

Report 14.88
Date 4 March 2014
File TD/02/10/06

Committee Regional Transport Committee
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Review of the Regional Public Transport Plan

1. Purpose

The report outlines key elements of the draft Regional Public Transport Plan (RPTP).

2. Background

The Council is required to have a RPTP by the Land Transport Management Act 2003 (LTMA). The existing RPTP was adopted in 2011, but the legislation was subsequently amended and a revised RPTP must now be adopted before the Council can procure any public transport services.

The RPTP must provide a statement of the public transport services that are integral to the public transport network, and the policies, procedures, information, and infrastructure that support those services.

The RPTP is primarily a policy document that sets out the approach to achieving the objectives for public transport set out in the Regional Land Transport Strategy (to be replaced by the Regional Land Transport Plan), the Government Policy Statement on Land Transport, and the Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) Long Term Plan. High level objectives, targets and performance measures for public transport are set in these documents rather than in the RPTP.

The statutory requirements for preparing the RPTP are set out in Part 5 of the LTMA (set out in **Attachment 1**). The statutory purpose of the RPTP is to provide:

- A means for encouraging regional councils and public transport operators to work together in developing public transport services and infrastructure
- An instrument for engaging with the public in the region on the design and operation of the public transport network

- A statement of the public transport services that are integral to the public transport network; the policies and procedures that apply to those services; and the information and infrastructure that support those services.

The draft RPTP is being developed based on the following principles from the LTMA:

- GWRC and public transport operators should work in partnership to deliver the public transport services and infrastructure necessary to meet the needs of passengers
- The provision of services should be coordinated with the aim of achieving the levels of integration, reliability, frequency, and coverage necessary to encourage passenger growth
- Competitors should have access to regional public transport markets to increase confidence that services are priced efficiently
- Incentives should exist to reduce reliance on public subsidies to cover the cost of providing services
- The planning and procurement of services should be transparent.

3. Comment

GWRC's Long-Term Plan 2012-22 defines the community outcomes that GWRC aims to achieve in the long-term to improve the Wellington Region's wellbeing. Public transport contributes towards achieving the following outcomes for the Wellington Region:

- A connected community - by providing a mass transit system that moves people efficiently and relieves congestion from our roads at peak times, and by providing an essential service for people for whom, whether by choice or circumstance, private vehicle travel is not an option
- A strong economy - by enhancing the efficient movement of people and goods within the region
- A healthy environment - by reducing vehicle emissions from private vehicles.

The provision of public transport in Wellington also contributes to the Government objective of providing an effective, efficient, safe, secure, accessible and resilient transport system that supports the growth of our country's economy, in order to deliver greater prosperity, security and opportunities for all New Zealanders. The public transport network will have the following impacts on the overall transport system in the short to medium term:

- Decrease severe congestion (particularly in the morning and afternoon peak periods)
- Decrease journey times and improve journey time reliability

- Contribute to reducing CO2 emissions from transport
- Provide transport choices, including during off peak periods
- Decrease death and serious injury resulting from car crashes.

The majority of these impacts result from the 36 million trips annually on public transport that would otherwise require private vehicle trips, and therefore maintaining and growing patronage and mode share is a fundamental objective for Wellington's public transport system, which requires services that are attractive to the public. GWRC aims to achieve patronage growth by providing a public transport network that:

- Goes where people want to go, at the times they want to travel
- Provides competitive journey times
- Provides value for money
- Is easy to understand and use
- Is safe, comfortable, and reliable
- Provides flexibility, allowing people to change their plans.

The major initiatives in the draft RPTP that aim to achieve this are:

- New performance-based operating contracts for all services
- Implementing the Wellington City Bus Review
- Completing the modernisation of the rail fleet (the Matangi 2 project)
- Completing the Rail Scenario 1 from the Regional Rail Plan to enable new service patterns.
- Introducing integrated fares and ticketing, including implementing the outcomes of the fare structure review
- Implementing the Wellington Public Transport Spine (once agreed by the Regional Transport Committee).

Further details on the regional rail plan, fare structure review, and the introduction of integrated fares and ticketing are set out in **Attachment 2**.

The RPTP will also set out the policies and actions aimed at providing an attractive and efficient public transport network under the following headings:

- Network approach: An integrated approach to the public transport network – including the planning and provision of services, infrastructure, and information
- Services and infrastructure: High quality, reliable, safe, and customer focused public transport services using modern vehicles and infrastructure
- Fares and Ticketing: A fares and ticketing system that attracts and retains customers
- Customer Connection: An effective connection with customers
- Providing for the transport disadvantaged: information, facilities, and services that are increasingly available to all members of the public
- Monitoring and review: A system of monitoring and review that supports continuous improvement
- Procurement approach: A procurement approach that supports the efficient delivery of services and provides value for money

- Funding: Sustainable funding arrangements that balance user contributions (fares) against public funding.

The policies and actions set out in **Appendix 2** are largely based on the policies in the existing RPTP, although wording has been amended and actions have been updated to reflect current plans. However, in some areas changes have been made:

- Increased priority has been placed on ongoing timetable reviews reflecting the availability of real time information, and the fact that the major service reviews have been completed and will be reflected in Units (ie reviews are more likely to focus on improving timetables than on changing routes) (policy 2.a)
- The fares and ticketing policies have been amended to reflect the 2013 fare structure review (policy 3)
- Increased priority has been placed on managing customer feedback to assist in improvement of the network (policy 4.a)
- A stronger brand across the public transport network has been proposed with the aim of providing a more consistent experience for customers, (policy 4.b)
- The marketing approach reflects a move away from general marketing to a more targeted approach (policy 4.d)
- The procurement approach and performance monitoring policies have been amended to reflect the objectives of the Public Transport Operating Model (PTOM) and the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) procurement rules (policies 6 and 7).

4. Communication

The matters addressed in this report will be communicated to the public through the consultation on the draft RPTP. The major consultation issues are expected to be:

- The existing and future public transport network – including the implementation of the Wellington City Bus review
- The fare structure review, based on Council decisions in June 2013
- The objectives and projects outlined in the Regional Rail Plan
- The implementation of the Public Transport Spine, subject to decisions from the Regional Transport Committee.

Public consultation will occur with a submission period from 4 April to 9 May, followed by hearings in late May, with the expectation that the final RPTP will be adopted in June 2014.

5. The decision-making process and significance

No decision is being sought in this report.

This report provides an opportunity for the Regional Transport Committee to provide feedback on key elements of the draft RPTP to inform Greater Wellington Regional Council's decision making. During the preparation of the draft RPTP, input has been sought from public transport operators (incumbent and potential), the Regional Land Transport Plan Technical Advisory Group, and officials from councils, the NZTA and the Ministry of Education.

6. Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the content of the report.*
3. *Agrees to provide feedback on the key elements of the draft Regional Public Transport Plan.*

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Attachment 1: Legislative requirements – summary

Attachment 2: Key elements of the draft Regional Public Transport Plan