

| | |
|---|---|
| Officer responsible Environmental Policy and Planning Manager | Author Stuart Woods, Senior Transport Planner |
| Corporate Plan Output: Transport Policy Advice | |

The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on progress of the Northern Rooding Options Scoping Study since the last report on this matter in October, including the outcomes of the recent stakeholder consultation, progress on the computer modelling and deficiency analyses, and the next stages.

The study has been structured around 6 stages - stages 0-5, as outlined below.

- Stage 0 Traffic model development
- Stage 1 Issues and problem identification
- Stage 2 Strategy identification
- Stage 3 Assessment
- Stage 4 Evaluation and consultation on strategies
- Stage 5 Final reporting and further study brief writing

At the study management team meeting on 15 November, the consultant reported that stage 0 was completed, and that stage one was nearing completion.

Stage one involved initial consultation with stakeholders and the wider public, along with a deficiency analysis using the traffic computer model. Meetings have been held with three of the stakeholder authorities at the time of writing this report (City Council, Regional Council, and Transit New Zealand). A meeting with the Waimakariri and Hurunui District Councils is under arrangement at the time of writing. It will be recalled that this study is a joint study in partnership between the City Council (45% funding contribution), Transit New Zealand (45%), the Regional Council (5%), Waimakariri District Council (5%) and Hurunui District Council (0%).

In summary these meetings raised the following matters:

- The need for sensitivity analysis on land use assumptions, such as the level and location of growth in certain northern locales including Pegasus Bay, Styx Mill and Belfast.
- The focus and balance of the study between cars and other modes, and the need for public transport improvements as well as roading improvements.
- The environmental impacts (related to catering for more cars).
- The need to cater for growth in freight.
- A preference for a dispersed roading improvement strategy that could be implemented in stages.
- The number of property accesses along Marshland Road being a problem for major upgrading of the road.
- The effects of land owned, both currently and previously, by roading authorities needs recognising in the formulation of strategies.
- There are three projects previously given initial consideration by Transit New Zealand that need further consideration in the formulation of strategies – Chaneys Corner realignment, Styx Mill four laning and Cranford Street/Innes Road intersection widening.

The collation and analysis of the public consultation media release have been substantially completed and the consultant is currently preparing a report for the management team. Some 400 submissions were received, with some 500 plus points of submission. The submissions ranged from requesting no significant roading improvements and focusing on public transport/alternatives to roading options, through to requests for the reinstatement of the uplifted Northern Arterial designation, and many other suggestions in between.

At the City Council stakeholder meeting, the Subcommittee agreed that the study should be renamed “Northern Transport Study”. This item was taken to the management team meeting on 15 November. In discussion at the management team, it was thought inappropriate to rename the study as requested, as this could create unrealistic expectations of the breadth of the outcomes of this study, which is specifically focused on roading improvements. Such matters would be covered in a separate “Alternatives to Roding” study, discussed below. A transport study would create the expectation in the community of much wider potential outcomes than is in the current brief (which was considered by the Land Transport Subcommittee some 15 months ago). It is, of course, the prerogative of the City Council to call the study as it wishes. However given that the remaining study partners (with a combined majority voice on the management team, including Transit who are the principal to the contract) do not wish to rename the study/contract, it would not be helpful in the public arena to promote a different title.

The City Council stakeholder meeting also requested that an Alternative to Roding options study should be developed and that timelines of such a study should be reported to this committee. At the Regional Council stakeholder meeting, similar interest in Alternative to Roding options was raised. It was also raised at the City Council stakeholder meeting that this study should be reported to a joint committee of the City and Regional Councils. Officers of the City and Regional Council met on 19 November to discuss the matters related to this proposal, and a proposed timeline is attached.

The principal objective of such a study would be to identify a suite of Alternative to Roding projects which are compatible and form an integrated package with the preferred NROSS strategy, to maximise the use of “non-single occupant car” modes to meet travel demand through the area.

It is estimated that such a study would cost of the order of \$100,000. The study brief could be developed with close involvement of the Regional Council and Waimakariri District Council (who would have an interest in some outcomes of the study). The timeline indicates that a significant proportion of the study could be completed before the end of the current financial year. City Streets and Environmental Policy and Planning Units resources to deal with this study are very limited; this would present difficulties in making significant progress on this additional project without more resources being made available, either by way of additional budget or deferral of other projects. The attached timeline is based upon the early provision of additional resources. If the Committee wishes to approve the study brief, such approval at the February meeting would delay the project by some five weeks with a possible completion date about early October.

The timeline accepted by this Committee at its October meeting is attached. On recent review it has been noted that the allowance for the peer review of stage 3A (initial strategy assessments) is planned for approximately 10 January 2000. It is the view of the author that it is important that at this stage there is an opportunity for Councillors to receive and update on the strategies developed to that point. This would allow some input into the choice of the preferred 5 strategies to be taken to the next stage (3B - detailed assessment of preferred strategies).

Given this situation, when discussed at the management team meeting, it was proposed that this time window could be postponed to enable this input. The alternative was to supply the information to the stakeholders on 19 January, with a response to the consultant by 21 January. A seminar for the Northern Roding Options Subcommittee could therefore occur on Thursday 20 January, if so desired, rather than about Tuesday 11 January 2000. However, this introduces a one week delay to the programme, which would ultimately result in a delay to the final completion date of one week to 26 April. The consultant is not concerned as to which way the Council should wish to decide regarding this matter. The author would recommend this course of action (to delay the study one week overall) to maximise the likely attendance of elected members to this seminar. This stage of the study is a pivotal point wherein the initial choices of preferred strategies to be taken forward is considered. It should be acknowledged that both this difficult timing and the tight time frame within which to respond is a result of the considerable tightening of the timeline at the City Council's request.

The consultant is now continuing to work on drawing stage one of the study to a close, so that the initial work is completed on creating the computer traffic model and the identification of issues and problems. The next 2 stages (strategy identification and initial strategy assessments) will occur quite quickly and will be largely completed prior to Christmas.

- Recommendation:**
1. That a seminar for the Northern Roding Options Subcommittee to review the initial strategy assessments and provide input to the identification of the five preferred options for more detailed assessments occur on Thursday 20 January 2000, and that the Committee accept the resulting one week delay in the completion date of the study to 26 April 2000.
 2. That the Land Transport Subcommittee hold discussions with elected members of the Regional Council and Waimakariri District Council, in relation to Alternative to Roding options for north Christchurch; if at all possible to occur before Christmas.

- Chairman's Recommendation:**
1. That the above recommendation be adopted.
 2. That funding for the employment of additional resources be given high priority in the 2000/01 draft Annual Plan.