



Report 08.925
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Committee Council
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Greater Wellington Real Time Information Project

1. Purpose

To inform the Council of the progress of the Greater Wellington Real Time Information project and seek approval to proceed to tender.

2. 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.

3. Background

A Real Time Information system has long been identified by Greater Wellington, as well as public transport users and operators, as an important improvement for public transport in our region.

The New Zealand Transport Strategy (Part 3.2.4) identifies Real Time Information as being a priority area for investment.

The Wellington Regional Land Transport Strategy (Part 8.2a) requires Council to:

“Ensure the availability of reliable information on the transport system, and the choices available”.

The Wellington Regional Passenger Transport Plan (Policy 3.7) requires Council to:

“Provide reliable, relevant and timely information that is readily available and easily accessible to everyone, including information on when services are due to arrive or depart and any disruptions that may affect services.”

The Ngauranga to Airport Corridor Plan identifies Real Time Information as a key public transport measure.

And the project is part of Greater Wellington's current Long Term Council Community Plan.

The project has been closely monitored by the Transport and Access Committee. In November 2007 that Committee (**Report 07.750**) considered a business case for the project, and agreed to proceed with detailed system design and preparation of the tender documents. Progress reports have been presented to every Committee meeting since that date.

3.1 What is a Real Time Information system?

A Real Time Information system tracks vehicles in order to predict the 'real' arrival/departure time of that vehicle at various points along the route. The 'real' time is in fact an 'estimated' time, being derived from the vehicle's current location and historical travel time information collected over a certain period.

Public transport users in the Greater Wellington region will be able to access this Real Time Information via:

- On street displays including audio information at major bus stops and stations. The initial number of on street displays will be limited, but it is envisaged increasing the number of displays if additional funding becomes available. Displays will be at major bus stops and stations.
- A SMS tool (cell phone texting)
- A website

The SMS and the website tool will give information about all stops and stations at which tracked vehicles call.

Greater Wellington plans to implement a system for the whole region, for buses and trains. It is envisaged that the project will be rolled out in phases.

3.2 Benefits of a Real Time Information system

Public transport users, councils and operators benefit from a Real Time Information system. The main benefits are:

- More reliable information for public transport users, which enables them to make better informed decisions;
- Reliable information for planning, monitoring and reporting purposes for councils and operators;
- The potential for more reliable travel times, because the Real Time Information system can give priority to delayed vehicles at intersections (traffic signal pre-emption);

- Overall, a higher quality public transport system, which contributes to an increase in patronage.

Public transport users have frequently expressed their expectation that a Real Time Information system will be implemented in the Greater Wellington region as soon as possible.

4. Project funding

The estimated capital cost of the project is \$10.85 million. The New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) approved funding of 80% of the capital costs at its November 2008 Board meeting.

The estimated annual ongoing operational cost of the project is \$1.6 million. NZTA approved funding of 60% of the annual ongoing operational costs at its November 2008 Board meeting.

Greater Wellington's share of the costs needs to be provided for. The project is already part of Greater Wellington's Long-term Council Community Plan (LTCCP). Greater Wellington's share of 20% for the capital costs (\$2.17 million) and 40% of the annual ongoing operational costs (\$0.64 million p.a.) will need to be provided for as part of future budgeting.

5. Project update

After developing a business case in 2007, Greater Wellington has undertaken the system design and tender preparation. During the last few months the following work has been carried out:

- An Expression of Interest request was issued in September 2008, to give advance notice to the market of the impending tender and to gauge the market interest. In total 29 replies have been received.
- Currently the documents for the Request for Tender are in preparation. This includes the technical specification of the system, which has been developed in collaboration with main stakeholders, including public transport operators, New Zealand Transport Agency and public transport users.

6. Next steps and timeline

The major next steps and the timeline are as follows:

Task	Date
Request for Tender issued	22 December 2008
Request for Tender closes	April 2009
Supplier chosen	May/June 2009
Report to Transport & Access Committee (recommendation to proceed and seek approval from Council to award the contract)	May/June 2009
Council meeting (seek approval to award the contract)	May/June 2009
System design finalised	July 2009
System trial starts	October 2009
System trial finished	February 2010
System roll-out starts	March 2010

7. Communication

No communications are required.

8. Recommendations

That the Council:

1. ***Receives the report.***
2. ***Notes the content of the report.***
3. ***Agrees to issue the Request for Tender for a Real Time Information system.***
4. ***Notes that the progress of the project, including the results of the tender, will be reported back to the Transport & Access Committee on a regular basis.***

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