

Wellington City Bus Review

Terms of Reference (revised 18 January 2011)

Introduction

This document sets out the terms of reference for the Wellington City Bus Review (previously the Wellington Public Transport Review), to be conducted by Greater Wellington Regional Council between 2009 and 2011.

These terms of reference have been updated to reflect changes in the external environment and to the timetable. They replace those presented to the Transport and Access Committee on 3 September 2009.

Background

Greater Wellington has an ongoing programme of area-wide reviews, in accordance with policies laid out in the current *Regional Passenger Transport Plan*, which require that all scheduled passenger transport services be reviewed at least once every five years, to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the community and reflect any changes such as shifts in demand (Policy 1.5). These reviews are not a statutory requirement.

Area-wide reviews provide an opportunity to maximise the effectiveness and efficiency of the passenger transport network by allowing consideration of the interaction between all public transport services within a larger geographical area. They take a short to medium term view, focus on operational improvements to the network, and look to achieve these within existing public transport budgets.

The last comprehensive area-wide review of Wellington City services was undertaken in the early 1990s, although a number of service-level reviews have been undertaken since that time. The lack of subsequent area-wide reviews appears to be related to a previous belief that reviews were not necessary due to the fixed nature of the trolley bus network. This stance has changed, given the increasing emphasis on integrated network planning, increases in trolley capacity gained from the new trolley buses, the expansion of the diesel bus network, and the significant growth that the city has experienced in recent years and expects in future years.

Objectives

The primary objective of the review is to improve value for money by improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the public transport network within the study area. Other objectives include improved reliability, coverage, connections, access, and service levels, and ensuring that capacity is matched to demand.

Key principles for review include:

- A strategic approach – the wider context will be considered before detailed design is undertaken.
- An integrated approach – all related initiatives, activities and modes will be considered (e.g. real time information, improvements to the Golden Mile).
- Stakeholder and community engagement – operators and the community will be engaged to help identify issues and test options. Greater Wellington will work with Wellington City Council and operators to implement the resulting service changes.

Scope

The review encompasses the urban areas of Wellington City, south of Takapu Rd in Grenada North. Tawa and Grenada North are considered as part of the Porirua area-wide reviews, and have been recently reviewed.

The review will consider all public transport services in the study area. Its particular focus will be those services provided by regular and purpose-specific bus services, including trolley bus, diesel bus and school bus. It will also consider how these integrate and interconnect with rail services (particularly the Johnsonville railway line), harbour ferry services within Wellington, and the cable car.

The current review is being undertaken on the basis that:

- There is an operative 10-year trolley bus contract.
- Rail services will continue to operate on the Johnsonville Line.
- Rail will not be extended south of its current terminus.

The review will not consider:

- Longer-term strategic changes that require significant investment in vehicles and/or infrastructure, such as light rail. Greater Wellington will undertake a separate study - the *Ngauranga to Wellington Airport Corridor Plan High Quality Public Transport Feasibility Study* – that will look at such options for the Wellington Railway Station to Wellington Regional Hospital corridor, in partnership with Wellington City Council and NZ Transport Agency. That study is expected to be completed in 2013. The Greater Wellington staff involved with this project will work closely those undertaking the *High Quality Public Transport Feasibility Study*.
- Rail services or bus services that primarily serve catchments outside the study area.
- Fares and fare zones. However, consideration will be given to simple ticketing improvements that might improve the operational efficiency of the study area network.

The review will implement the current policies laid out by the *Regional Land Transport Strategy*, *Regional Passenger Transport Plan*, *Passenger Transport Operational Plan*, and the *Ngauranga to Wellington Airport Corridor Plan*, as they pertain to public transport services in the study area. Other initiatives to be considered include: real time information; integrated ticketing; the *Central Area Bus Operational Review*; Wellington City Council plans such as *Golden Mile Development Plan*, *Wellington City Bus Priority Plan*, and urban development and growth plans; and operator bus fleet upgrades.

Process

The project will be broken into six key stages: Preliminary, Initial Consultation, Initial Design, Final Consultation, Final Design and Implementation. A proposed timeframe is provided in the following section.

A description of the tasks associated with the key stages follows:

1. **Preliminary Stage:** Will entail project planning and initial discussions with the public transport operators and Wellington City Council.
2. **Initial Consultation:** Will consist of two components: public consultation and consultation with key stakeholders. The findings of these will be used to guide the subsequent Initial Design stage. They will involve the following:
 - Public consultation: Consultation with individuals via the delivery of a consultation document to all households within the study area. This will inform households about the review and its timelines, and give them with the opportunity to provide feedback on issues and ideas for improvement.
 - Consultation with key stakeholders:
 - Direct consultation with:
 - Wellington City Council (face to face consultation)
 - Public transport operators (face to face consultation)
 - Iwi (face to face consultation)
 - Residents' and progressive associations (by letter and hearing)
 - High schools (by letter)
 - Major organisations with a likely public transport interest (e.g. Capital and Coast District Health Board, the universities, and Wellington Airport) (face to face consultation)
 - Any other organisations that Wellington City Council considers should be consulted as a key stakeholder.
 - Workshops with:
 - Representatives of disability groups

- User representatives (individuals that make regular submissions on public transport issues)
- Bus drivers.

3. Initial Design: Will consist of strategic planning, assisted by focus groups, then more detailed option design. These tasks will entail:

- Strategic planning: Identification of the key nodes and corridors, and application of the layered service approach, which is being developed for the new Regional Public Transport Plan. This will define the high-level options and set the parameters around which the subsequent option design can be undertaken.
- Focus groups: Will be used to identify the aspects of the high-level options that the public most like and dislike.
- Option design: Development of a 'possible' network, in sufficient detail to allow it to be modelled using a new public transport model. Then refinement of the network to create a 'preferred' network that maximises public benefit, while minimising cost.

4. Final Consultation: The community will be presented with options for suggested changes to the network. The findings of this process will be used to guide the subsequent Final Design stage. It is expected that this stage will consist of:

- Public consultation: The testing of the option(s) with households by geographical area. This will follow a similar approach to the initial consultation stage.
- Consultation with key stakeholders:
 - Direct consultation with Wellington City Council and the public transport operators via the Reference Group (see below)
 - Possible workshop(s) with user representatives.

5. Final Design: The final network will be identified and detailed network design work undertaken to produce working public transport timetables. Aspects of the new network may be tested again using focus groups.

6. Implementation: Implementation will be dependent on the construction of any required infrastructure, and contractual changes related to the introduction of the Public Transport Operating Model. Regardless of those constraints, it will be carefully staged and supported by a major information campaign. It is likely that it will be preceded by a pilot if there are significant changes to operating patterns. Services will be monitored closely following implementation, to ensure that they are running successfully, and any significant problems will be addressed as identified.

Schedule

The following revised timeline is proposed for each stage of the review. The final consultation and focus group tasks may be reduced in scale or omitted, if required to accelerate the project.

Stage	Key tasks	Indicative dates
Preliminary	Preliminary tasks	Completed
Initial consultation	Public consultation	Completed
	Consultation with key stakeholders	Completed
	Market research	Not carried out
Initial design	Strategic planning	Completed
	Focus groups	Completed
	Option design	In progress – by May 2011
Final consultation	Public consultation (if required)	June – July 2011
	Consultation with key stakeholders	July 2011
Final design	Detailed network design	August - November 2011
	Focus groups (if required)	October – November 2011
	Confirm network	December 2011
Implementation	Detailed implementation planning	From January 2012
	Route and timetable changes	To be determined

Data requirements

The outcome of the review is particularly dependent on the cooperation of the public transport operators, who will be asked to supply detailed boardings and journey data. Any data supplied will be treated as highly confidential, and will not be publicly released without the permission of the operator concerned.

Governance

The review will be led by Greater Wellington. Wellington City Council and the public transport operators will be involved and consulted throughout the process. Key milestones will be reported to the Transport and Access Committee and Economic Wellbeing Committee.

Project management

The Project Sponsor will be responsible for the day to day decision making, including directing the Project Manager. The Project Sponsor is Wayne Hastie, General Manager, Public Transport Group.

The Project Manager will be responsible for the day to day running of the project as directed by the Project Sponsor. The Project Manager is Doug Weir, Senior Public Transport Planner.

Reference Group

Greater Wellington will set up a reference group, which will include Wellington City Council and the major public transport operators, to guide the study and ensure that major stakeholders are informed of major developments. The Reference Group will meet on a regular basis, most likely on a bi-monthly frequency, and as required at major milestones.

Deliverables

Deliverables will consist of public consultation material, reports to the Transport and Access Committee and Economic Wellbeing Committee, and final timetables as agreed with public transport operators.

The review will be considered to be complete once changes are implemented. Ongoing monitoring will continue beyond that point, but will not be considered to be part of the current review.

Budget

The project will be funded through the existing service review budget. Most costs are associated with consultation, expert advice and peer review.

Subsequent service changes, including infrastructure costs, will be funded through existing public transport budgets.