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Committee: Regional Land Transport
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Wairarapa Corridor Plan Update

1. Purpose

To update the Committee on progress on the Wairarapa Corridor Plan.

2. Background

At the 14 November 2002 meeting the Committee received a presentation on the possible economic futures for the Wairarapa. The key issues arising were:

- Tourism
- Forestry and timber processing
- Recreational journeys
- Education
- Commuter travel to Wellington and the Hutt Valley

The consequential transport network issues are:

- a) State highway 2 south of SH58 which is being considered as part of the Hutt Corridor Plan
- b) Rimutaka and Kaitoke Hill Roads
- c) The Wairarapa rail link to the Hutt Valley and Wellington
- d) Impacts of local roads of forestry
- e) SH2 bypasses of Wairarapa townships

3. **Comment**

The paper in **attachment 1** canvasses the objectives, needs and issues and possible options for evaluation. The options provided are theoretical options which could be evaluated through a normal evaluation process.

Consideration of the options for travel between Wairarapa and Wellington highlights a number of key points.

It is likely than an incremental approach to upgrading the Rimutaka Hill Road will be sufficient to meet all demands for travel over the next 20 years except for the demands imposed by forestry, timber, products, and tourism. It is highly unlikely that sufficient capacity could be provided on the Rimutaka Hill Road to meet the demands of forestry, timber products, and tourism. There is not the money available to fund such a project nor sufficient time to design, gain consents and build such a project before the forestry demands come on stream.

Trucking and barging would be risky given difficult water conditions. Transporting to Napier or Palmerston North would reduce the economic benefits to the Wellington region and increase the transport costs of the product making such a proposal less beneficial and possibly uneconomic.

The option that is most likely to be realistic is the mixed option. This is the incremental upgrade of the Rimutaka Hill Road with as much forestry, timber products, and tourism as possible transported by rail. Such an option would require the development of a log transfer site in the Wairarapa with forestry and timber products transported by rail to Wellington. The transfer site would be fed by trucks. Rail passenger services would need to be upgraded to meet the demands of tourists, recreational travellers, and commuters.

4. **Communications**

There are no relevant communication matters.

5. **Recommendation**

This report be received for information.

Report prepared by:

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Attachment 1: Preliminary Consideration of Options