



GREAT LAKE TAUPŌ
Taupō District Council

5 May 2026

Liz Stolwyk
Chair
Regional Transport Committee
Waikato Regional Council
Via email: Liz.Stolwyk@waikatoregion.govt.nz

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Dear Liz

Re: Tūrangi–Taupō public transport services

Thank you for our recent conversation and for your ongoing leadership as Chair of the Regional Transport Committee. I appreciate the continued engagement and the work underway to improve public transport outcomes across the Taupō District.

I am writing to reaffirm our strong interest in achieving a practical, reliable public transport connection between Tūrangi and Taupō. This remains an important issue for the Tūrangi community, and we are keen to continue working constructively with Waikato Regional Council to explore how best this can be delivered.

Many Tūrangi residents rely on regular travel to Taupō for work, education, and access to essential services. At the same time, Tūrangi has a resident population of around 5,000 people and plays a key role as a tourism gateway for the wider region. In our view, these factors together justify continued focus on improving connectivity along the Tūrangi–Taupō corridor.

We acknowledge and appreciate the work undertaken by your team on the Connect-2-Taupō service, and thank you for responding to our request to pause the proposed May 2026 changes. Our interest is in ensuring that any service changes strengthen overall usability and patronage. In particular, we remain cautious about changes that may reduce the practicality of the service for commuter or day-trip use, as this is an important driver of demand.

We are also keen to keep an open mind and look beyond traditional service models. There may be alternative or complementary approaches that could better reflect how the Tūrangi to Taupō route is used, such as more commuter-focused or flexible service options. We would welcome further discussion with the Regional Transport team on whether there are opportunities to test or refine different approaches within existing funding frameworks.

In that context, I want to be clear that Taupō District Council does not currently have funding available to contribute to service enhancements, and no formal funding request has been considered by Council. Our focus at this stage is on working collaboratively with WRC to help identify solutions that are effective, well-used, and sustainable over the long term.

We value the partnership with Waikato Regional Council and look forward to further engagement ahead of the June Subcommittee meeting, and to continuing to work together toward outcomes that best support the Tūrangi community.

Best regards

John Funnell
Mayor
Taupō District Council