
Report 3
(1215/52/IM)

SUBMISSION ON DRAFT RLTS AND RPTP

1. Purpose of Report

To seek approval for the attached submission to Greater Wellington on the Draft Regional Land Transport Strategy (RLTS) and Draft Regional Passenger Transport Plan (RPTP).

2. Executive Summary

The RLTS sets out the strategic direction for land transport in the region while the RPTP sets out a framework for the provision of passenger transport services and once completed will be incorporated into the RLTS.

The attached submission supports the vision, objectives and policies of the draft RLTS but it also identifies a number of areas of concern to the Council that need to be addressed. These primarily relate to lack of affordability, program prioritisation, the Ngauranga to Airport Study having not yet been completed, inclusion and funding of the Grenada to Hutt Valley link road, and conditions of support for the Western Corridor Plan, including safety concerns on the coastal route. The attached submission also recommends better consideration of environmental sustainability issues.

The attached submission also supports the draft RPTP but encourages greater emphasis on relieving congestion and requests greater support of the WCC growth spine concept.

3. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

- 1. Receive the information.*
- 2. Approve the attached submission on the Draft Regional Land Transport Strategy (RLTS) and Draft Regional Passenger Transport Plan (RPTP), subject to any changes by the Committee.*
- 3. Agree to delegate to the Mayor and Chief Executive the authority to make any minor drafting changes necessary before forwarding the submission to Greater Wellington Regional Council.*

4. Background

The RLTS sets out the strategic direction for land transport in the region. It includes funding and implementation plans for transport projects over the next ten-years. The RPTP sets out a framework for the provision of passenger transport services and once completed will be incorporated into the RLTS.

All regional councils are required to prepare a RLTS, which must include any RPTP that may exist for the region, and review it every three years. The current RLTS 1999-2004 was due for renewal in November 2005 but the review process was delayed to enable agreement between local and central government on the Wellington Transport Project funding package, to allow coordination with the Wellington Regional Strategy, and to allow completion of the Western Corridor Study.

The review process included an initial phase of consultation in 2005 which sought comment on the draft vision, objectives and outcomes of the strategy, along with three strategic options for achieving these. The strategic options were “Planned Investment”, “Advanced Passenger Transport” and “Advanced Rooding”. Consultation was also undertaken for the individual corridor plans and a number of the implementation plans now contained in the draft RLTS 2007-2016.

The draft RLTS 2007-2016 will replace the current RLTS. It was released for public consultation in mid-November 2006 with submissions closing 16 February 2007. Hearings will be held in March with the final RLTS adopted by Greater Wellington Regional Council in May 2007.

5. Discussion

The attached submission supports the vision, objectives and policies of the draft RLTS. It also identifies a number of areas of concern to the Council that need to be addressed.

The main areas of concern are affordability and program prioritisation. The draft RLTS Regional Transport Programme (p118-131) and Funding Plan (p132-136) set out a strategic roading and passenger transport programme that is unaffordable under current funding estimates. Furthermore, the draft RLTS does not provide a robust prioritisation framework for projects. The order of projects in the strategic roading and passenger transport plans does not reflect their significance or priority making it difficult to identify those projects that best meet the vision, objectives and policies of the draft RLTS. This creates a risk of projects being considered on a “first come first serve” basis rather than strategic fit.

The current funding shortfall of \$415m (p136) is exacerbated by government funding allocations not being inflation adjusted and by high construction cost escalation. This has the potential to delay or cancel a number of priority projects

that are of particular importance to Wellington City, in particular those projects that will form part of the CBD Corridor Plan and the Grenada to Hutt Valley link road.

The draft RLTS does not yet include a CBD Corridor Plan due to the Ngauranga to Airport Strategic Study having not yet been completed. This study is due for completion in the middle of this year. The Grenada to Hutt Valley link road is included in both the Western and Hutt Corridor plans, but according to the draft RLTS the current cost estimates are “possibly conservative” (p132). It is unclear as to how any additional costs would be funded. This is of particular concern considering that the project already relies on a local share from Wellington City Council that has not been budgeted for in our LTCCP. Previous versions of the draft RLTS have assumed a WCC contribution of \$45m (25% of the project cost), but the Council has never agreed to this. The attached submission states that the Grenada to Hutt Valley link road should be one of the highest regional priorities and should be 100% funded from regional funds.

The draft RLTS includes the Western Corridor Plan (April 2006) which was adopted by the Regional Land Transport Committee (RLTC) on 11 April 2006 as follows (highlighting added):

Resolved that the Committee:

- (1) Adopts the Western Corridor Plan (April 2006) as amended as set out in Attachment 2 of this report.*
- (2) Recommends that Greater Wellington Regional Council amends the Regional Land Transport Strategy by replacing the Western Corridor Plan Implementation Plan (1999) with the Western Corridor Plan (April 2006) as amended.*
- (3) Notes that Transmission Gully should not be funded at the expense of other transport and roading projects required to meet the transport needs of all communities in the region and ensure their future growth and prosperity, in particular:***
 - (i) Projects in the Ngauranga to Airport corridor.***
 - (ii) The proposed Grenada to Hutt Valley link.***
- (4) Recommends that enduring regulatory land use controls and other mechanisms be introduced by relevant local authorities, potentially including land ownership and binding access limitations to avoid generating urban sprawl.***
- (5) Recommends that Greater Wellington Regional Council urgently investigates mechanisms for travel demand management to avoid adverse impact on passenger transport***

patronage, including the investigation of congestion charging on the Western Corridor.

- (6) Recommends the early implementation of passenger transport projects in advance of the completion of Transmission Gully, to help ensure public transport patronage is maintained and enhanced***
- (7) Requests the Regional Land Transport Committee to consider seriously how to respond to the clear scientific threat of climate change*
- (8) Requests that the Regional Land Transport Committee, with the support of Government agencies, develops a case for new funding criteria to determine how “critical, strategic, special and national” projects can be funded*
- (9) Establishes a deputation, led by the Chair of the Regional Council, comprising of the chair of the Regional Land Transport Committee and the region’s mayors, to undertake discussions with appropriate Government Ministers to resolve uncertainties in funding the Western Corridor Plan, and to report back to the Committee*
- (10) Notes that the Western Corridor Plan has to meet the legal requirements set out in S.175 of the Land Transport Act 1998, and be consistent with the Regional Land Transport Strategy.*
- (11) Notes the concern that the Western Corridor Hearings Subcommittee’s Report does not adequately address these requirements with respect to environmental sustainability and the environment, and with respect to the New Zealand Transport Strategy, the National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy, the Regional Policy Statement and the Regional Land Transport Strategy and requests further information.*

The following note was recorded in the minutes at the request of Mayor Prendergast:

“Wellington City Council reserves its position in respect of accepting the Western Corridor Hearings Subcommittee’s findings re inclusion of the Transmission Gully Motorway in the Regional Land Transport Plan in the event that points 3 – 8 are not actioned and/or implemented in a timely manner.

Clauses 3-6 above (highlighted) correspond to the Wellington City Council’s conditions for support as recommended by this committee on 6 April 2006. Clauses 7 and 8 above were not conditions of support but were also submitted by this committee.

It is considered that the draft RLTS generally meets these conditions of support. As already noted in this report and also in the attached submission there is

some concern in respect to the CBD Corridor Plan (Ngauranga to Airport) and the Grenada to Hutt Valley link road however there is no indication at this stage that this condition (Clause 3) has not been met. Clauses 4-6 are considered to be met through policies and “short to medium term projects” recorded on pages 94-96 of the draft RLTS.

According to the draft RLTS Western Corridor Plan the Transmission Gully Motorway will not be opened for at least another eight years (2015/16). The attached submission notes that in the meantime there are a number of serious safety concerns along the existing coastal route that need to be addressed as soon as possible.

The draft RLTS has been under review for the last three years and during this time a number of implementation and corridor plans have been developed and adopted separately. The draft RLTS 2007-2016 is the first time these have been brought together into a single comprehensive strategy. This appears to have led to some inconsistencies in respect to greenhouse gas emission and fuel consumption outcomes. The potential impact of peak oil and rising fuel prices is acknowledged in the draft RLTS (p32) but no specific interventions are identified other than providing improved passenger transport and alternatives to the private car.

The attached submission also supports the vision and strategic goals of the draft RPTP. It encourages greater emphasis on the role of passenger transport in relieving congestion on the roading network and requests greater support for the WCC growth spine concept.

The attached submission is consistent with the strategic direction already adopted by this Council and is not expected to lead to any significant additional requirements for Council although the draft RLTS currently has a funding shortfall of \$415m and assumes a local share contribution for the Grenada to Hutt link road that WCC has not approved. The attached submission requests that this link be 100% funded from regional funds.

6. Conclusion

The attached submission supports the vision, objectives and outcomes of the draft RLTS. It identifies a number of areas of concern, particularly in respect to regional affordability, prioritisation and potential impacts on the yet to be completed CBD Corridor Plan and the Grenada to Hutt Valley link road project.

The attached submission also supports the vision and strategic goals of the draft RPTP but encourages greater emphasis on relieving congestion and requests greater support of the WCC growth spine concept.

Contact Officer: *Adam Lawrence, Strategic Advisor*

Supporting Information

1) Strategic Fit / Strategic Outcome

Consistent with the Council's Transport and Urban Development Strategies.

2) LTCCP/Annual Plan reference and long term financial impact

Not applicable.

3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations

Nil.

4) Decision-Making

This decision does not trigger the significance policy. This submission is important in advancing the interests of the Council in regional transport infrastructure.

5) Consultation

a) General Consultation

Not applicable.

b) Consultation with Maori

Not applicable.

6) Legal Implications

Nil.

7) Consistency with existing policy

Consistent with current policy as set out in the Council Transport Strategy.