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Report to the Regional Land Transport Committee
By Dr D J Watson, Divisional Manager Transport

RLTS : Public Transport Progress Report

1. . Purpose

To update the Committee on progress towards implementing the public transport projects in the adopted Regional Land Transport Strategy.

2. Western Corridor (Otaki to Wellington)

Public Transport Projects to 2004

- Upgrade the Paraparaumu railway station building
- Build a new railway station at Raumati
- Extend the urban electric rail service to Waikanae
- Increase weekday urban rail service frequency from the Kapiti Coast to Wellington to 15 minutes in peak period and 30 minutes in off peak
- Provide additional commuter car and cycle parks at major railway stations
- Increase rail feeder bus services to match the increase in urban rail frequency

Progress on these projects is split into two categories. Those projects that rely on a long term contract with the urban rail provider are all stalled. These projects are:

- Upgrade of Paraparaumu railway station
- New station at Raumati
- Electrification to Waikanae

Capital projects such as these need a provider willing to invest on the back of a long term service contract with the funder and the necessary procedural sign off from Transfund to allow for a long term arrangement. Clearly these conditions don't exist and have not existed for a number of years now. All these projects have lead times of months or years. Every delay for whatever reason places these projects in jeopardy.

A lack of investment and even the lack of planning for future investment can only result in the service deteriorating over time. We may not yet be at the point of no return but we may soon reach it. The Regional Council's Long Term Financial Strategy has a planned purchase of new rolling stock for 2005/06, with a 36 month lead time this means a decision is needed on this in the 2002/03 year or about 12 months from now.

The other projects not related to a long term rail contract are proceeding at pace. The rail service frequency should be improved to 30 minute off peak and 15 minute peak from August 2001. Paraparaumu and Paekakariki commuter carparks have or are being sealed. Paraparaumu and Redwood commuter carparks have been extended. Bus services are being increased to meet all the new rail services. Cycle lockers have been provided at Paraparaumu and Wellington railway stations.

3. Eastern Corridor (Masterton to Wellington)

Public Transport Projects to 2004

- Investigate the construction of a bus or high occupancy vehicle lane which does not compromise the use of cycles on the route from Petone to Ngauranga on State Highway 2.
- Allow additional direct commercial bus services from Wainuiomata, Stokes Valley, Western Hills and northern Upper Hutt to Wellington CBD
- Allow additional direct commercial ferry services across Wellington harbour
- Increase peak hour rail services to a 20 minute frequency from Upper Hutt
- Increase rail feeder bus services to match the increase in urban rail frequency
- Provide additional commuter carparks at main railway stations
- Refurbish Upper Hutt railway station and Petone railway station
- Continuous improvement in the quality and accessibility of passenger rail services on the Upper Hutt – Masterton route including improving commuter train frequency

Increased frequency on Upper Hutt rail services and rail feeder bus services is part of the changes to take place in August. An additional peak period train from Masterton is planned from September. No operator has sought to provide additional commercial bus or ferry services into the Wellington CBD. Commuter carpark spaces have been or are about to be increased at Waterloo, Petone, Trentham, Wallaceville, Upper Hutt and Featherston stations.

Again, the major rail infrastructure projects await the sale of Tranz Metro Wellington.

4. Porirua to Hutt Valley Corridor

Public Transport Projects to 2004

- New bus service Porirua to Lower Hutt

Local community pressure from particularly Upper Hutt has led to the development of a Porirua to Upper Hutt bus service that will be trialled from August.

5. Wellington and Wellington CBD Corridors

Public Transport Projects to 2004

- Improve bus priority through CBD traffic
- Establish bus priority for Newtown buses serving the southern and eastern suburbs
- Provide a bus service to the airport from the CBD
- Construct bus and high occupancy vehicle priority measures through Karori down to the Karori tunnel
- Enhance the bus/rail interchange at Wellington station
- Improve pedestrian linkages from Wellington station to the CBD

The Lambton Bus/Rail Interchange is being rebuilt. Some limited bus priority measures in Lambton Quay are part of the Interchange programme. A Lower Hutt CBD to Airport bus service has started which provides a Wellington CBD to airport service. Additional canopies linking the Lambton Interchange to the Wellington CBD are included in the Interchange development.

6. Summary

. Many of the public transport projects listed in the Regional Land Transport Strategy for completion by 2004 are either in operation or are planned to be implemented shortly. The key rail infrastructure projects are on hold pending the outcome of the Tranz Metro Wellington sale process. Delays in resolving the future of Tranz Metro Wellington are putting the long term future of rail services at risk.

7. Communications

All the public transport improvements have already been publicised.

8. Recommendation

That the report be received.

Report prepared by:

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