**28 September 2023**

**Media Release – Blind Citizens NZ
Blind pedestrians push back on renewed E-Scooters ‘Declaration’…**

Blind Citizens NZ’s National President Jonathan Godfrey says that “Waka Kotahi has kicked the problem ‘can’ down the road. Unfortunately for pedestrians, our population of people and anyone else impacted, E-scooters are now stuck right back in our way on our footpaths!”

Even though Waka Kotahi has delegated decision-making under legislation, Blind Citizens NZ does not believe the election period is the right time to put such an important policy in place.

Cities around the world are cleaning up their streets of littered for-hire e-scooters and removing them from footpaths. Yet here in NZ we are expected to accept Waka Kotahi’s decision to renew the Declaration for another five years. “This decision is a failure to keep those of us who are pedestrians safe. We actually question ‘why five years’ and findings which tell us that Waka Kotahi’s review ‘…found that the greatest risk is to e-scooter riders themselves and a substantial number of pedestrians feel anxious or stressed about sharing the footpaths with them’, says the National President.

Mechanisms to ensure the safety of e-scooters such as geo-fenced no-go and low-speed zones for rental e-scooters are not working now, so why would we have confidence they will work in future?

‘Blind Citizens NZ will continue our advocacy to remove E-scooters (and other micro-mobility devices) off footpaths and into designated areas that keep pedestrians and E-scooter users safe, but we will not compromise the safety of pedestrians using footpaths” says Jonathan Godfrey, Blind Citizens NZ’s National President. <ends>

For further comment contact National President Jonathan Godfrey:
**Email**: A.J.Godfrey@massey.ac.nz
**Mobile**: 029 538 9814