Upper Hutt residents are being urged to have input into decisions being made about what major projects should be funded in their community over the next 10 years. The Greater Wellington Regional Council needs to decide what projects it is going to include in its 10 Year Plan, and how it will pay for them.

Top projects on the list for Upper Hutt include protecting communities from flood risk, boosting the capacity of rail services, expanding park and ride facilities, and improving the environment and water quality. GWRC Chair, Fran Wilde, says six main projects have been identified as needed to be carried out in the Wellington region over the coming decade. They are:

- Investing in public transport infrastructure to improve service levels
- Implementing major initiatives to increase the number of public transport users
- Increasing programmes aimed at getting more people walking, cycling, carpooling and using public transport
- Taking a strong leadership role in ensuring improved water quality across the region
- Investing in flood protection infrastructure to protect the community from flood risk
- Increasing the region’s ability to withstand an emergency (through a number of projects to provide emergency water following a major event).

“We’ve identified what we believe are the priorities, locally and regionally, and included them in the Draft 10 Year Plan. Now we need our communities to tell us what they think,” says Ms Wilde. To pay for the initiatives included in GWRC’s Draft 10 Year Plan, the regional council is proposing an average rate increase of around $38 for the average residential home in the 2015/16 financial year. That’s 9.8% and equates to 73 cents per day for the average home. GWRC is proposing maintaining the cost of its ‘business as usual’ – or existing services – with a 1.1% rates increase.

Submissions for the Draft 10 Year Plan are open from 16 March to 20 April. For more information visit www.gw.govt.nz/10-year-plan.