



21 April 2023

Greetings.

It's been a while since our last, rather disillusioned newsletter at the end of 2021. 2022 was a year when other concerns preoccupied us. But now we are back! Here is what we wrote over 1 year ago:

*'The 4 options being publicised by LGWM have evolved somewhat since our last newsletter, and each is now clearly displayed and explained at this link:*

<https://hello.lgwm.nz/explore/?option=04&view=detail>

*'This voluminous HELLO website features a lot of PR puff, and careful reading reveals pivotal wording such as:*

- 1. LGWM offers "... public transport... that can move more of us around Wellington more quickly and reliably...moving more people, more quickly and comfortably...Faster, more reliable commutes".*
- 2. The TRAMS option (so-called Light Rail) does not lend itself to later extension to other suburbs.*
- 3. "2028 Construction begins! Depending on the final decision this will take **8-15 years**".  
**That's right!...***

If you want to be reminded what we wrote in response then, you can look it up on our [EVENTS page](#).

**BOTTOM LINE:** our point was that in all of that PR puff, there was **no mention of SAFETY**. \*

Since then, not a lot has happened on the "**Let's Get Wellington Moving**" front, and what we wrote in November 2021 remains topical (see below).

Meanwhile, the Ukraine war and the residue of Covid-19 are having ongoing financial implications, with a recession beginning to kick in. Now, there seems to be a groundswell of opposition to "Light Rail", owing to the bite of the recession. What is still being overlooked, is that it is *not* simply about **construction costs** or about **passenger capacity** if the vehicles will still be **slow**, and yet **unsafe because they cannot stop in a hurry...**

\* Did you know that **on September 4th 2022 a fire truck on a callout crashed into a Sydney "Light Rail" tram, derailing it, with multiple injuries and prolonged traffic chaos?** This was on shared roadway at a city intersection. Trams are not safer... They are *slow juggernauts; the bigger they are, the harder it is for them to stop...* See video of this collision at FASTR-Wellington's new [Home Page](#), along with our detailed response to LGWM's insubstantial PR spin...



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Recently Greater Wellington Regional Councillor Thomas Nash, who is a strong supporter of light rail, was quoted in a Stuff article titled ***"Irresponsible': Push to delete light rail from \$7.4b Wellington transport plan"***.

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/news/wellington/131618468/irresponsible-push-to-delete-light-rail-from-74b-wellington-transport-plan>.

This article quoted him saying *"Relying on improved buses alone was not feasible", he said. "There will be full bus, followed by full bus – a long line of full buses crawling along at peak times"*. That does describe the present *problems*, but not their solution.

We asked Nash how can "Light Rail" in Wellington provide a **faster** service than the current buses. His initial response was Light Rail would have a *"dedicated right of way"* and *"more capacity"*.

After more emails Nash conceded that at least 50% of the Island Bay Light Rail route would be shared with other traffic (as shown in [LGWM's maps HERE](#) - see the dotted blue lines in map #1).

However he did think the greater capacity of "Light Rail" would help (sic – larger numbers moving at 30km/hr is not the same as "faster"). Nash agreed to disagree with our follow-up query about –

- How would LR have a dedicated right of way down Riddiford St and Adelaide road to the Basin;
- Nor did he choose to comment on how any incident along the shared route would cause the whole LR to stop;
- Nor what does a "dedicated right of way" mean?... Will vehicles / pedestrians still be able to cross it?

We believe "Light Rail" supporters should be able to justify their claims of a faster, safer, more reliable service using measurable statistics.

What we see from Sydney and from Melbourne does not support these claims. 75% of the latter's line is *shared* and its collision rate increased 60% in 2022, with an average of *3 collisions per day*. See our web pages [SAFER](#), [SURER](#), and [SWIFTER](#) for details.



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## WHAT CAN BE DONE?

If you are as annoyed as we are about this level of *misinformation* and the impending futile expenditure of major public funds, as well as the threat of a decade or more of crippling traffic congestion during construction, then please -

- First and foremost, take action yourself. Go to the LGWM HELLO website (<https://lgwm.nz/all-projects/mass-rapid-transit/>), and post a comment. We suggest you –
  - Say that **none** of the options are acceptable.
  - Comment about the **lack of comparable overseas evidence** of significant safety, speed, or reliability advantages for the proposed options for Mass Transport (Trams and Bendy buses).
  - Ask that LGWM formally dump its “**Clayton’s Light Rail**” scam.
- recruit friends and colleagues to join us in objecting to this biased and poorly-focused process.
- Please forward a copy of this newsletter to others, inviting them to use our [Contact page](#), to send an email with the subject heading JOIN. We look forward to more voices joining us.

Stay Safe!

**Stephen Moore & Peter Dodwell**

for FASTR-Wellington.

[www.fastr-wellington.com](http://www.fastr-wellington.com)

**PS:** Watch for renewed publicity from FASTR-Wellington in 2023. If any of you wish to provide practical help, please get in touch via or Contact Us page.