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Committee Proposed Regional Land Transport Programme
Hearing Subcommittee
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Report on submissions to the Proposed Regional Land Transport Programme 2009 - 2012

1. Purpose

To provide the Subcommittee with an overview of the submissions received on the proposed Regional Land Transport Programme and officer comments on the significant issues raised by submitters. The report also presents the findings of market research undertaken on the proposed programme.

2. Significance of the decision

The matters for decision in this report **do not** trigger the significance policy of the Council or otherwise trigger section 76(3)(b) of the Local Government Act 2002.

3. Background

The amended Land Transport Management Act 2003¹ (the Act) requires the Regional Transport Committee to prepare and consult on a Regional Land Transport Programme (RLTP) every three years.

The RLTP is a three year programme that contains all the land transport activities proposed to be undertaken throughout the region for the next 3 financial years (2009 – 2012), the regional priority of those activities, indicative activities over the following 3 financial years, plus a 10 year financial forecast.

The proposed activities in the RLTP are submitted by the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) and 'Approved Organisations' (including the eight territorial authorities (TAs) and Greater Wellington). The activities in the

¹ As amended by the Land Transport Management Act 2008.

programme relate to passenger transport, walking and cycling, travel demand management, local roads, state highways, and the movement of freight.

The Regional Transport Committee sought feedback on the proposed RLTP in March/April 2009, particularly in relation to the transport activities included in the proposed programme and the identified priorities for funding transport activities in the region. After considering the feedback provided through submissions, the Regional Transport Committee will recommend a final RLTP for Council's adoption in late June 2009. The final adopted RLTP will support the approved organisations' bid for funding assistance from the National Land Transport Programme.

4. Scope of the Committee's discretion

Section 16 of the Act sets out the form and content of RLTPs. Section 16(1) (a) sets out those activities that must be automatically included in the programme. These are: local road maintenance, renewals and minor capital works and existing public transport services. Committed activities are also automatically included. Section 16(1) (b) allows the Regional Transport Committee to exclude other activities.

Therefore, the decision for those projects currently included in the 3-year programme that the Committee has discretion over is:

- i) whether to continue to include the project/activity in the 3-year programme
- ii) whether to give the project/activity a higher or lower regional priority.

It is important to note that this programme forms one step in the funding process.

Many activities require local funding that is approved separately through each council's Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) and Annual Plan processes.

In most cases, activities are included in the regional programme because they require some funding from the National Land Transport Fund. While the New Zealand Transport Agency will take account of the regional programme and priorities it does not have to include any activities or projects in the National Land Transport Programme, nor is it bound to follow the regional programme when considering detailed funding applications.

A projects 'assessment profile' as determined by the NZ Transport Agency (e.g. the rating of high/medium/low against each of the assessment criteria) is also a key consideration in determining whether or not a project receives funding from the National Land Transport Fund.

Other processes such as scheme development, project scope/design, and consenting will also still need to be completed in due course independent of this step in the funding process.

5. Recent changes to funding frameworks

A new Government Policy Statement (GPS) on Land Transport Funding 2009/10 – 2018/19 was issued on 19 May 2009. It states that the government's priority for its investment in land transport is to increase economic productivity and growth in New Zealand. It sets out the impacts that the government expects to achieve through the National Land Transport Fund.

One significant change of particular relevance to Wellington is the intention to fund capital investment in Wellington rail infrastructure directly through Crown funds rather than the National Land Transport Fund. Many aspects of this new arrangement have yet to be clarified. However, we expect that we will need to remove all rail capital expenditure projects from the programme and identify them in the 'Significant expenditure on activities funded from other sources' in the final RLTP.

Officers will table advice on the implications of the new GPS at the Subcommittee deliberations. The final RLTP will need to take account of the new GPS.

6. Consultation

The Regional Transport Committee, at its meeting on 5 March 2009, approved the proposed Regional Land Transport Programme for public consultation. Consultation commenced on 23 March 2009.

Public Notices were placed in the Dominion Post, the Wairarapa Times Age and key community newspapers.

The proposed programme was mailed out to over 200 stakeholders and public libraries. A summary document of the proposed programme was sent out to every household in the region (approximately 191,000).

An article was included in the April publication of Greater Wellington's 'Our Region' newsletter.

A media release was prepared and distributed.

Greater Wellington's website had a dedicated page with an electronic submission form.

A market research survey was commissioned alongside the consultation process. Results are summarised in section 9 of this report.

Submissions closed on 24 April 2009.

7. Overview of Submissions

579 submissions were received on the proposed programme.

Around 93% of submissions were received from individual members of the public, most using either the paper feedback form contained in the summary document or the online submission form on Greater Wellington's website.

The remainder (7%) were received from local councils, organisations/agencies, advocacy groups and community groups. Five submissions were received from territorial authorities (Kapiti Coast District Council, Porirua City Council, Upper Hutt City Council, South Wairarapa District Council and Carterton District Council). A submission was also received from Horizons Regional Council in relation to projects of inter-regional significance.

A number of submissions also came through to this process via Greater Wellington's LTCCP process. Where submissions were made on the LTCCP that addressed programme matters (i.e. matters relating to prioritisation and roading projects) these have been included in the Regional Transport Committee's process. This is to ensure any comment made about strategic transport issues is dealt with by the appropriate process.

Of the 579 submitters, 63 indicated a wish to be heard in support of their submission.

A Subcommittee was established at the 8 April 2009 Regional Transport Committee meeting to hear these oral submitters and consider all submissions.

A full copy of all submissions has been provided to the Subcommittee.

Discussion about the key issues arising from submissions is set out below. This discussion was reviewed by the officers' (including officers' for the TA's and the Agency) technical working group on 19 May. Minor amendments were made to the report in response to matters of clarification sought by the technical working group.

8. Submission analysis

The issues raised by submitters through their submissions ranged both in terms of topic and specificity. Submitters commented on high level strategic issues through to detailed operational issues.

General support was noted overall by submitters for the projects included in the proposed programme even if views varied greatly about the order of priority in which projects were ranked in the proposed programme. Around 41% of submitters answered 'Yes' to the question *Do you support the projects in the RLTP?* Around 23% answered 'No' and 36% did not specifically respond to this question in their submission.

The project that overwhelmingly received the most comment through the submissions was Transmission Gully, with a mention from around 33% of all submitters.

The following sets out the common and more significant issues raised by submitters and the officer comments in response.

8.1 Committed activities and those already underway

Submitters provided various views on projects that were already underway, and support for projects for which funding is committed.

While one submitter considered the new Dowse intersection upgrade unnecessary and ugly, several other submitters expressed positive views about the difference they felt the project was already making.

Many submitters supported the rail improvements between Wellington and Waikanae and supported the Johnsonville rail line improvements.

Strong support was noted by many submitters for the Real Time Information project and the Bus Priority Scheme with submitters noting how important this initiative is to making public transport more attractive. How quickly and how widely these projects are implemented are up to the responsible agencies (Greater Wellington and Wellington City Council respectively).

Support was also noted for the Muldoon's Corner Upgrade project and the Wairarapa Log Freight project. Several submitters sought more freight be carried by rail which is a key driver for the log freight project.

Comment

Committed activities must be included in the programme in accordance with Section 16(3) (c) of the Act. The Committee has no discretion over these activities.

8.2 First and Second Priority Activities 2009 – 2012

A number of submitters noted support for activities in the first and second priority categories, particularly those relating to walking, cycling, travel demand management and state highway safety improvements.

Overall, submitters were supportive of the categorisation of activities into broad priority one, priority two and priority three groupings. However, there were some who thought that state highway maintenance should be removed or reduced in the first priority category and that walking, cycling and travel demand management programmes should be elevated into the first priority grouping. Others believed some walking, cycling and demand management activities should have a lower priority, coming after some major new projects in the third priority group.

Submitters sought various improvements to walking and cycling networks, including:

- A regularly maintained cycle track between Petone and Wellington (suggests inclusion in second priority group).

- An integrated regional cycle network (and integration with a national cycle network)
- Safer cycling and walking infrastructure and safer road environment
- Hutt City, Petone, and Wellington to become ‘cycle cities’

Several submitters specifically supported the cyclist skills training programme and cyclist safety promotion in the second priority category. Other submitters felt that walking and cycling promotion should be eased off as they believe this will make no difference to demand for public transport or car use given the terrain, weather and aging population.

A few submitters suggested that horse travel should be considered and provided for alongside walking and cycling. In terms of travel demand management, submitters suggested a number of initiatives including restricting urban growth in outer areas and implementing a workplace parking levy to discourage commuting by car.

Comment

Specific initiatives to improve walking and cycling, and to manage travel demand are identified through regionally agreed plans. Programmes to progress these initiatives are currently identified in the second priority category. Whether specific projects or activities are included for funding in this second priority group will depend on them being put forward by the responsible agency.

Horse travel is not considered to be a transport mode in the way that walking and cycling are alternative modes to car travel. Therefore our planning documents do not make provision for horses.

*The broad categorisation and order of priorities, with relatively high priority given to the low cost walking, cycling and demand management activities is consistent with the policy framework of the Regional Land Transport Strategy (RLTS). **No change is recommended.***

8.2.1 Transport Planning Studies

Some submitters felt that too much expenditure is allocated to transport studies generally.

Comment

*Studies and investigations are vital to ensure that the right solution is selected and developed for addressing our transport issues and needs. The allocation of funding available for transport planning studies is set at the national level through the GPS. **No change is recommended.***

One study identified in the second priority category that was commonly supported was the Wellington – Airport Passenger Transport (PT) Feasibility Study, a Greater Wellington project identified to start in 2011/12. In addition to supporting this study, a number of submitters requested it happen sooner.

Comment

The timing of the Wellington - Airport PT Feasibility Study is consistent with the timing set out in the recently adopted Ngauranga to Airport Corridor Plan. No change is recommended.

8.3 Third Priority Activities (Large New Projects) 2009 – 2012

8.3.1 Overview

Of those who provided a direct response to the question in the submission form ‘Do you agree with the order of priority given to projects?’ around 63% answered ‘No’ and 37% answered ‘Yes’. In most cases, those answering ‘No’ suggested some alteration to the order of priority given to projects in the Third Priority ‘large new projects’ list.

All projects in the third priority group ‘large new projects’ received some level of support and opposition in the submissions, and submitters had a range of, often conflicting, views about which projects should be given higher or lower priority.

The project in the Third Priority list that attracted the most feedback was the Basin Reserve Upgrade project. Around 120 submitters (21% of all submitters) specifically commented on this project. Of those, 88% were opposed to the project and 12% specifically supported it.

Also attracting a high level of comment, but in these cases strong support, were Rail Scenario 1 (package of rail improvements), Region-wide Bus Service Improvements, and Rail Electronic Ticketing. In addition to supporting these projects, many submitters sought a higher priority be given to them.

Receiving a good level of support through submissions were the Western Link Road Stage 1, Paraparaumu and Waikanae Station Upgrades, SH1 MacKay’s to Paekakariki Median Barrier.

Receiving a moderate level of support was the SH58 Safety Upgrades, followed by the two SH1 tunnel fire safety projects, SH2/58 Grade Separation, SH1 Ngauranga tidal flow lanes and Hutt Road bus lanes package, SH2 Melling Interchange and Melling Bridge Package, and SH2 Moonshine to Silverstream Median Barrier.

Projects that attracted a similar level of both support and opposition were Masterton Eastern Bypass, Westchester to Glenside, Waterloo Quay Capacity Improvements and Western Link Road Stage 3.

8.3.2 Basin Reserve Upgrade

Submitters who opposed the Basin Reserve Upgrade project gave a wide range of detailed reasons, but overall the reasons were based upon the potential impact of a flyover solution.

In around thirty submissions the sole focus was opposition to the Basin Upgrade project and did not mention any other project in the programme. This included advocacy group 'Save the Basin', the Mt Victoria Historical Society, the Mt Victoria Residents Association, and the Green Party. A template letter was provided on the website savethebasin.org.nz that many of these submitters used as the basis of their submission, often modifying it to make it more personalised. The key common points of these submissions were:

- Opposed to the proposal to build a flyover at the Basin and its listing as the number two transport priority for the region.
- Request that the Committee drop this project from the programme and that alternatives to the flyover be presented for public consideration as a matter of urgency.

In addition, submitters provided detailed comments across the following range of issues:

- Believes 79% of submissions on Ngauranga to Airport Corridor Plan have been ignored.
- Concerned that this project has been approved before the impacts/effects fully considered and before a full design was presented for public consideration. Asked how they can agree something as the number two priority when they don't know what it will look like. Seeks better accountability and transparency.
- Flyover should not be considered before other options explored. The alternatives suggested were: bus lanes and bus priority around basin, walking and cycling improvements, promote alternatives to car, roads are shared multi-modal space, TDM initiatives, light rail system, PT spine via Pirie St bus tunnel, 'tweaking' traffic signals, an 'at-grade' solution, tunnel under Basin, pedestrian underpasses.
- Concerned about the visual and noise impacts of a fly-over, loss of green space, recreational, cultural, historic, heritage and intrinsic values, impact on the Basin as an iconic world class cricket ground, repeating Auckland's errors, identifies poor overseas examples of impact of urban flyovers.
- No evidence that the fly-over will solve traffic congestion or deliver significant benefits to PT users, will not enhance the environment for pedestrians/cyclists, would just move bottleneck to Mt Victoria tunnel.
- Concerned about cost of project, likely escalation, and poor use of rates/taxes, suggests has a negative B/C ratio, and seeks better value for the \$50m than some small travel time improvements for car users.
- Traffic should expect some delays moving through central city at peak times, traffic congestion is a good thing as it makes PT, walking, cycling more attractive.
- Focus should be on reducing carbon emissions and addressing peak oil.

- Project doesn't align with NZTS direction.
- New indoor stadium will mean even more important to have good PT network to Kilbirnie.
- Geotechnical and safety concerns (e.g. in case of earthquake – high cost to mitigate).

Many of these submitters did however note their support for the mixed use development and multi-modal improvements along Adelaide Road, some suggesting these should not be packaged with the Basin Upgrade project.

Those who supported this project tended to note the need to improve the efficiency of State Highway 1 through Wellington City and saw the project as closely linked with other improvement projects identified in the Ngauranga to Airport Corridor Plan, both roading and public transport.

Comment

The need to improve traffic management at the Basin Reserve was identified as a priority in the Ngauranga to Wellington Airport Corridor Plan, adopted in October 2008. A key objective of the Basin Reserve Upgrade project is to provide more reliable bus journey times for services travelling along this key public transport spine. To achieve this without causing significant detriment to journey times on State Highway 1 to/from the Wellington Airport, some form of separation between the two corridors is needed.

The opposition in the submissions was primarily around the potential impacts of a flyover solution on the Basin Reserve and its surrounds, which will be subject to future scheme assessments and public consultation. In general, submitters did not dismiss the need for a solution at this location outright, rather they tended to offer alternatives to a flyover solution as outlined in section 8.3.2 above.

The NZ Transport Agency is working on a detailed scheme assessment to develop options for addressing the issues at the Basin. Public consultation on these options is expected to be carried out later this year.

No change is recommended to the priority of this project.

8.3.3 Rail Scenario One (RS1)

Overall, submitters strongly supported the high priority given to this project in the proposed RLTP. Many felt that continued investment in the rail network, beyond the committed improvements, was crucial to bring it up to an acceptable standard after years of under-investment. However, there were a small number of submitters who did not support the high priority given to this project. Some felt it was too expensive and suggested reducing the size of the rail expenditure to allow funding of other projects lower on the list. Other submitters sought better consultation on the Regional Rail Plan to ensure this large investment is needed. One submitter (no.515) sets out detailed reasons why they do not support this project.

Comment

It is well recognised that improvements to rail services and infrastructure take time to implement and therefore must be planned well in advance. This need to plan was the key reason for the preparation of the Regional Rail Plan (RRP). The RRP took into account all known proposals for rail improvements and identified how rail can be developed to achieve RLTS objectives.

RSI is a package of proposals and the majority of the individual components have been the subject of consultation processes such as Greater Wellington's Amended 2006-16 LTCCP and various corridor plans. Greater Wellington has received sustained and consistent feedback seeking improvements to public transport overall and to the rail system in particular. RSI addresses many of the issues raised by submitters. Rail is a network and must be planned as such, and scheduling issues and track configurations are technical matters that can be informed by public comment but must be determined by experts in the area.

Despite the changes to the funding of rail capital developments, RSI should remain in the final programme. However, RSI should be split into two – those components that will be funded out of the NLTP; and those components that will be funded from other sources (i.e. by Ministry of Transport). The latter is required under section 16(3)(b) of the Act which requires the RLTP to include all significant expenditure on land transport activities to be funded from sources other than the Land Transport Fund.

It is recommended that RSI be retained but that the proposed expenditure is split into two components as set out above.

8.3.4 Region-wide Bus Service Improvements

Many submitters supported this activity and suggested it be given 'high' priority within the major projects list. NZ Bus noted the importance of investing in continuous improvements to bus services, particularly bus capacity at peak times, to ensure any potential mode shift is not hampered by overcrowding and unreliability. One submitter suggested that increases to meet demand do not go far enough but need to generate demand as per the Northern Express service in Auckland.

Comment

Greater Wellington's current priorities with respect to bus services are to seek improvements through efficiency gains and to ensure that all currently funded bus services operate effectively. Reviews of current services have identified potential savings from poorly performing services and it has been possible to fund new services from the savings that have been made. However, this approach is not sustainable long-term in providing capacity to meet demand and RLTS targets. This project was therefore included in the proposed RLTP from year three onwards.

In relation to timing, we are advised that bringing this project forward in the programme will place significant additional stress on Greater Wellington's budgets and is a matter for consideration in Greater Wellington's LTCCP.

It should be noted that other activities currently underway, such as the introduction of a real time passenger information system, will indirectly enhance bus services.

A change to the priority of this project is recommended - refer to section 9.8

8.3.5 Rail Electronic Ticketing

This project received a high level of support through submissions, with many suggesting it be raised significantly in the priority order. Many submitters considered it an essential project and suggested it be packaged with a wider integrated ticketing system. There was some dissatisfaction expressed by submitters with the 'Snapper' card system on buses and requesting a better solution for rail electronic ticketing.

Comment

This project, as currently defined, is limited in scope to electronic ticketing on the rail network. This is seen as the first step to a wider integrated ticketing system. The project's relatively low priority within the 'large new projects' list reflects its relatively narrow scope and limited contribution to RLTS outcomes.

Greater Wellington's current priority is to implement a real time passenger information system. However, it will continue to investigate the introduction of full integrated electronic ticketing. The outcome from the investigation will feed into future reviews of the RLTP.

No change is recommended to the priority of this project.

8.3.6 Western Link Road Stage 1

This project was well supported by submitters, with the benefit to both local connectivity, trip efficiency and reduced traffic volume on State Highway 1 cited as the key reasons. Support came from both Kapiti residents and others who noted that they have experienced long delays on State Highway 1 through Kapiti. However, a number of submitters thought that just constructing a local bridge linking existing local roads was all that is needed.

Comment

State Highway 1 is nearing capacity and is regularly congested from Paraparaumu to Waikanae. The Western Link Road will remove local trips from SH1, reducing congestion and providing better connectivity between Raumati South, Paraparaumu and Waikanae.

*Consideration has been given to a local bridge option. However, while improving local connectivity and network diversity, it does little to alleviate pressure on the State Highway to the south of Otaihanga Road and results in significant increases in traffic on local roads either side of the bridge. It is not considered a viable option to provide the significant relief to SH1 that the full length (Raumati Road to Te Moana Road) provides, nor the more wide ranging north-south connectivity that is currently missing from the local network. ***No change is recommended to the priority of this project.****

8.3.7 Paraparaumu and Waikanae Station Upgrades and SH1 Waikanae Grade Separation

A number of submissions were received in support of these projects. Many recognised the importance of the railway station upgrades to accommodate the works currently underway to double track and electrify the railway network to Waikanae. However, there was also a common theme raised by many submitters around the need for a coordinated solution at Waikanae. A number of submitters felt that the Waikanae Station Upgrade must be packaged with the Waikanae Grade Separation project (rated 'medium priority' in the Third Priority list) as they felt the two projects are inextricably linked. Both Kapiti Coast District Council and Kapiti Coast Grey Power raised concern about the different priorities given to these two projects and stated that they only supported interim alterations to the station in its current location to accommodate the new service frequency, but sought an integrated and coordinated approach to planning and funding the rail and road aspects of these projects. Submitters emphasised that good access to the station and integrated planning of all components is essential, including car parking and links with the town centre.

Comment

All parties involved in the roading and rail projects at Waikanae have committed to continue to work together to ensure that developments are integrated and co-ordinated. The different stages of development of the roading and rail projects dictates that the rail station upgrades proceed in advance of the road projects. The rail station upgrades will not preclude a fully integrated transport hub at some future date.

A funding application has been submitted to NZTA for the Paraparaumu and Waikanae Station Upgrades. It is anticipated that this funding will be approved by 30 June 2009. If funding is confirmed before the programme is finalised the Paraparaumu and Waikanae Station Upgrades will be moved from the major projects list to the "already underway/committed activities" list in the programme.

8.3.8 SH1 MacKays to Paekakariki Median Barrier

This project received a large amount of support from submitters. Many recognised it as a relatively low cost project with significant safety benefits on a busy stretch of road. However, there were also a few submitters who did not support the project, preferring money to be spent on other projects or suggesting that widening the stretch of road would make it safer than installing a barrier.

Comment

*The Regional Transport Committee gave particular regard to safety issues when considering the priority order of third priority activities. The priority given to this project reflects that safety focus. **No change is recommended.***

8.3.9 SH58 Safety Upgrades

The SH58 Safety Upgrades project was commented on by a number of submitters, primarily in support and asking that the project be given higher priority. Submitters identified a need for improving the safety of this route, particularly if it is to experience increased use in future.

Porirua City Council submitted that this project must be given a 'HIGH' priority ranking and be moved up to number 3 on the third priority list.

Submitter 337 provided a detailed submission solely in relation to this project. The submitter felt that the SH58 Safety Upgrades project was too low on the priority list given its major safety issues. Personal risk bands and traffic volumes were cited as evidence. Particular concern was raised about safety at the SH58 intersection with Murphys/Flightys Roads. The submitter suggested that money be spent on upgrading SH58 instead of constructing a new road link between Petone and Grenada.

Comment

*Detailed investigation of safety improvements for SH58 is programmed in the first year of the RLTP. NZTA is currently developing a long term safety plan for SH58 which will include recommendations for short-term safety improvements. Submission 337 will be considered in detail by the team developing the SH58 safety plan. The SH58 safety plan will be released later this year. **No change is recommended.***

8.3.10 Masterton Eastern Bypass, Westchester to Glenside, Waterloo Quay Capacity Improvements and Western Link Road Stage 3

These projects all received a similar level of both support and opposition through the submissions.

In the case of the Westchester to Glenside Link, Waterloo Quay Capacity Improvements and Western Link Road Stage 3, the submissions in opposition were commonly linked with comments that these projects were unnecessary or not warranting the priority they had been given. One submitter (Glenside Progressive Association) suggested a new Tawa to Porirua Link via the top of Stebbings Valley instead of the Westchester to Glenside Link.

In relation to the Masterton Eastern Bypass project, submitters supporting the project noted the need for, and benefits of, having heavy vehicles bypass the town's main street. However, other submitters were concerned about the proposed route of the bypass and its potential impact on other local streets and residential areas. It was also suggested that an alternative solution would be to move logs onto rail.

Comment

Waterloo Quay Capacity Improvements and Westchester to Glenside Link – these projects were put forward to the proposed programme by the responsible agency (Wellington City Council) in response to an identified need. The 'medium' and 'low' priority given to these projects reflects their relatively

*narrow contribution towards regional outcomes. Waterloo Quay Capacity Improvements are needed to improve access to Centreport and the ferry terminals for pedestrians, cars and freight. The Westchester to Glenside Link is needed to improve access and efficient trip making between the Churton Park development areas and State Highway 1. While the Regional Transport Committee has discretion about whether to include these projects in the programme, there is no evidence to suggest they should be excluded. **No change to the priority of these projects is recommended.***

*Western Link Road stage 3 – This project has a ‘high’ priority (Number 5 on the list) within the third priority activities because it is closely related to Western Link Road Stage 1. **No change to the priority of this project is recommended – we note that Stage 3 may need to be packaged with Stage 1 in order to maximise the benefits of Stage 1.***

*Masterton Eastern Bypass – This project has a ‘low’ priority within the third priority activities which reflects the project’s relatively limited contribution towards regional outcomes. The design phase only is expected to commence in the first three years and this will include a study of future forestry activity and investigation of whether an eastern bypass route is justified. It is expected that information about any proposed route would be made available to the local community through this process. **No change to the priority of this project is recommended.***

8.3.11 Other third priority projects

The remaining projects in the third priority category received a moderate level of comment, primarily in support.

In relation to the tunnel fire safety projects, some submitters felt that the proposed expenditure was not warranted by what they perceived as a low risk of incident. Others disagreed.

Upper Hutt City Council suggested that the region would be remiss if it did not strongly promote the SH2/SH58 Grade Separation project for funding in 2009/10 because it is ready to go.

Comment

The priorities given to these projects reflect their contribution to the RLTS outcomes, and considerations of seriousness/urgency and benefit/cost ratio. Timing and ‘readiness to go’ is a separate matter that was also considered by the Regional Transport Committee in determining its priorities (refer to section 6.2 of the proposed programme). In the list of large new third-priority projects, there are three that could expect to commence construction within the first year of the programme. These all have a ‘high’ priority rating.

In relation to the tunnel fire safety projects, the design phase is currently underway. In relation to the SH2/SH58 Grade Separation project, the design contract has been awarded.

No change is recommended to the priority of these projects.

8.4 Projects identified in the next RLTP 2013 – 2015

Many submitters noted their support for, and in some cases acceleration of, the Grenada to Gracefield Western project. It was seen as an important link between Tawa/Johnsonville and the Hutt Valley, and a high priority for new subdivisions in the area and providing better local connections. Several submitters stated that it must be done together with Grenada to Gracefield Eastern to provide an effective connection, for freight in particular. However, a comparable number of submitters opposed the Grenada to Gracefield Western project. These submitters tended to say that the link was unnecessary and stated concerns about the project's impact on the local environment and likely damage to Korokoro Stream. One submitter also felt that including this project in the programme prior to completion of the Ngauranga Triangle Study was inappropriate.

Many submitters specifically supported the SH2 Rimutaka Hill ongoing upgrades, particularly noting safety reasons. In some cases submitters asked that the activity be brought forward. However, there were also several submitters who did not support this activity, believing it unnecessary or likely to result in increased speeds, traffic volumes and fuel use.

Several submitters noted support for the SH2 Kennedy Good interchange project. Support for ongoing bus service improvements was common throughout the submissions.

Comment

The Regional Transport Committee cannot adjust the timing of activities in this process. All it could do is ask the proposing agency to advance or defer the project.

In relation to the Grenada to Gracefield Western project, it would be inappropriate to ask the NZ Transport Agency to bring this project forward into the current three year programme prior to completion of the Ngauranga Triangle Study. However, identifying it as a potential major project in the next RLTP is appropriate given that it has been identified through several high level plans and strategies to date (the Hutt Corridor Plan, the Western Corridor Plan, the RLTS, and the Wellington Regional Strategy).

Given the recent commitment to construction of the Muldoons Corner Easing project which was identified as the most urgent section to be addressed on SH2 Rimutaka Hill Road, the identification of the ongoing upgrades in the next programme is appropriate.

No change is recommended to this section of the programme.

8.4.1 Transmission Gully Motorway

Transmission Gully received by far the most support compared with any other specific project mentioned in the programme. Many submitters sought urgent progress in relation to this project which they felt was long awaited and vital for providing efficient, safe and resilient access to/from Wellington City through the western corridor.

However, there were also a large number of submitters who opposed Transmission Gully (around half as many as supported it) for one of two reasons. Either they favoured upgrade of the coastal route as an alternative solution, or they believed that building such a major new road was unsustainable and money would be better spent on improving public transport, walking and cycling. One submitter felt that Transmission Gully should be a 2-lane road and have a dedicated cycle lane. Another submitter suggested Transmission Gully be developed as a rail link, allowing the existing rail corridor (North Island Main Trunk Line) to be utilised for widening the existing coastal highway.

Comment

The issues for and against the Transmission Gully project were thoroughly considered when the Western Corridor Plan was developed. This plan, adopted in April 2006, makes it clear that the region's preferred solution to state highway issues between MacKays and Tawa is Transmission Gully. It also identifies Transmission Gully as one part of an integrated multi-modal plan. It should be noted that the rail improvements called for by the plan are currently being implemented. The RLTP therefore appropriately provides for continuing investigation of Transmission Gully over the next three years, with construction to start in the following three years. The programme also notes that funding of \$620 million is still to be identified. It is anticipated that the government will make further announcements on Transmission Gully by the end of 2009.

No change to the programme is recommended in relation to this project.

8.5 Projects in the 10-Year Forecast

Of all the projects identified in Table 7 of the programme 'Other Significant Activities in the 10-Year Forecast' the Grenada to Gracefield Eastern project drew the largest response. Support for, and acceleration of, Grenada to Gracefield Eastern was noted in a number of submissions. Support for this project was at a level equal to that of Western component. Reasons for support focused around the need to remove traffic from Petone Esplanade and to better connect Gracefield industrial area with State Highway 2 and the proposed new link to Grenada. A small number of submitters noted that they did not support this project and felt it to be unnecessary.

Comment

Investigations to date have suggested that the western part of the proposed Grenada to Gracefield Road would need to be completed before the eastern part. It would be inappropriate to bring this project forward into the current three year programme prior to completion of the Ngauranga Triangle Study.

A number of submitters also supported, or sought acceleration of, the Western Link Road Stage 2 project. A similar number specifically stated they did not support it, generally commenting it was unnecessary.

Comment

KCDC advises that this is likely to proceed as a developer funded project and is not expected to enter the design phase until the end of the 10-year forecast period.

Several submitters supported the Johnsonville Road capacity improvements project and urged the timing of this be packaged or coordinated with the proposed new mall development and new public transport hub. One submitter noted their opposition to this project.

Comment

Ideally the capacity improvements to Johnsonville Road would be coordinated with plans for the Johnsonville Mall redevelopment and a public transport hub. Unfortunately, due to land ownership and planning issues we understand that this may no longer be feasible and the future of the Mall and any public transport hub is uncertain.

A small amount of both support and opposition was noted in relation to the SH2 Upper Hutt Bypass Upgrade project.

Comment

*The scope and timing of all projects identified in the 10-year forecast is consistent with the RLTS and associated regionally agreed corridor plans. The projects are identified and programmed by the responsible agency. **No new information has become available as a result of submissions to justify the Sub-committee asking the responsible agency to revisit any of the proposals in the 10-year forecast at this time.***

8.6 Projects suggested by submitters for inclusion in the RLTP

Throughout the submissions a wide range of projects or ideas were identified by submitters as activities that they felt should or could be included in the programme but are not currently.

A list of these projects and ideas is included in **Attachment 1**. The following summary describes those projects most commonly identified by submitters.

The individual projects that the largest number of submitters identified as 'missing' from the programme included:

- a light rail system from Wellington railway station (or Johnsonville) through the Wellington City CBD to the Hospital and Wellington Airport (some submitters suggested using money currently allocated to Transmission Gully to pay for it)
- a new railway station at Raumati South
- a high quality, safe, well maintained cycleway between Petone and Wellington City (with some identifying the wider Great Harbour Way concept).

Also sought by a number of submitters was a SH1 Pukerua Bay Bypass, a full public transport integrated ticketing scheme, and upgrade of State Highway 1 north of Mana. A detailed submission was received from the advocacy group PKB4 Bypass Org setting out reasons in support of a Pukerua Bay Bypass. A number of submitters commented on the need for SH1 to bypass local communities wherever possible and called for traffic ‘pinch points’ through Paraparaumu and Otaki to be addressed.

As a group, further enhancements to the region’s rail network beyond the committed projects and Rail Scenario 1 were also commonly identified. Some suggested that Rail Scenario 2 be included in the next RLTP list, while others sought new stations, retaining and upgrading Muri Station, extended electrification (eg. to Otaki/Levin/Palmerston North and north of Upper Hutt), new links (e.g. to Lower Hutt CBD) and full double tracking between Pukerua Bay and Paekakariki.

Other ‘missing projects’ identified by submitters included a SH2 tunnel between the Hutt Valley and Wairarapa, an upgraded SH1 intersection at Paekakariki, widening or straightening Moonshine Bridge, and replacement of the Waihenga Bridge SH53. South Wairarapa District Council sought reassurance that the replacement of Waihenga Bridge is to be progressed under the NZ Transport Agency national programme of bridge renewals and sought an indication of timing for investigation, design and construction. The NZ Heavy Haulage Association felt that upgrading the Aotea Quay Overbridge should be included in the programme and provided detailed reasons in support.

Several submitters felt that major walking and cycling projects needed to be included in the programme, not just minor. An enclosed, ventilated space through Mt Victoria tunnel for cyclists and walkers was a specific project identified by submitters, in addition to the Petone to Wellington Cycleway.

Several submitters noted their disappointment that more projects identified in the Ngauranga to Airport corridor plan were not included in the proposed programme such as the duplication of Mt Victoria tunnel and four-laning of Ruahine Street/Wellington Road. They noted an urgent need to create an efficient state highway route through the CBD to Wellington Airport. Similarly, several submitters noted the absence of a scheme assessment for these elements of the Ngauranga to Airport Corridor Plan and suggested this be brought forward and carried out in conjunction with the Basin Reserve upgrade investigation.

Comment

Specific comment on each of these matters have been provided in Attachment 1.

Overall, there are a significant number of land transport projects, options and ideas that could be implemented in the region if funding was unlimited. Unfortunately this is not the case and the region must therefore put together a list of its top priorities for receiving funding from the national land transport fund.

Most of the major projects included in the proposed RLTP have been previously identified through a corridor plan process or in some cases an implementation plan such as the Regional Passenger Transport Plan. However, whether a specific project is included or not is dependent on the responsible agency (TAs, Greater Wellington, or NZ Transport Agency) putting that project forward into the programme.

In some cases the 'missing projects' identified by submitters (e.g. light rail or dedicated public transport spine through the CBD to the Airport) have been identified through a corridor plan or implementation plan but are subject to further investigations and are not expected to be constructed for at least ten years.

The scheme assessment for the roading aspects of the Ngauranga to Wellington Airport corridor mentioned above are identified beyond three years in the corridor plan, and is not therefore included amongst the studies/investigations in the 3-year programme.

In other cases (e.g. the Waihenga Bridge or Paekakariki intersection upgrade) the project may be covered under a group allocation or wider heading where it cannot be easily identified, and will require the lead agency to clarify where the project sits.

There are also potential projects that have just not been identified through any process for various reasons, including some that are likely to have very low benefits for the associated cost.

The Regional Transport Committee does not have the ability to add projects to the programme. If appropriate, the Committee could request that the relevant agency give further consideration to the potential of or need for a particular project for inclusion in future RLTPs. No projects have been identified by officers as requiring further consideration.

8.7 Regional Rail Plan

A detailed submission was received from the Raumati Public Transport Action Group noting their disappointment that a new rail station at Raumati is currently missing in the proposed RLTP, Greater Wellington's 10-Year Plan, and the Regional Rail Plan despite what they claim were previous assurances and commitments. They believe the Raumati Station should be in the Regional Rail Plan Base Case and they questioned the assumptions of the plan. This submission is also being considered as part of Greater Wellington's 10-Year Plan submission process.

This view was backed up by the submission from Kapiti Coast District Council who noted concern about lack of public consultation on the Regional Rail Plan and the omission of both Raumati and Lindale Stations.

Pukerua Bay Residents Association provided a submission seeking inclusion of the retention and upgrade of Muri Station and detailing why Muri Station should be retained.

Comment

Greater Wellington has considered its position on Raumati Station in recent months and made the following commitments:

- *That the design of the double tracking and electrification between MacKays Crossing and Waikanae will not preclude the construction of a Raumati Station.*
- *That land at Raumati owned by Greater Wellington will be retained as a potential car park and not be sold to developers for other activities*
- *That the future programme of work on the Kapiti line will be reviewed once the electrification and double tracking work is complete.*

There is no current proposal to close Muri Station. However, some work is underway to look at station usage and to identify the scope and cost of the upgrade work that is required to ensure the station platform is compliant with the needs of the new Matangi trains.

See also comments under section 8.3.3 regarding the Regional Rail Plan.

8.8 Road Safety

Improved road safety was sought by a large number of submitters. Some called for more investment in road safety improvements and programmes generally, and others supported the specific road safety activities and projects in the proposed programme.

Several submitters felt that the only road projects that should be funded were those focused solely on addressing road safety. Others suggested road safety should have the top priority over all other activities in the plan.

Some submitters felt that increased investment in public transport would make a big contribution to road safety through increased use of a safer mode.

Comment

Improved road safety is one of seven key outcomes of the Regional Land Transport Strategy that the proposed RLTP seeks to address.

In addition to giving a high priority to minor safety works on our region's state highway network (second priority activities), the Regional Transport Committee gave particular regard to safety issues when considering the priority order of third priority activities (the large new projects). As a result, those projects with a sole focus on, or that make a significant contribution to, road safety tended to be given a relatively high priority.

It is recommended that this approach is maintained when considering the final RLTP.

The Regional Road Safety Plan is currently under review following a report presented to the Regional Transport Committee in April showing that road safety in our region is getting worse. This plan is not expected to identify

specific infrastructure projects to improve the safety of the transport network, but will provide a framework of actions for all responsible agencies to address road safety going forward. It is likely that the plan will include a number of key advocacy points for the region to take forward to Central Government.

8.9 Inter-regional issues

Horizons Regional Council noted the importance and inter-regional significance of State Highway 1 and the North Island Main Trunk line in providing access and connections to/from Wellington City, CentrePort, Wellington International Airport, and the South Island. They were pleased to see that four of the third-priority activities rated 'High' relate to this route - Western Link Road Stage 1, Rail Scenario 1, Western Link Road Stage 3, and SH1 MacKays to Paekakariki median barrier. Horizons urge Greater Wellington to implement a solution to the capacity, reliability and safety issues in the Western Corridor as soon as possible.

Comment

Horizon's support of the inter-regionally significant activities in the Wellington RLTP and their request for urgency in relation to issues in Western Corridor reinforces the views previously expressed by the Regional Transport Committee when agreeing to the proposed RLTP.

(See also the comments in 8.4.1 above and 8.10 below).

8.10 Roads of National Significance

As mentioned in other sections of this report, a large number of submitters commented on various aspects of State Highway 1 between Wellington and Otaki, particularly the section north of Mana. Whether it was about the need for an alternative route such as Transmission Gully or the need to upgrade the existing Centennial Highway, the need to bypass particular communities, or the need to address specific safety issues or traffic pinch points, submitters generally identified the importance of this route and a need to address the worsening issues around safety and capacity. Several submitters highlighted the government's recently announced 'Roads of National Significance' in this regard.

Comment

State Highway 1 between Wellington Airport and Otaki has been identified as one of seven 'Roads of National Significance' (RoNS) in New Zealand by central government. The NZ Transport Agency advises that the declaration of SH1 from Levin to Wellington Airport as a RoNS adds a further guiding factor in determining the priority of improvements in the Greater Wellington Region.

Several of the improvements already programmed in the RLTP will contribute to the objectives of the RoNS. These activities are Transmission Gully, Basin Reserve Improvements, and Ngauranga to Aotea Quay Traffic Management, Waikanae Grade Separation, and Kapiti Western Link Road. The strategic significance of the RoNS will require the investigation of additional measures

on SH1 which will contribute towards reducing congestion, improving safety and supporting economic growth between Levin and Wellington Airport.

This investigation is likely to result in new projects being proposed in the next RLTP or possibly through a variation to this RLTP. Given that these projects will depend on obtaining adequate funding, we would expect that the identification of this route as nationally significant will assist in seeing solutions to the roading components of the Western Corridor addressed sooner rather than later.

It is recommended that suitable references to 'Roads of National Significance' be included in the final RLTP.

8.11 Allocation of expenditure

Some submitters sought less funding for minor projects, preferring expenditure to be focused on 'the big stuff'. In contrast, others suggested only doing the first priority projects or not doing any high cost projects (particularly roading) given the current economic recession.

While many submitters provided feedback on specific projects, others commented more generally about what they believe should be the priority for land transport expenditure.

A significant level of feedback sought greater expenditure be allocated to public transport, walking and cycling (some suggesting that funding should come from the roading allocation). Many submitters requested greater emphasis be given to encouraging people to use these sustainable modes. Submitters called for improvements to make public transport more reliable and pleasant, to improve frequency and coverage, for investment in rail and new trains, for investment in bus services and bus lanes. There was a strong call for more investment in cyclist safety and in improved cycling infrastructure and facilities.

Submitters supported the above views with a range of reasons including an urgent need to address greenhouse gas emissions, to prepare for peak oil, to improve our transport network's efficiency, to improve our health, and to improve economic efficiency. Several submitters sought better recognition of cycling as part of the solution to addressing traffic congestion. Some felt that greater investment in walking, cycling and public transport would better align with the direction of the NZ Transport Strategy.

Contrasting views were received from other submitters who suggested that walking and cycling were given too much attention or resource in the programme, or that the proposed spending on public transport was not warranted.

Comment

The allocation of funding in the RLTP is about addressing identified needs in our region. The projects proposed in the programme to address these needs are generally identified through the relevant corridor plan or implementation

plan process under the policy framework of the RLTS. They reflect the integrated, multi-modal network approach provided for in the RLTS.

The programme therefore includes projects to address public transport competitiveness and reliability, road safety, and provision for cycling/walking. It also includes projects to ensure that the road network, which currently accommodates the majority of our journeys, is maintained and improved.

The allocation of funding across the various activity classes is set out at the national level in the Government Policy Statement on Land Transport Funding (the GPS).

8.12 Funding issues

The impact on rates as a result of transport projects was of concern to a number of submitters. It was suggested that the cost of projects be spread out over the lifetime of those projects so that the burden would not only fall on current ratepayers. Some submitters suggested higher user pays for public transport, while others requested that ways to reduce public transport fares be investigated.

Comment

Local body rates contributions to the share of project and activity costs vary considerably across activity classes (ranging from 10% for some rail investments up to 100% for some local roading activities). Rates are set independent of this RLTP process in the separate LTCCP/Annual Plan processes run by each local and regional council. It is noted that most capital expenditure undertaken by local and regional authorities is debt funded in order to spread the cost out over the life of the asset created and provide for inter-generational equity.

Public transport fare recovery policy is set out in Greater Wellington's LTCCP. This policy seeks to recover 45-50% of the cost of providing services from users, the balance coming from the National Land Transport Fund and rates. The Regional Transport Committee cannot set this policy.

Submitters identified the need for more central government funding for transport. One submitter suggested that local councils will need to compensate for the new government focus on roads by investing more in public transport.

Comment

Central government funding is set out in the Government Policy Statement on Transport Funding (GPS). As set out in sections of this report, officers' will provide advice to the committee on the new GPS implications for the programme.

Some submitters noted support for toll roads, petrol tax and congestion charging and others opposed them.

Comment

*There are no toll roads identified in the RLTP, although it is possible that Transmission Gully will operate with a toll. The Government has announced that it will be repealing legislation that provides for regional fuel taxes. Congestion charging or other forms of direct road pricing are not proposed in the RLTP, although the RLTS includes policies to advocate for changes to legislation to enable road pricing measures to be considered by the region in future. **It is recommended that reference to a possible regional fuel tax should be removed from the final RLTP.***

One submitter suggested a subsidy for electric vehicles, cycles and foot power as a means of encouraging these modes of transport and addressing climate change.

Comment

*Such a scheme would need to be developed at the national level. Any advocacy at the regional level is not part of the consideration of this programme. **No change is recommended.***

Some submitters considered that private vehicle owners are bearing the cost of what they believe to be unnecessary wear and tear on roads by logging trucks and suggested these should be moved by rail. Submitters suggested weight restrictions on the Rimutaka Hill Road or tolls on heavy vehicles to encourage this shift.

Comment

The issue of appropriate road user charges (RUCs) for heavy vehicles has been recently reviewed by central government. A report titled 'An independent review of the New Zealand Road User Charge System', issued 31 March 2009, made 33 recommendations for the RUC system, but the government has yet to determine how it will proceed with these.

The Wairarapa Log Freight project (listed under Committed Activities) aims to facilitate more logs being transported by rail between Wairarapa and the port. However, rail will not be feasible option for all road freight travelling between Wairarapa and the rest of the region, and therefore there would be little justification for placing weight restrictions or tolls on heavy vehicles using this key strategic route with limited alternatives. In addition, these are not matters that can be determined through the RLTP process.

There were mixed views about how funding should be allocated across different local authority areas. For example some suggested Wairarapa residents should only pay for Wairarapa projects. Others suggested too much expenditure was focused on Wellington City, and others felt not enough was.

Comment

The programme sets out the expenditure proposed by the various agencies responsible for the activities in response to identified needs and issues in each area. The Committee has recommended priorities for third priority activities (major projects) based on their contribution to the region's strategic outcomes

*as set out in the Regional Land Transport Strategy. This process does not set priorities based on geographic spread. **No change is recommended.***

8.13 Process matters

A range of comments were made throughout the submissions about the RLTP and the consultation process.

Some submitters felt that not enough information or detail was provided about the proposed projects to enable meaningful feedback. Other submitters were unclear about how the programme related to the various LTCCPs and expressed concern about duplication of work that might be occurring.

One submitter (Johnsonville and Newlands Paparangi Residents Association) felt that the prioritisation process was biased towards rail.

One of the strongest themes in this area was the message ‘just get on with it’. Many submitters felt that far too much time and money is spent on consultation. Others were cynical about whether public feedback makes any difference to the outcome. Submitters also felt that they were not seeing enough action in terms of projects actually being progressed and constructed. This message was particularly notable in reference to the Transmission Gully project.

Comment

In many cases, more detailed information about projects was available from the relevant lead agency if requested, however in other cases the projects are at the concept stage, with the detail yet to be developed and determined. The level of information provided in the proposed RLTP was considered a reasonable balance between a highly technical document and a document that could be easily digested by all regional residents. The level of detail provided met the requirements of the Act.

The prioritisation process undertaken by the technical working group, as the basis for initial recommendations to the Regional Transport Committee, was developed by assessing the seriousness and urgency, the effectiveness in achieving the RLTS outcomes, and the benefit/cost ratio of each project. No preference was given to one mode over another.

*The consultation is a statutory requirement of the Land Transport Management Act 2003. **It is suggested that the message around consultation fatigue be brought to the attention of Ministry of Transport officials after the consultation process.***

8.14 Considerations for other processes

In many cases submitters raised issues that cannot be considered as part of this process because they are outside the scope determined by the Act, or because they relate to other decision making processes. Where submitters raised detailed issues related to a projects timing or cost, or an operational matter, then that submission has been forwarded to the relevant implementing agency for their consideration. Detailed matters relating to local roads in a specific area have been forwarded to the relevant council. Operational issues relating to

the state highway network have been forwarded to the NZ Transport Agency, and matters relating to operation of the public transport network including those about specific routes or services, have been forwarded to Greater Wellington's Public Transport Division.

A lengthy and detailed submission was received from NZ Sleep Safety Ltd. The submission seeks a nationally coordinated programme on the development and introduction of Roadside Stopping Places linking up the 16 regions throughout New Zealand. NZ Sleep Safety Ltd have been promoting the idea to Transit NZ (now NZTA) for the last four years and is concerned that good work done to date may be lost. The submitter raises four detailed questions about: the priority of these facilities in region, what action is being taken, what funding is committed, and who is responsible for implementing this initiative?

Comment

The full submission from NZ Sleep Safety Ltd has been forwarded to the NZ Transport Agency for its consideration as the agency responsible for the operation of the State Highway network. While the regional prioritisation of state highway activities put forward in the RLTP now rests with the Regional Transport Committee, the NZ Transport Agency is still responsible for identifying and putting forward programmes and projects for funding that relate to the operation of the state highway network.

The NZ Transport Agency advises that it currently has a Highway Stopping Places Strategy (March 2008) which provides guidelines and a defined level of service for stopping places. No new stopping places are specifically proposed under this Strategy. However, if the NZ Transport Agency were to implement new stopping places, we understand that this would be funded from their State Highway Maintenance, Operations and Renewals Programme which is identified in the First-Priority Activities (Table 1) in the RLTP.

9. Market Research

9.1 Introduction

Research New Zealand was commissioned to undertake a survey of the general public in the Greater Wellington Region. The survey began on 16 April 16 and obtained opinions about whether the people of the Greater Wellington region agreed with the prioritisation of projects as set out in the Regional Land Transport Programme. The following is based on the interim report that had been received at the time of writing. A presentation from Research New Zealand will be made to the Subcommittee on 27 May.

The survey was conducted using a mixed methodology. Initially, respondents were sent a pre-notification letter and a paper copy of the survey. The pre-notification letter informed respondents about the purpose of the survey and also gave respondents the option to complete the survey online should they wish to do so.

The survey of residents collected the opinions of residents sampled from three specific areas:

- Area 1 - Wellington City (including the Eastern and Western Suburbs, Johnsonville and Tawa)
- Area 2 - The Hutt Valley and Wairarapa
- Area 3 - Porirua to Kapiti Coast.

In total, 415 questionnaires were completed in the survey. Overall these results are subject to a margin of error of +/-4.9 percent.

9.2 Overall support for the broad order of priorities set out in the RLTP

In all, 52 percent of the respondents ordered the priorities in the same order as they appeared in the RLTP summary document indicating that they were happy with the priority framework set out in the RLTP.

9.3 Rating third-priority activities (large new projects) in terms of importance

Each project was rated on a scale of one to five, where one was “Not at all important to me” and 5 was “Very important to me”. Sixteen of the nineteen projects received an average rating that was above the mid-point of 3.0.

9.4 Projects most often rated as the highest priority

Respondents were then asked to place the projects that they rated as being important or very important in order of priority, with the project they believed should be given the highest priority as number one on their list.

Half of respondents (48 percent) included Rail Network Improvements in their top five most important projects while more than a third (37 percent) of respondents included Region-wide bus service improvements in their top five.

9.5 Projects most often rated as the lowest priority

The project that appeared most often as the lowest priority on respondents’ lists was the Masterton Eastern Bypass. In all, 18 percent of respondents said that this project was lowest on their list of priorities.

Twelve percent of respondents ranked the Westchester to Glenside link lowest on their list of priorities, while a further 10 percent of respondents chose the Rail Electronic Ticketing as their lowest priority.

9.6 Projects respondents would like to see happen sooner

Fifty-two percent of respondents said that they believed Transmission Gully should happen sooner than was proposed in the RLTP. In addition, more than two-fifths (43 percent) of respondents said that the proposed Bus Service improvements should happen sooner than proposed.

9.7 Overall rating of the RLTP

Respondents were asked to take everything in the draft RLTP into consideration and to rate the overall draft RLTP on a scale of one to five, where one was “Not at all supportive” and five was “Extremely supportive”.

In all, half of the respondents (52 percent) rated the overall draft RLTP as a four or five. Twenty-eight percent of respondents rated it as a three on the scale, while only nine percent of respondents rated it as a one or two.

In terms of the average rating, these results equate to an average rating of 3.76 for all respondents.

9.8 Comment on Market Research results

The survey, like the submissions, showed a wide range of opinions about the priority of major projects. Not surprisingly respondents were more likely to support proposals relevant to their local area. Overall, more respondents supported the RLTP than didn't by a factor of 5:1.

The response from the survey was generally aligned with the feedback from submissions in supporting Rail Scenario 1 and Bus Service Improvements. Rail Scenario 1 is the number three priority (high) in the large new projects list, which is consistent with this feedback.

*The Bus Service Improvements project is the number 13 priority (medium) in the proposed programme. The technical working group evaluation showed the project to have good merit. Its evaluation score placed it in a group that could place it as high as sixth or as low as 15th on the list. Its current priority reflects the Committee's decision to elevate safety projects. **Given consistent support through submissions and market research, the Subcommittee may wish to recommend to the Regional Transport Committee that this project be moved up the list, possibly as high as number seven (after Paraparaumu and Waikanae Station Upgrades which are vital to support a committed project). Increasing this project's priority does not affect its timing (starting in year 3).***

The response from the survey was also generally aligned with the feedback in submissions in placing relatively low importance on the Westchester to Glenside Link and Masterton Eastern Bypass projects. These projects are currently rated as number 17 and 18 priority respectively (low) in the proposed programme.

The other large new project in the three year programme of particular interest to submitters was the Basin Reserve Upgrade, currently the number two priority of the 19 third-priority major projects. Most submitters who commented on this project did not support it. The survey showed:

The average rating of importance was 3 on a scale of 1 (not important) to 5 (very important), ranking it at number 8 of 19.

- *When respondents ranked the projects that were important or very important to them, this project was 5th most frequently ranked in respondent's top 5 priorities.*
- *When respondents ranked the projects that were least important to them, this project was 6th most frequently ranked in respondents' bottom 3 priorities.*

*These results highlight the polarisation of views around this project. The need for the project was established by the Ngauranga to Airport Corridor Plan. The NZ Transport Agency is currently developing detailed options which will be consulted on later in the year which will allow more informed consideration of this matter. **The current priority of this project is still to be considered appropriate.***

10. Next steps

The Hearings Subcommittee will report back on submissions to the full Regional Transport Committee meeting on 23 June.

The Regional Transport Committee will then recommend a final programme to Greater Wellington for consideration at its meeting on 30 June. The Act specifies (s18B(3)) that the Council MAY decide to approve the programme without modification OR refer the programme back to the Regional Transport Committee with a request that it reconsiders one or more aspects of the programme. If referred back, the Committee, after reconsidering matters, may forward to the Council an amended programme OR supply further information that it considers will help the Council with its decision.

Once the Council receives an amended programme or a programme with additional information the Council MUST approve the programme or amended programme and forward it to the New Zealand Transport Agency; OR forward the programme or amended programme to the Agency stating that it is not approved along with a statement of reasons.

11. Communication

The Chair of the Hearings Subcommittee may wish to issue a statement on the submissions at the completion of deliberations.

12. Recommendations

That the Subcommittee:

1. ***Receives** the report.*
2. ***Notes** the content of the report.*
3. ***Agrees** to recommend to the Regional Transport Committee that no activities or projects identified in the proposed programme should be excluded from the final programme.*

4. **Agrees** to recommend to the Regional Transport Committee the following changes to the proposed RLTP, as a result of consideration of submissions:
 - 4.1 Elevate the Region-wide Bus Service Improvements project from 13 (medium) to 7 (high)
 - 4.2 Add commentary about the new GPS
 - 4.3 Remove reference to the possibility of a regional fuel tax
 - 4.4 Remove rail capital expenditure from the programme and identify it in the final RLTP under 'Significant expenditure on activities funded from other sources' and add commentary about the changes in funding of rail projects
 - 4.5 Add commentary about the Levin to Wellington Airport Roads of National Significance.
6. **Recommends** that the Regional Transport Committee instruct officers to provide feedback to the Ministry of Transport after the consultation process on the RLTP process and in particular concern about public consultation fatigue.

Report prepared by:

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Attachment 1: Other projects suggested by submitters for inclusion in the RLTP