

MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Increased funding for RiverLink in Lower Hutt**

The RiverLink project team has welcomed the decision by Hutt City Council to increase its share of funding for RiverLink to \$138.4M in the Long Term Plan 2021-2031.

RiverLink is a partnership between Hutt City Council, Greater Wellington and Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency working together with Mana Whenua partners – Ngāti toa Rangatira and Taranaki Whānui ki te Upoko o te Ika (Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust).

RiverLink Project Director Tom Newson says “RiverLink is an iconic project that will improve Lower Hutt’s resilience, connectivity, enable growth and leave a lasting legacy for the city”

“It is a project that embraces and celebrates the spirit of our taonga (treasure), Te Awa Kairangi Hutt River.”

The project team is in the process of finalising the planning application to be lodged in the second half of this year and enable construction to commence following a favourable decision

Hutt City Council approved funding towards transport and local road upgrades, a pedestrian bridge and river edge enhancements.

Chair of the Infrastructure and Regulatory Committee Councillor Deborah Hislop says the council recognises its share of the investment will help the project realise its full potential and stimulate future and ongoing economic growth in Lower Hutt.

“Our funding will ensure improvements to a number of key intersections in the city. There will also be a range of streetscape improvements, for example, creating laneways for pedestrians and outdoor dining, improved lighting for safety, and street-based markets.

“A pedestrian and cycle bridge, a riverbank park, riverbank carpark and the purchase of properties to support future development is also part of the council’s vision for the city,” says Cr Hislop.

“Being able to access the relocated Melling Station from the city via the new pedestrian cycle bridge will be a major improvement. In addition the proposed cycleways will link with other upcoming projects like the Te Ara Tupua cycleway, the Eastern Bays Shared Path and the Beltway Cycleway.

The funding decision by Hutt City Council comes just after an announcement from the Government that the new Melling interchange, bridge, and relocated train station will continue to be funded from the NZ Upgrade Programme.

“These crucial transport components elements of RiverLink, can continue with certainty thanks to increased government funding,” says Tom Newson.

Notes:

- The project will lodge a planning application in the second half of this year.
- Intersections will be improved at Rutherford/Melling, High Street/Melling, High Street/Queens Drive, Marsden Street/Victoria Street, and Queen's Drive/Ewen Bridge.

ENDS

RiverLink Indicative Design

