

Report 09. 371
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File TP/01/14/03

Committee Council
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Approval of the Wellington Regional Land Transport Programme 2009 - 2012

1. Purpose

To recommend the Wellington Regional Land Transport Programme (RLTP) 2009 – 2012 for approval (**Attachment 1**).

2. Consideration by Committee

The Regional Transport Committee considered the recommended RLTP at its meeting on 23 June (**Report 09.342**) and resolved to refer it to Greater Wellington for approval.

3. 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.

4. Background

The amended Land Transport Management Act 2003¹ (the Act) requires each Regional Council to approve a RLTP every 3 years. Under the Act the Regional Transport Committee prepares and consults on the RLTP for referral to the Regional Council for approval. There are some procedural controls on the approval process and these are outlined in Section 8 below.

This is the first RLTP. Once approved it is required to be submitted to the NZ Transport Agency. The Agency will take all RLTPs from around the country into account when preparing a National Land Transport Programme (NLTP). The NLTP is due to be published by 31 August 2009. While the NZ 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

¹ As amended by the Land Transport Management Act 2008.

Programme, nor is it bound to follow the regional programme when considering detailed funding applications.

The RLTP 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, plus a 10-year financial forecast. The activities in the programme relate to passenger transport, walking and cycling, travel demand management, local roads, state highways, and the movement of freight.

The proposed activities in the RLTP are submitted by the NZ Transport Agency and 'Approved Organisations' (including the eight territorial authorities and Greater Wellington). Greater Wellington's activities primarily relate to passenger transport, transport planning and implementing the regional travel demand management plan. These activities have been included in Council's Annual Plan and LTCCP.

5. The Programme

Section 16 of the Act sets out the form and content of Regional Land Transport Programmes.

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. Activities for which funding has already been committed (by the Agency) are also automatically included.

Section 16(1)(b) gives the Regional Transport Committee discretion over other activities. In relation to these activities, discretion is limited to:

- a. whether to include a project/activity in the 3-year programme
- b. the priority given to the projects and activities.

Development of the RLTP forms one step in the funding and approval process. Many activities require local funding that is approved separately through each council's Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) and Annual Plan processes.

Projects must be included in the NLTP (via the RLTP) to be considered for funding, but inclusion does not guarantee funding. A projects 'assessment profile' as determined by the 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 may also still need to be completed.

6. Consultation

Consultation on the proposed Wellington RLTP was carried out by the RTC in accordance with the consultation principles set out in section 82 of the Local Government Act 2002 and using the special consultative procedure under sections 83, 87(2)(a), and 89 of the Local Government Act 2002. This is a requirement under Section 18A of the Land Transport Management Act 2003.

Submissions were invited on a proposed programme during March/April 2009. The proposed RLTP was mailed out to around 200 key stakeholders and a summary of the RLTP was sent out to every household in the region (approximately 191,000).

As part of the consultation process Research New Zealand was commissioned to carry out a survey of residents in the region to seek a representative opinion from the community on the proposed RLTP.

A Hearings Subcommittee was established to hear and consider submissions to the proposed RLTP, to consider feedback from the survey and to make recommendations on any changes to the final programme.

579 submissions were received. A number of submissions also came through to this process via Greater Wellington's Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) process which was being consulted on concurrently. A full analysis of the submissions can be found in **Report 09.288** to the RLTP Hearings Subcommittee which is available on Greater Wellington's website.

The Subcommittee reported its findings and recommendations to the Regional Transport Committee at its meeting on 23 June.

7. Government Funding Announcements

Several announcements of relevance to the RLTP were made by the Government during the preparation of the programme.

- The potential for regions to develop a Regional Fuel Tax scheme was scrapped by the government in mid March.
- A new Government Policy Statement (GPS) on Land Transport Funding 2009/10 – 2018/19 was issued on 19 May. The new GPS 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.
- The Minister of Transport identified seven 'Roads of National Significance' for New Zealand in mid March. State Highway 1 between Wellington Airport and Otaki is one of these. The identification of this Road of National Significance in Wellington adds a further guiding factor in determining the priority of improvements in the Wellington region.

- Signalled in the GPS is the intention to fund capital investment in Wellington rail infrastructure directly through Crown funds rather than the National Land Transport Fund.

The changes arising from the above announcements have been taken into account in the RLTP recommended for approval.

8. Process for approval of the RLTP

Under Section 18B of the Act, the Regional Council is responsible for approving the final RLTP and forwarding it to the NZ Transport Agency.

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 the matters raised by the Council, 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 and forward it to the Agency OR forward the programme to the Agency stating that it is not approved along with a statement of reasons.

The RLTP must be approved and the relevant information submitted into the NZ Transport Agency's online database by 30 June 2009. The published RLTP document must be provided to the Agency by 15 July.

The Agency will take account of the final RLTP when preparing a National Land Transport Programme (NLTP) for the three financial years 2009/10 – 2011/12. The NLTP is due to be published by 31 August 2009.

9. Communication

A media statement will be developed in relation to the approved RLTP.

Copies of the RLTP will be sent out to all partner agencies and relevant organisations.

The RLTP will be published on Greater Wellington's website.

10. Recommendations

That the Council:

1. ***Receives the report.***
2. ***Notes the content of the report.***
3. ***Approves the final Regional Land Transport Programme 2009 - 2012, as set out in Attachment 1; and,***

4. *Agrees to forward the final Regional Land Transport Programme 2009 – 2012 to the New Zealand Transport Agency.*
4. *Delegates to the Chair of the Greater Wellington authority to approve any minor editorial amendments to the RLTP prior to it being published.*

Report approved by:

Fran Wilde
Chair, Regional Transport Committee

Attachment 1: Recommended Wellington Regional Land Transport Programme 2009 - 2012