

4. SUBMISSION ON TRANSIT NZ LAND TRANSPORT PROGRAMME

General Manager responsible:	General Manager Strategy and Planning, DDI 941-8177
Officer responsible:	Programme Manager Liveable City
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PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to present, seek comment on and recommend adoption of a Council submission to the Transit NZ draft 2008/09 Land Transport Programme and 10 Year Financial Plan (LTP) on which Transit NZ are currently consulting, and to approve attendance at a subsequent hearing of submissions. This consultation is an annual requirement under the Land Transport Management Act 2003 as part of Transit's land transport programme formulation. The due date of the submissions is 7 March 2008, although approval has been received from Transit to provide a ratified submission following on from this meeting.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. Under legislation, each year Transit New Zealand is required to consult on its forward work programme. This year's consultation document outlines Transit's proposed Land Transport Programme for the 2008/09 financial year, provides information on the remaining three years of the Government's committed five year programme of works (established two years ago), and a ten-year financial plan (outlining overall expenditure in the generic work categories on which its budget is based). The overall expenditure proposed for the 2008/09 year is \$1.34B, which may be compared to the \$1.28B for the current 07-08 year (a 4.6% increase), with about 3% increase over the entire 10 year forecast.

Subject to the proposed changes in the Land Transport Management Amendment Bill currently before Parliament, this may be the last time that there will be a State Highway Land Transport Programme which is consulted upon annually and on a national level. The Bill proposes to merge Transit NZ and Land Transport NZ into one agency, and that State Highway programmes will be compiled as part of new three-yearly regional land transport programmes, developed on a regional basis.

3. Transit's approach in its consultation document has been to seek feedback on the coming year's activities, and to provide an update on the remainder of the committed five year programme. Specifically, Transit is seeking feedback on:
 - the small-to-medium projects programme;
 - the priority order of new projects;
 - the proposed maintenance activity level; and
 - any projects not currently identified which stakeholders consider should be included.
4. A copy of the draft Canterbury State Highway Land Transport Programme is attached (Attachment A), and the full Transit draft 2008/09 Land Transport Programme may be found on the internet at <http://www.transit.govt.nz/planning/forecast/forecast-08-09-draft.jsp>.
5. The level of detail provided in the consultation document is similar to last year and provides little specificity in many areas, making any detailed analysis of the proposed programme difficult. Thus, it is difficult to provide in-depth and specific submissions. Nevertheless, the Council still has an important opportunity through this mechanism to seek to influence and contribute to the finalisation of this year's Transit Land Transport Programme and Financial Forecast. It is important therefore to compile the Council's views into a submission to respond to Transit's draft proposals.
6. The key matters identified by staff as important on which to express views are:
 - That the draft programme is aligned to the Urban Development Strategy and the Canterbury Transport Regional Implementation Plan (the implementation plan for the Regional Land Transport Strategy).
 - That the removal of the 10 year programme for the Large Projects provided in previous LTP's is disappointing and effectively only provides three years of listed projects to provide any indication of regional expenditure on improvements and programming.

- That cycling and walking improvement projects again are allocated a very small part of the overall expenditure, at around 0.37%, and are allocated in a priority 6 (the lowest) grouping of projects in terms of priority call on funding. They should be raised to priority 4 to be alongside Minor Safety Works (and above the Large Projects – priority 5), to provide sufficient focus to better meet the objectives of the LTMA.
 - That the proposal to construct the TDM project (bus priority corridor measures) in 2008/09 is strongly endorsed.
 - That the significant progress being made in the planning of the Southern Motorway should be acknowledged and strong support be given for the continued development and implementation of this project in line with the Government five-year commitment.
 - That the planning and design proposals for the Russley-Johns route and the north Christchurch package (Western Belfast Bypass, Northern Arterial and QEII four laning) are welcomed, with encouragement to implement as quickly as possible.
8. A copy of the proposed City Council submission is attached for discussion (Attachment B), amendment if necessary, and adoption.
9. In the consultation material, Transit has asked whether the Council wishes to take an opportunity to present its submission to a hearing panel. Officers believe that this is a key mechanism to promote and optimise the chances of success to address our issues. Therefore officers intend to accept the opportunity, and are recommending that the presentation be delegated to the General Manager Strategy and Planning, the Programme Manager – Liveable City and any Councillors nominated by this meeting. Information to date regarding these hearings is that they will be regionally-held and will occur in April in Christchurch. Following release of the confirmed forecast around the turn of the new financial year, all submitters will be informed of the decisions, along with reasons, made by the Transit Board.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

10. There are no financial implications to the Council directly related to this submission.

Do the Recommendations of this Report Align with 2006-16 LTCCP budgets?

11. Yes.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

12. The Council has no legal obligation to provide a submission on the Transit draft Land Transport Programme and Financial Plan, nor are any legal commitments made through the submission.

Have you considered the legal implications of the issue under consideration?

13. Yes

ALIGNMENT WITH LTCCP AND ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT PLANS

14. Making the submission aligns to working with partner agencies to meet community outcomes related to transport.

Do the recommendations of this report support a level of service or project in the 2006-16 LTCCP?

15. The recommendation to adopt and promote the submission may influence Transit to improve its activities to support levels of service related to the transport system operation.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIES

16. The views expressed in the submission are aligned with the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy, the Council's transport strategies and Council budgets.

Do the recommendations align with the Council's strategies?

17. Yes

CONSULTATION FULFILMENT

18. None required.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council:

- (a) Adopt the attached submission, subject to any agreed amendments, for forwarding to Transit New Zealand as its views on the Transit NZ draft 2008/09-2017/18 10-Year State Highway Forecast.
- (b) Approve the General Manager Strategy and Planning and the Programme Manager – Liveable City, along with Councillors nominated at this meeting, to represent the Council's submission to the regional hearings.