

Report to the Regional Land Transport Committee  
From Tony Brennand, Manager Transport Policy

## **The Relationship of Corridor Plans to the RLTS**

### **1. Purpose**

To examine the relationship of corridor plans to the Regional Land Transport Strategy.

### **2. Background**

A workshop for members of the Committee was held on 13 February 2002 to brief members on their role and the background to the current RLTS. During that meeting a discussion took place concerning the relationship between the RLTS and the corridor plans. Are the corridor plans part of the RLTS or not? A report was requested.

### **3. Comment**

#### **3.1 What does the legislation say?**

The relevant section of legislation that discusses what is an RLTS is section 175(2) of the Land Transport Act. Refer to **attachment 1**.

The first observation is that the legislation provides no prohibitions. It does not prohibit the inclusion of corridor plans or even the specification of projects. No limits are placed on what may or may not be included in an RLTS.

The legislation does provide assistance in answering this question by considering the following questions. Do the corridor plans contribute in:

- (i) identifying the most desirable means of responding to needs?
- (ii) identifying an appropriate role for each land transport mode?
- (iii) stating the best means of achieving the objectives?

It should be noted that (i) and (iii) use the words “most” and “best” respectively which means that an RLTS must put in place sufficient guidance to ensure optimality.

### 3.2 What does the Wellington RLTS say?

On page 35 of the RLTS it is clearly stated (refer **attachment 2**) that within the RLTS there are two levels – policies and projects – which combine to produce corridor plans. That is the corridor plans are intended to be within the strategy.

According to the RLTS the corridor plans, when implemented, together with the policies are designed to achieve the strategy’s objectives. This is a requirement of the Act. The RLTS is saying that neither the policies on their own nor the corridor plans on their own are sufficient to achieve the objectives and certainly not sufficient to ensure the “best means” of achieving the objectives. Both policies and corridor plans are required in the strategy if the requirements of the legislation are to be satisfied. The RLTS links achievement of the objectives to meeting the identified needs. This is another requirement of the Act.

A core theme of the RLTS is network balance. The demand for travel influences the need for network capacity. The provision of capacity is interdependent. Upstream and downstream road capacity needs to be balanced. There needs to be a balance between road capacity and passenger transport provision (refer **attachment 3**).

The need for network balance requires an integrated development of local roads, state highways, and passenger transport to achieve the best means of resolving strategic network issues. This requires territorial authorities, Transit New Zealand, and Regional Council to coordinate their proposals. Independent action by anyone of these agencies will lead to network balance not being achieved and the consequence is that “the best means of achieving the objectives” of the RLTS will not be achieved. This means section 175(2) of the Land Transport Act will not be complied with.

Network balance means that it is not possible for any one agent to independently determine its projects of strategic significance and ensure the best means of achieving the objectives of the RLTS are identified. Optimum selection of projects requires a coordinated approach between implementing agencies.

### 3.3 Do corridor plans make individual agencies roles redundant?

The answer to this question is clearly no. Corridor plans relate to strategically significant transport issues only. In the case of strategically significant transport issues all the relevant agencies participate together in developing the corridor plans.

The corridor plans are strategic and do not design individual projects. Design of projects is the responsibility of the implementing agency. For example, the Western Corridor Plan did not specify the design of Transmission Gully, nor did it prescribe the design of the existing highway improvements, nor did it determine the number of additional trains to be provided in the morning peak running from the Kapiti Coast to Wellington.

The corridor plans provide answers to the questions of *need, benefit, location, scale, and timing* of projects in a coordinated package. The selected package is tested against

the RLTS objectives to ensure it is the best means of achieving the objectives of the RLTS.

The Western Corridor Plan identifies where additional road capacity should be provided or additional train services provided, how much additional capacity and when these improvements should be sequenced.

There are other corridor plans underway. These are being developed by agencies in a coordinated way and relate to the strategic transport network. They are not designing projects but are dealing with questions of *need, benefit, location, scale, and timing*.

### 3.4 **What is driving the strategy?**

The RLTS is driven by the vision, objectives, targets, and performance indicators. The corridor plans are developed by optimising a package of projects and measures against the RLTS objectives using the performance indicators. Corridor plans are a derived outcome of the vision and objectives and cannot drive the strategy.

A major review of the RLTS will require a review of the vision, objectives, targets, and performance indicators. Changes in these would be translated into changes in the corridor plans.

## 4. **Communication**

There are no relevant communication matters.

## 5. **Recommendation**

*That the report be received for information.*

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### **Attachments:**

1. **Extract from Land Transport Act 1998 – section 175(2)**
2. **Extract from RLTS – Policies and Plans (page 35)**
3. **Extracts from RLTS (pages 33, 40, 53)**