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**Committee**            **Regional Land Transport**  
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## **Approval of draft Regional Land Transport Strategy for consultation**

### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to present to the Committee the final draft Regional Land Transport Strategy (RLTS) and to seek the Committee's approval to release the draft strategy for consultation.

### **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**

A review of the current RLTS (1999-2004) has been carried out over the past three years. The review process has been delayed to enable the Western Corridor Plan process to be completed, and to align with development of the Wellington Regional Strategy.

The strategy review process included an initial phase of consultation which sought comment on the draft vision, objectives and outcomes of the strategy, along with three strategic options for achieving these. Feedback from this first consultation process was considered by the Committee at a hearing on 23 November 2005 and at a meeting on the 8 December 2005.

The Committee received drafts of the strategy at workshops on 25 July 2006 and 14 September 2006. Since then, further refinements have been made to the strategy to respond to comments received from committee members and the independent auditor. The strategy has also undergone a final review by an editor.

## 4. Comment

### 4.1 Draft Regional Land Transport Strategy

Section 175(1) of the Land Transport Act (LTA) 1998 requires every regional council to prepare a land transport strategy for its region. Section 175 of the LTA 1998 also sets out a number of things which the strategy must do. The draft RLTS meets the requirements of Section 175 of the Act. The final draft strategy is provided in **attachment 1**. When released for consultation the draft strategy will be spiral bound with a colour cover page. All diagrams and maps in the draft strategy will be in colour to assist the reader.

‘Making connections’, a summary of the draft RLTS is provided in **attachment 2**. The summary document has been prepared in order to meet the requirements of section 83 and 89 of the Local Government Act (LGA) 2002. It provides an interesting and non technical summary of the major elements of the draft strategy and describes where to view and how to obtain a full version of the draft strategy. (Please note that attachment 2 is a draft and all dates will need to be updated to reflect the consultation plan prior to release).

### 4.2 Statutory compliance

In accordance with section 175(2)(p) of LTA 1998, the draft strategy has been independently audited. Mein Consulting Ltd has carried out the audit over the last 18 months. An audit checklist covering the statutory process and content requirements for the RLTS review was developed to ensure compliance with the relevant sections of the LTA 1998, the Land Transport Management Act (LTMA) 2003 and the Local Government Act (LGA) special consultative procedure. The audit checklist includes a number of detailed steps under the following headings:

1. Governance
2. Review timing
3. Preparatory steps
4. National and regional policy framework and objectives
5. Development and evaluation of strategic options
6. Specific content requirements
7. Consultation
8. Adoption.

Documentation against the audit checklist has been undertaken as the RLTS review has been progressed. The auditor has provided interim reports on progress towards meeting statutory requirements. The most recent interim report from the auditor comments on compliance up to Step 7: Consultation, and is included as **attachment 3** to this report. The auditor considered a very recent version of the draft RLTS dated 9 October. The draft RLTS in attachment 1 has been updated to respond to the auditor’s comments.

The report concludes that with the exception of the timing issue (discussed in detail below), the auditor believes the Draft RLTS complies with its statutory requirements, and on that basis supports it being released for formal public and stakeholder comment.

#### 4.2.1 Recommendations from the audit report

The interim audit report makes several comments and recommendations which do not relate to statutory compliance matters, but may assist the reader in interpreting the strategy. The auditor's recommendations and associated officer responses are summarised in the table below.

RLTS auditor recommendation	GWRC officer response
<p>Clarify the status of additional funding sources, and note the implications for the strategy if they are not forthcoming.</p> <p>(refer to step 4.5 of the audit report table)</p>	<p>It is considered that the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph under chapter 12.5 'Matching investments to funding' adequately addresses potential funding uncertainties and the implications for the strategy if that funding is not forthcoming.</p>
<p>Certify that there is no inconsistency between the RLTS and any regional plans prepared under the RMA.</p> <p>(refer to step 4.7 of the audit report table)</p>	<p>As noted by the auditor, a detailed analysis has been undertaken to check consistency between the Regional Policy Statement (RPS) and the RLTS. The analysis (which forms a background report to the strategy) concludes that there are no inconsistencies between the two documents.</p> <p>A number of regional plans (e.g. Regional Freshwater Plan, Regional Coastal Plan, Regional Air Quality Management Plan) have been developed under the strategic framework of the RPS. These plans contain objectives, policies and methods (including regional rules) that are consistent with the RPS. Consequently, the RLTS is not considered to be inconsistent with any relevant regional plan. It should also be noted that the detailed issues covered by the rules in these plans are likely to apply to RLTS projects during the resource consent process.</p> <p>The above paragraph has been added to the strategy text under section 2.2.2 of the strategy in response to the auditor's recommendation.</p>
<p>Provide a summary description of the three strategic options in Chapter 6.</p> <p>(refer to step 5.1 of the audit report table)</p>	<p>A further description of the three strategic scenarios considered as part of the strategic options process has been added to the strategy under section 6.1 as recommended, to assist the reader.</p>
<p>Ensure the Regional Passenger Transport Plan is identified as part of the final RLTS, and highlight strategic linkages between the two documents.</p> <p>(refer to step 6.3 of the audit report table)</p>	<p>The Regional Passenger Transport Plan will be identified as part of the RLTS and strategic linkages between the two documents will be highlighted in the final adopted strategy as recommended.</p>
<p>Incorporate demand management actions and outcomes into Appendix as proposed.</p> <p>(refer to step 6.4 of the audit report table)</p>	<p>Appendix 6 of the strategy sets out analysis of all strategy actions against the strategy objectives. It also sets out analysis of the TDM Strategy actions against outcomes as recommended by the auditor. A full analysis of all strategy actions against all strategy outcomes will form a background document to the RLTS.</p>

#### 4.2.2 Outstanding non-compliance

The interim audit report identifies one point of non-compliance with the requirements of the LTA 1998. This relates to step 2.2 of the audit checklist and section 108(2)(a) of the LTMA 2003 which requires the current Wellington RLTS to be renewed by November 2005.

It was not considered possible to meet the statutory deadline given the time required to meet statutory consultation processes and the need to coordinate with the outcomes of three significant parallel processes. These processes were the Wellington Transport Project<sup>1</sup>, the Wellington Regional Strategy, and the Western Corridor Plan. A letter was sent from Greater Wellington to the Secretary for Transport dated 26 July 2005 outlining the reasons for the delay and the expectation that the statutory deadline would not be achieved. In a letter dated 18 August 2005 the Secretary for Transport commented “*we strongly encourage the Council to complete the RLTS review as soon as possible. We appreciate that the Council will need to balance the risk of breaching the deadline with the risk of invalidating the strategy through deficient process, including those required to meet the LTMA’s consultation requirements*”.

Given that there is no remedial action possible to change this area of non compliance, it is recommended that processes continue to allow adoption of the strategy as soon as possible, and ensuring all other statutory requirements are met.

#### 4.3 Regional Passenger Transport Plan

Section 175(2)(k) of the LTA 1998 requires the strategy to include any Regional Passenger Transport Plan that has been prepared by the Council. A draft Wellington Regional Passenger Transport Plan (PT Plan) been developed by Greater Wellington’s Passenger Transport Committee (PT Committee). The draft PT Plan is currently undergoing further development and refinement. It is anticipated that the final draft PT Plan will be ready for release for public consultation alongside the draft RLTS in November. The summary of the draft RLTS includes a section on the PT Plan. The full strategy includes a ‘place marker’ to identify where the PT Plan is expected to sit once adopted.

#### 4.4 Consultation process

Section 179 of the LTA 1998 sets out the consultation requirements for preparation of regional land transport strategies. A separate report (report number 06.598) outlines the details of the proposed consultation and communication plan for the draft RLTS, for the Committee’s approval.

Set out below is the anticipated RLTS review timetable following approval to release of the draft strategy for consultation by the Committee on the 31 October 2006:

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<sup>1</sup> A study by central and local government to identify a package of improvements to address the Wellington region’s transport needs. The project lead to an additional \$880 million Crown funding for the greater Wellington region over the next ten years.

Consultation commences	mid November 2006
Consultation closes	16 February 2007
Submission analysis	February/March 2007
Hearing of submissions	March 2007
RLTC finalises RLTS and recommends adoption to GWRC	April 2007
GWRC adopts RLTS	May 2007

It is proposed to establish a hearings subcommittee to hear oral submissions on the draft strategy. A report to this effect will be included in the agenda for the RLTC meeting scheduled for 12 December 2006.

Consultation on the draft RLTS will be coordinated with consultation on the draft PT Plan. However, separate submission forms have been developed to ensure submissions on each document are distinct from each other. Submissions on the PT Plan will be considered separately by Greater Wellington's PT Committee. The chair of the RLTC together with the chair of the PT Committee will agree a method of ensuring considerations relevant to both process are integrated.

## 5. Communication

A press statement will be prepared on the release of the draft RLTS. Key messages on the importance of the strategy and opportunities for public engagement in the consultation process will be highlighted.

## 6. Recommendations

*That the Committee:*

1. ***Receives*** the report.
2. ***Notes*** the content of the report.
3. ***Notes*** that the draft RLTS has been audited and that, with the exception of section 108(2)(a) of the LTMA 2003 (renewal timing), the relevant statutory requirements have been met; and,
4. ***Approves*** the draft RLTS, as shown in ***attachment 1***, for public consultation.
5. ***Approves*** the summary of the draft RLTS, as shown in ***attachment 2***, for public consultation.
6. ***Delegates*** to the chair of the RLTC the ability to approve any minor amendments that may need to be made to the draft RLTS and summary document prior to publication.

Report prepared by:

Report approved by:

Report approved by:

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**Attachment 1: Final draft Regional Land Transport Strategy (attached separately)**

**Attachment 2: Draft RLTS Summary Document**

**Attachment 3: Wellington Regional Land Transport Strategy: Audit comments on Draft Strategy**