take place ensure they are sustainable options, supported by the necessary infrastructure.