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Committee Regional Transport
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Submissions Report – Proposed Regional Land Transport Strategy 2010 – 2040

1. Purpose

To provide the Committee with an overview of the submissions received on the Proposed Regional Land Transport Strategy 2010 – 2040 (RLTS), together with officer comments and recommendations on the issues raised by submitters.

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. Consultation

The Committee, at its meeting on 9 March 2010, approved the Proposed RLTS for public consultation. Consultation commenced on 22 March 2010.

A letter inviting submissions, a copy of the Proposed RLTS and a summary document were sent to parties identified in section 78 of the LTMA, including local councils, the New Zealand Transport Agency, KiwiRail and New Zealand Police. Other groups and interested parties, such as user groups and operators, were mailed a letter inviting submissions and a summary document.

Copies of the Proposed RLTS and summary document were made available at libraries, Greater Wellington offices and on request.

Public notices were placed in the Dominion Post and all local community newspapers. A media release was prepared and distributed. Stories appeared in several local newspapers about the Proposed RLTS and consultation. Greater Wellington's website had a page dedicated to the Proposed RLTS, with an electronic submission form.

Submissions closed on 23 April 2010.

4. Overview of Submissions

35 submissions were received on the Proposed RLTS. Of those, 26 were from agencies or groups and 9 were from individuals.

Submissions were received from three territorial authorities (Upper Hutt City Council, Porirua City Council and Wellington City Council). A submission was also received from the Horizons Regional Transport Committee.

Of the 35 submitters, 21 indicated a wish to be heard in support of their submission. Oral submitters were heard by the Committee at its 29 April 2010 meeting. A full copy of all submissions has been provided to the Committee.

Some of the key themes emerging from the submissions have been outlined below. Officer comments on these and any recommended changes are also noted.

5. Submission analysis

A more detailed summary of all submissions and officer recommendations is included as **Attachment 1**.

The submission from the New Zealand Transport Agency contained a very detailed list of comments, suggestions and recommendations. Officer responses to these are included as **Attachment 2**.

Submitters commented on high level strategic issues through to detailed operational ones. 11 out of 35 submitters indicated that, overall, they supported the Proposed RLTS. Two stated that they did not. The remaining 22 submitters did not specifically indicate either way.

Many supporters sought a shift in focus or more concrete policy signals in a few common areas. Submitters also made suggestions as to how they believed the RLTS could be amended or improved.

Having considered the points and key issues raised in the submissions, several wording changes and points of clarification are recommended.

5.1 Vision

The proposed long term vision for the Wellington regional transport network was largely supported by submitters. 12 of 35 submitters indicated they supported the long term vision, with only four submitters opposed.

Horizons' Regional Transport Committee suggested that the vision could be simplified in order to make it more meaningful. NZ Transport Agency also commented that the supporting rail freight and coastal shipping aspiration could be clarified.

Comment: Minor changes are proposed to address the issues raised, including updating the rail freight and coastal shipping aspiration.

Recommended change

Remove 'through significant achievements in each period', and change 'transport system' to 'transport network' to align with terminology used throughout the RLTS. The proposed new vision statement reads:

"To deliver an integrated land transport network that supports the region's people and prosperity in a way that is economically, environmentally and socially sustainable."

Amend the last paragraph in the detailed aspirations by replacing 'when appropriate' with 'when sustainable' as follows:

"More bulk freight will be moved by rail and coastal shipping when sustainable."

Some submitters also expressed confusion concerning the road safety aspiration that aims to aid efforts to ensure no one is killed or seriously injured on the region's roads.

Comment: The aspiration sets out an ideal long term view to "help to ensure no one is killed or seriously injured when travelling within or through the region." The statement reflects the assertion that no amount of deaths or serious injuries is acceptable on the region's roads.

Recommended change

No change to the road safety aspiration, but change the explanatory text on page 47 paragraph 4 from <i>"The RLTS Vision statement seeks that no one will be killed or seriously injured on the region's roads"</i> to "The RLTS Vision statement reflects the assertion that no amount of deaths or serious injuries are acceptable when travelling in the region."

5.2 Preferred strategic option

The preferred strategic option for mixed investment in roads, public transport and active modes with road pricing as a potential long term tool was also generally supported. However, some submitters raised concerns about the effects road pricing would have on low or fixed income groups as well as the proportion between road and public transport projects.

Comment: No changes are proposed to the preferred strategic option, however, to improve the flow of the Strategy and increase understanding, RLTS Chapter 4 'Strategy development' and Appendix 3 'Strategic options' should be merged into one chapter to remove duplication of material.

Recommended change

Remove Appendix 3. Re-write Chapter 4 to cover material from Appendix 3.
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5.3 Proposed outcomes and targets

General support was given for the proposed outcomes and targets. Several supporters indicated that they particularly supported having aspirational targets, especially for mode shift away from private cars and onto public transport and active modes.

Opposition to the proposed targets was centred on the assertion that the public transport patronage and active mode share targets should flow from an ambitious carbon emissions reduction target.

Comment: Public transport, pedestrian and cyclist mode share targets are based on modelling to be ambitious and achievable. Progress toward these targets provides a range of benefits - not just emission reductions. A balanced programme of roading, public transport and active mode investment is necessary to best manage the region's transport carbon emissions profile.

Recommended change
No change.

The proposed targets that received the most support were the road safety targets. Each of the submitters on the road safety target highlighted different elements of road safety motivating their support. These elements range from particular attention on pedestrians and cyclists, to incorporating driver behaviour training in education programmes, and support for zero fatalities due to road design.

The NZ Transport Agency recommended that the road safety policies be reviewed to ensure their alignment with the Safer Journeys 2020 strategy.

Comment: The road safety targets came out of a technical working group process. The targets took account of Safer Journeys 2020 by ensuring that the RLTS targets were not weaker than the national level ones. The Regional Road Safety Plan contains interventions pertaining to all road users utilising education, enforcement and engineering tools.

A new RLTS policy concerning motorcyclist safety will increase alignment with the Safer Journeys 2020 strategy as motorcyclist safety is an area of high national concern.

Recommended change
Add new policy to section 8.3 'Safety' reading: "Support improved safety (perceived and real) of motorcyclists from risks posed by traffic and other hazards."

Several submitters commented on a perceived lack of emphasis on issues related to the transport disadvantaged, including the elderly.

Comment: People with disabilities and elderly form part of the 'transport disadvantaged' which is brought through in RLTS Objective 3, outcome 1.3, and policy 8.1.n 'ensure the provision for public transport services and concessions recognise the needs of the transport disadvantaged.' It is recommended that RLTS section 3.3.16 'Access for mobility impaired and ageing population' be expanded to take these submissions into account.

Recommended change
Recommended changes to RLTS are outlined in submission point 3.2 in Appendix 1.

5.4 Affordability

A key theme to come out of the submissions related to the affordability of transport in the Wellington region. Concern was raised in several submissions on affordability issues for low, fixed and limited income groups. Particular mention was made of future rates increases resulting from projects and activities within the Proposed RLTS.

Comment: RLTS Objective 6 calls for the consideration of affordability issues, including for low income groups, and is carried through into the policies. The Regional Land Transport Programme (Programme), rather than the RLTS, identifies all of the transport projects put forward for the region. The Programme addresses affordability by applying a prioritisation process to those projects, recognising that funds available from the National Land Transport Programme and the local share via rates and from fares are limited.

In developing Long Term Council Community Plans (LTCCP) and annual plans, councils carefully consider affordability issues for ratepayers and residents. Affordability issues are appropriately managed through these processes.

Recommended change
No change.

The affordability of public transport fares was a specific concern for a number of submitters. They considered that the Proposed RLTS underestimates the impact of public transport fares in influencing public transport patronage.

Comment: Fare recovery policies are set in Greater Wellington's LTCCP and the Regional Public Transport Plan. The current fare policy is for a 45-50% recovery rate of the cost of running the public transport network with the balance made up of contributions from rates and central government funding. It is considered that this level of fare recovery will be affordable and will encourage continued growth in public transport use.

Recommended change
No change.

5.5 Public transport

Public transport was a key theme throughout many of the submissions, with submitters expressing general support for improving public transport services.

The provision of light rail services through the Wellington City CBD and even extensions to Porirua City and Lower Hutt CBD were proposed by submitters.

Comment: An integrated public transport network will be a key focus of the new Regional Public Transport Plan currently under development.

Options for a high quality public transport system for Wellington City, including light rail, are scheduled to be part of a feasibility study in 2011/12. Dependent on the results of that study, light rail may be part of a comprehensive scheme assessment programmed for 2013/14 in the Ngauranga to Wellington Airport Corridor Plan.

The Porirua CBD is already served by heavy rail and extending rail services to the Lower Hutt CBD is not part of the current Wellington Regional Rail Plan.

Recommended change

No change.

There was also strong support for moving freight off the region's roads and onto rail and coastal shipping.

Comment: Freight mode share is influenced primarily by Central Government policy, the NZ Transport Agency and KiwiRail, as well as the decisions of commercial operators. The RLTS has policies supporting the use of rail freight, however the target for rail freight needs to be updated to better align with the Wellington Regional Rail Plan.

NZTA's National Freight Demands Study (2008) found that the role of coastal shipping in freight movements is very minor. This is not expected to change in the near future. However, the RLTS vision statement identifies coastal shipping as a freight option to be expanded as sustainable opportunities arise.

Recommended change

Recommended changes to RLTS are outlined in NZTA submission point 10 in Appendix 2.

Several submitters also commented that the Proposed RLTS should contain some provision of support for the retention of little used rail lines, including the North Wairarapa Line.

Comment: The future potential for rail to play a greater role in the movement of freight, and the value in having an alternative route to the NIMT line is recognised. However, this needs to be balanced against the need for investment in rail to be focused into areas where the most benefits and efficiencies can be gained. KiwiRail has announced a consultation process with local communities and customers before making decisions on the retention of little used rail lines, and it is proposed that RTC members meet with KiwiRail to discuss the future of the North Wairarapa Line. This is the subject of a separate report to the committee.

Recommended change
No change.

The level of accessibility to the public transport network was mentioned as a concern in several submissions in terms of the availability of park and ride facilities, east-west connections, and the reach of the network. There was general support for the overall reach and level of connection to be improved. One submitter stated that the public transport accessibility target (RLTS Outcome 1.3) should be strengthened.

Comment: An amendment of the public transport accessibility target is recommended to take account of the work undertaken on the Regional Public Transport Plan, currently being prepared.

Facilities to support public transport, including park and ride, are being considered as part of the Regional Public Transport Plan. Levels of service, routes and frequencies will be considered in detailed public transport service reviews for each territorial authority area.

Recommended change
Change the public transport accessibility target from: <i>"65% of the region's residents live within 400 metres (5 minutes walk) and 80% within 800 metres of a bus stop or train station with a service frequency of at least 30 minutes (59% within 400m, 77% within 800m in 2009)"</i> to: <i>"75% of people in the region live or work within 400m, and 90% within 800m, of a public transport stop with service throughout the day (68% and 85% in 2009)."</i>

Also of concern was the future of the Capital Connection service after the electrification and double tracking project to Waikanae is complete.

Comment: RLTS outcome 8.1 calls for improved safety, efficiency and reliability of the strategic road, rail and freight links to the north of the region. Greater Wellington is currently in talks with KiwiRail and Horizons Regional Council concerning the future of the Capital Connection service.

Recommended change
No change.

5.6 Climate change and peak oil

Climate change and peak oil were of concern to many submitters. Several submitters stated that they did not believe the Proposed RLTS was aggressive enough in tackling these two issues. Concern was raised that climate change and peak oil were not being adequately considered as key strategic drivers in the Corridor and Implementation Plans as well as in the Regional Land Transport Programme.

Comment: Section 3.3.9 discusses the regional implications of peak oil. Section 3.3.10 of the RLTS considers the effects of greenhouse gas emissions, transport's emissions profile in the Wellington region and actions being undertaken to respond to climate change.

The RLTS plays its part in addressing these issues by seeking to support and encourage public transport and active modes, advocate for integrated land use and transport planning, as well as to make travel and access more efficient. However, many of the key measures for significantly addressing climate change and mitigating peak oil are outside the scope of the RLTS.

Modelling work showed that an integrated, multi-modal transport network achieves the best results across all the RLTS objectives, including carbon emission reductions. Corridor Plans include measures to improve public transport, walking and cycling, and support technology such as fast broadband and integrated land use considerations.

Some minor changes to the peak oil section in the Pressures and Issues chapter are recommended to more accurately reflect international research.

Recommended change
Recommended changes to the RLTS are outlined in submission point 14.4 in Appendix 1 to this report.

Some submitters also commented that the target for outcome 3.1 'Reduced greenhouse gas emissions' was not adequate. Submitters indicated that the target did not represent the near-term emission reductions necessary to avoid the worst potential effects of climate change.

Comment: The emissions target from transport is based on modelling work conducted for the Strategic Options Assessment and seeks to be ambitious but also achievable.

Recommended change
No change.

5.7 Wellington Road of National Significance

Several submitters indicated that they did not support the implementation of the Wellington Northern Corridor Road of National Significance (Wellington RoNS). Some submitters provided desired alternatives for the Wellington RoNS funding to be spent on, including light rail, bus service improvements, and walking and cycling infrastructure investment.

Comment: Central Government has decided to invest \$2.4 billion in the Wellington RoNS. This funding is largely in addition to the Regional Land Transport Programme 2009 – 2012 allocation and unavailable for other projects.

Recommended change
No change.

Other submitters raised the concern that the RoNS concept was inconsistent with the Proposed RLTS, Western Corridor, and Ngauranga to Wellington Airport Corridor vision statements. As well, induced traffic from the operational RoNS would run counter to RLTS outcome 4.1: ‘Reduced severe congestion’.

Comment: The modelling for the Strategic Options Assessment indicated that a mixed investment scenario in roads and public transport was needed to achieve the best outcomes in 2040. Most of the RoNS projects were included in the mixed investment scenario. Many of the public transport components of the multi-modal Western Corridor Plan are already funded and have begun to be implemented.

The Ngauranga to Wellington Airport Corridor Plan identifies a package of projects programmed for the next 10 years and beyond 10 years. While some of the Wellington RoNS projects may be programmed faster than previously identified, they still form part of the overall package of improvements.

Recommended change
No change.

5.8 Process related comments

Several submitters commented on a perceived disconnect between the Proposed RLTS and the supporting Corridor and Implementation Plans, as well as project and activity implementation through the Regional Land Transport Programme.

Comment: The RLTS provides the high level strategic framework as well as identifies objectives and outcomes for regional decision making. The Corridor Plans respond to all of those objectives and outcomes by identifying a multi-modal package of projects that takes account of land use development and

future funding proposals. Implementation Plans for walking, cycling, travel demand management and road safety provide focused attention on these important aspects of the transport network.

The projects and activities listed in these Plans and the Regional Land Transport Programme come out of collaborative working group processes and are agreed to by all involved parties before the plans and Programme are adopted by the RTC.

Summaries of the Corridor and Implementation Plans are provided in RLTS Chapter 10. To help clarify that these Plans flow from and support the RLTS (but are not a component of the Strategy) Chapter 10 can be transferred to an appendix while not affecting the perceived level of coordination between the RLTS and the Plans.

Recommended change

Create a new appendix for the Corridor and Implementation Plan summaries (currently RLTS Chapter 10).

5.9 School travel

Several submitters suggested a target around public transport and active mode share of students travelling to school. Most of these submitters suggested a target of 90% of the region's school children using public transport or active modes to get to school by 2020.

Comment: The Travel Demand Management Plan 2009 contains a target of 41% of schools having a travel plan or 34% of school children involved in or exposed to school travel plan activities by 2013. A mode share target for school children using active modes was considered during development of the TDM Plan, but journey to school data is not collected by the Census (only journey to work) and a robust alternative data source is not currently available.

The target of 'number of children involved in a school travel plan programme' was considered the best available indicator for this issue. However, it may be something that can be revisited with the next TDM Plan review and when sufficient mode share data is collected and analysed for school travel plans in the region.

Recommended change

Recommended changes to the RLTS are outlined in submission point 30.9 in Appendix 1 to this report.

Recommended changes are also outlined in NZTA submission point 15 in Appendix 2.
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5.10 Other

Submitters also raised a number of issues that are outside the scope of the RLTS. For example, matters that will be addressed by the Corridor and Implementation Plan processes, Regional Land Transport Programme prioritisation, or by the implementing agencies during design and implementation phases of specific projects.

Where submitters raised detailed issues related to specific operational matters, then that submission has been forwarded to the relevant implementing agency for their consideration.

6. Next steps

Following deliberations, officers will report back to the Committee with a final RLTS 2010 – 2040 for approval at the meeting on 14 September 2010.

Step	Who	Timing	Status
Process report to RTC	RTC	5 Aug 2009	Completed
Supplemental Technical Working Group meeting	Officers	22 Jan 2010	Completed
RTC workshop	RTC	10 Feb 2010	Completed
Proposed RLTS for approval	RTC	9 Mar 2010	Completed
Adopt consultation plan	RTC	9 Mar 2010	Completed
Adopt summary document	RTC	9 Mar 2010	Completed
Consultation time	GWRC	22 Mar 2010 / 23 Apr 2010	Completed
Hearing of submissions	RTC	29 Apr 2010	Completed
Summarising of all submissions	GW officers	26 April 2010 / 28 May 2010	Completed
RLTS submissions and recommended changes deliberation (this report)	RTC	20 July 2010	
Final RLTS for approval	RTC	14 Sept 2010	
Adoption by GW	GW	28 Sept 2010	

The final RLTS 2010 – 2040 is due to be adopted by the full Regional Council on 28 September 2010.

7. Communication

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

8. Recommendations

That the Subcommittee:

1. **Receives** the report.
2. **Notes** the content of the report.
3. **Agrees** to recommend the changes set out in section 5 of this report, as a result of consideration of submissions.

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Attachment 1: Summary of submissions, officer responses and recommendations

Attachment 2: Summary of New Zealand Transport Agency submission, officer comments and recommendations