



Transport Futures

AN OCCASIONAL NEWSLETTER FROM GREATER WELLINGTON TRANSPORT

This report of recent RLTC proceedings is not an official minute but a basis for reporting back to agencies and others interested. It is a perspective prepared by the Chairman, distributed widely shortly after the meeting cycle.

RLTC (Regional Land Transport Committee) - the people doing the work.

TWG (Technical Working Group) - the professional officers of stakeholder organisations jointly preparing the work.

RLTS (Regional Land Transport Strategy) - the statutory document, its preparation, implementation, and monitoring.

Wellington region's 2004-2007 RLTC established

The 2004-2007 Wellington RLTC has been established under the new provisions of the Land Transport Management Act. A list of members and alternates and the agencies or objectives they represent appears elsewhere.

Two briefing meetings were held in December, the first concentrating on statutory context and planning around the RLTS review (includes corridor studies); the second on implementation, especially prioritisation processes.

RLTS policies adopted and RLTS process connected

The new RLTC advanced the RLTS review, picking up previous work at the point of policies to be adopted. After some clarifying amendments this RLTC adopted a statement of vision, principles, and policies. That statement now goes to form the basis of a draft Strategy to be released later for stakeholder and public consultation. Policy doors have been created to enable direct input from other processes, eg Wellington Regional Strategy.

The next step is to establish strategic options to guide TWG assessment. Two aspects need to be defined – modal mix and level of growth. Arrangements have been made for the technical work of the Wellington Regional Strategy and the Wellington Transport Package to inform these matters this time. This is a welcome advance as there was no external process to connect to in any of the 3 previous RLTSs. Still, new members echoed previous calls for a prompt conclusion.

Western Corridor update

Leaders of the project team briefed RLTC on progress and forecast timelines for the Western Corridor study and review. Feedback expressed a determination to identify a preferred package more promptly, and to ensure good consultation in the process.

RLTC requested the Political Sounding Group be widened to include all metropolitan Mayors. Transit has agreed and this will be implemented from Jan 2005.

The June RLTC meeting has been identified as the point when RLTC receives reports enabling it to forward a preferred Western Corridor package to public consultation.

Agencies and objective representatives will need to discuss the proposals before that.



Rail and PT update

GWRC tabled and spoke to a report on recent and projected progress on rail matters.

As the outcome is likely to require a significant variation to GWRC's received 10-year financial plan, a full public consultation round on this subject alone is proposed to commence in late January.



GWRC indicated that a review of the Passenger Transport Plan (and policies) will be commenced shortly, to connect to the RLTS review. A review of the future of the Johnsonville and Melling lines (eg as rail or bus corridors) will also be undertaken over the next 3 years.

RLTC endorsed that progress reports on public transport matters be included in future agency reports to RLTC meetings, along with the standard reports on state highways, local roads, safety and sustainability. Previously, public transport reports to RLTC have been occasional or special.

Regional funding

The second briefing focussed on understanding and developing principles around the projected regional funding. Transfund, now Land Transport NZ, presented background and a paper was tabled and referred to members to consult on prior to formal discussion at the March RLTC meeting.

Two themes emerged: Regional funding is but one of a number of funding streams and while it has some special attributes, it needs to be considered in the wider context (of normal national funding, normal local funding, special Crown funding, and in the longer term even special supplementary funding eg tolls etc). This is an iterative process and there are some relevant unknowns (eg special Crown funding Western Corridor costs) so it is better to keep things flexible at this point.

2005 prioritisation round

The round is under way, to date hampered by the late appearance of Transit proposals. Last year's programme and list were tabled and brief updates given. Ranking methodology to be used by the TWG to prepare prioritisation was discussed.

The intention to integrate state highway, local road and public transport programmes into the one list signalled. The ongoing problem of advancing the preparation of major RLTS projects and packages but not in the received list was also discussed.

Advancing preparation

RLTC discussion identified two additional topics for the 2005 agenda – how to advance preparation of major projects (especially where two or more agencies are involved in a package); and how to advance advocacy, especially around additional funding for transport investment.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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