

Report **07.150**
Date 14 March 2007
File T/21/03/01

Committee Passenger Transport
Author Angus Gabara Rail Strategy Project Leader

Proposed implementation plan for Western Corridor rail projects

1. Purpose

To seek approval for the proposed implementation plan for Western Corridor rail projects

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 Western Corridor generally follows the line of State Highway 1 and the North Island Main Trunk Railway line from Otaki to Ngauranga. It includes connections to adjacent corridors. The corridor has strong population growth (33% projected from 2001 to 2026)¹ and similarly increasing transport demand. Unfortunately the corridor is also known for its serious reliability, resilience and capacity problems, for both rail and strategic roads, and associated road safety issues.

There is a clear message from the community that the time for extensive planning and consultation is over and it is time for implementation.

The passenger transport policies for the Western Corridor from the November 2006 draft Regional Land Transport Strategy 2007 – 2016 (draft Strategy) are:

- a. Maintain rail as the key passenger transport commuting service
- b. Increase rail capacity in line with demand
- c. Enhance accessibility to rail services

¹ Statistics New Zealand, Subnational Population Projections, 2001 (base) – 2026, June 2006

- d. Extend rail services to the north in line with demand
- e. Improve efficiency of the existing service
- f. Improve reliability of the existing service
- g. Complement rail services with local bus networks
- h. Provide priority to buses in congested areas
- i. Integrate rail and bus services.

The draft Strategy refers to the following Western Corridor rail projects for 2007 - 2016:

- Establish Lindale Rail Station including park and ride facilities
- Establish Raumati Rail Station including park and ride facilities
- Establish double track MacKays to Lindale
- Purchase additional rail units

The key outcomes being sought are:

- A safer, more reliable road and rail corridor
- User expectation for a consistent regional corridor are met
- Reduced congestion in parts of the corridor
- Balanced investment in road and passenger transport, along with Travel Demand Management.

4. Implementation plan

4.1 Lindale and Raumati stations

The current draft Strategy and Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) has the establishment of a new railway stations and park and ride facilities at Raumati and Lindale at \$5 and \$10 million respectively. The station upgrades and maintenance (including parking) budget allocates funding to major stations over the coming years in line with the arrival of the new EMUs.

To deliver the best possible Kapiti rail network, in the shortest timeframe, it is proposed that GW commission station concept designs by June 2007 for:

- new stations at Raumati and Lindale, and
- upgrades at Paraparaumu and Waikanae.

The concept designs will address the following matters:

- Station location, size and layout
- Concept design of the rail station furniture, fittings and platform surfacing
- Landscaping and fencing at stations
- Lighting, power supply, water supply, CCTV, directional signage and associated station works inside and outside the rail corridor
- Station access, by car, bus, walking and cycling, with particular attention to permanent and temporary pedestrian access and any required footbridges or tunnels
- Preliminary construction methodology and implementation programme
- Environmental effects and resource planning implications including preparation of required statutory planning consent applications and related documentation such as the Assessment of Environmental Effects
- Land purchase requirements
- Local roads - description of the effects of the proposed concept design on the local road network
- All known strategic, technical, operational and financial objectives for Rail Passenger operations in Wellington
- Project risks
- Maintenance of works - taking account of the need to avoid or minimise maintenance with a view to optimising lifecycle costs. Furthermore, the concept design shall ensure that hazards are eliminated, or mitigated, during inspection or maintenance activities.

The Station Concept designs will need to integrate with ONTRACKs Civil, Planning and Rail Works Design which will likely cover the following:

- Geotechnical investigation
- Earthworks
- Earth retaining structures
- Station access
- Stormwater drainage
- Ducting for services along the rail corridor and between station platforms
- Identification of any statutory consent applications that may be required
- Trackwork (alignment arrangement of the new and existing tracks and track structures to achieve operational requirements)

- Signalling (integration of the trackwork and signalling designs).

The concept designs will refine the projects and enable the projects to move to detailed design. They will also enable timeframes to be projected with a greater degree of certainty.

It is proposed to include upgrades of Paraparaumu and Waikanae Stations to ensure that the station developments consider the network as a whole and balance:

- community accessibility and targeted population densities, with
- operational rail service efficiencies and network optimisation.

Understanding the functionality, location, risks, timing and cost of a range of complementary stations in the Kapiti area will maximise the efficiency and accessibility of the rail network.

4.2 Double tracking

The current draft Strategy and LTCCP provides for double tracking (and electrification) from MacKays to Lindale at \$62 million.

In their presentation on the draft Regional Land Transport Strategy, ONTRACK has recommended double tracking and electrification to Waikanae in order to achieve the 15 minute frequency and allow the scope to move to a 10 minute frequency in the future. Their cost estimates for this work is \$70 million. GW officers agree with ONTRACK that this would provide significant additional benefits for a relatively small funding gap. Thus officers recommend that the extension of double tracking and electrification to Waikanae be set as the objective of this project.

The double tracking work will eliminate 12.6 km of single track, thereby enabling and maximising the improved reliability, speed and increased service frequency that the new EMUs will offer.

The double tracking works will begin to deliver the crucial backbone of a high quality, high frequency rail system. The works will future proof the northern extent of the Western Line and provide for identified Kapiti Coast growth

The majority of the alignment is well understood, with some concept design work completed. The construction planning and detailed design can start immediately and will also include the provision for rolling stock stabling near or at the terminus of electrification.

Due to the entire works being inside the rail corridor limited consents are required and works do not rely on any adjacent building or linking road projects.

The double tracking and electrification from MacKays north delivers the earliest possible visible and physical progress on Western Corridor works.

Programmed service disruptions would be minimised with night and weekend working and the maintaining of single line running whenever possible.

ONTRACK has estimated, assuming contractor availability, construction to take between 24 to 30 months. Amendments to budgeted cashflow are required to enable these works to be complete in time for the introduction of the new EMU fleet.

The Proposed Annual Plan 2007/08 and recommended amended cashflow is shown below:

\$ million	07 / 08	08 / 09	09 / 10	10 / 11	11 / 12	12 / 13
Proposed Annual Plan	0.5	0.5	1.5	17.0	20.0	22.0
Recommended amendment	17.0	34.0	17.0			

The impact of the proposed changes on rating levels cannot be determined until a final decision is made by Land Transport NZ on the financial assistance rate for Western Corridor projects. However, as the majority of funding will come from Land Transport NZ and GW is likely to borrow its share, the impact is likely to be small. It is proposed that the necessary changes be made when the GW finalises the Annual Plan 2007/08 in June 2007.

4.3 Additional rail units

The current draft Strategy and LTCCP provides \$40 million for an additional 12 Electric Multiple Units (EMUs).

Land Transport NZ has approved the funding for these additional units. The 12 new units will be delivered in 2010 as part of the initial order for new EMUs (the order is now 70 units in total).

5. Network upgrades

A number of network wide upgrades are necessary to ensure the new EMUs will function correctly when they come into service. We anticipate that there will be additional infrastructure enhancements on the Western Corridor as part of this work.

6. Funding

While the draft Strategy and LTCCP have provided funding for the Western Corridor rail projects, Land Transport NZ approval will be required for the station concept designs and double tracking.

7. Key parties

Critical to the successful implementation of the Western Corridor rail projects will be the on-going support and co-operation of a number of key parties. ONTRACK, Toll NZ and Kapiti Coast District Council (KCDC) will all have significant roles in the implementation of the projects.

8. Conclusion

Implementation of Western Corridor rail projects has already commenced with the additional twelve EMUs being added to the order that is currently out to tender.

Concept plans for new stations and station upgrades are proposed to advance these projects in the shortest possible timeframe.

It is considered imperative that GW make a commitment to proceed immediately with the double tracking so that the physical works can be completed in time for the arrival of the new EMUs. This will require some adjustments to current budgets.

9. Communication

Due to the likely public interest and various regional stakeholders it is proposed that presentations are made to KCDC, ONTRACK and Toll NZ. A news release will be prepared.

10. Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. **Receives** the report.
2. **Notes** the content of the report.
3. **Approves** the proposed implementation plan for Western Corridor rail projects, noting that this includes proceeding with double tracking and electrification from MacKays to Waikanae, and the commissioning of concept designs for new stations at Raumati and Lindale and upgrades to Paraparaumu and Waikanae stations.
4. **Directs** officers to make the necessary funding applications to Land Transport New Zealand.
5. **Notes** that it will be necessary to adjust budgets in the Annual Plan when it is finalised to include funding for the double tracking, but that the rates impact will be small.

Report prepared by:

Report approved by:

Report approved by:

Angus Gabara
Rail Strategy Project Leader

Rhona Hewitt
Manager, Transport
Procurement

Wayne Hastie
Divisional Manager, Public
Transport