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Committee Regional Transport Committee  
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## **Proposed governance process for consideration of network issues for Hutt Valley – Porirua Links**

### **1. Purpose**

To seek the Committee's support for the proposed process to identify and resolve wider network issues relating to the Hutt Valley – Porirua Links, including the proposed Petone to Grenada Link Road (P2G) and State Highway 58 safety upgrade proposals.

### **2. Background**

The Hutt Valley and north Wellington/Porirua form the two primary transport corridors along which much of the region's urban development is concentrated. Along these corridors run all the region's key transport connections with the rest of the North Island, including State Highway 1, State Highway 2, the North Island Main Trunk Line and the rail line through to the Wairarapa. Presently the only direct connector between these important corridors is State Highway 58.

The need for a new east-west link between State Highway 1 and State Highway 2 was first identified in the Wellington Region Land Use and Transport Study of 1975. Since that time it has been a component of a succession of studies and plans, including the Ngauranga Triangle Study of 2010.

The Regional Land Transport Strategy 2010-2040 identifies the need for better east-west connections to improve access, efficiency and reliability of trips between the Hutt Valley, Porirua and Wellington.

The need for a new east-west link road was confirmed as part of the Hutt and Western Corridor Plans adopted by this Committee in 2011 and 2013 respectively. The Regional Land Transport Programme 2012-2015 includes the P2G as a significant activity expected to commence within the next 10 years.

In 2013 the NZ Transport Agency completed a detailed Scoping Report for P2G. The conclusions of this report and a series of options for the link road have been the subject of public consultation. Public submissions closed in

April and are currently being analysed by the NZ Transport Agency. Additional time has been provided for local council feedback.

In addition to progressing work on the Petone to Grenada Link Road, the NZ Transport Agency intends to shortly undertake public engagement on its proposed upgrade of SH58, with the first stage of this upgrade programmed for implementation in the 2014/15 financial year. This significant upgrade is focussed on safety improvements.

### **3. Strategic Network Issues**

The need for an east-west link between Petone and Grenada has already been well established in a suite of regional transport plans adopted by this Committee. A new east-west link would fill a missing link in the regional road network and provide significant benefits to the region, including:

- Relief of severe congestion on SH1 (Ngauranga Gorge) and SH2 (Petone to Ngauranga)
- Significant improvement to the overall resilience of the regional transport network in the event of network events (storms, slips, congestion, crashes) or natural disasters. Recent seismic and storm events have confirmed the need to improve resilience of our strategic transport network
- Significantly improved journey times for trips between the Hutt Valley and Porirua, Tawa and north Wellington as well as trips to and from Wellington city
- Improving access to designated growth areas around Lincolnshire Farm and to the key industrial hub at Seaview/Gracefield
- Supporting and growing the regional economy through more efficient freight journeys and improved accessibility between the Hutt Valley and Porirua, Tawa and north Wellington
- Up to \$650m of economic benefits to the regional economy resulting from improved journey times, trip reliability and wider economic benefits
- The opportunity to re-use spoil from the construction of P2G to assist other regional projects including the proposed seaward option for the Ngauranga to Petone walking and cycling link.

There are however issues such as: the alignment of the proposed east-west link road, its impact on local communities and environmental impacts which will have to be considered further through the next phase of the project.

In addition, as part of the Scoping Report a potential increase in congestion (and reduction in the level of service) on SH1 between Tawa and Linden was

identified. This could result in deterioration in journey times and trip reliability for SH1 users. To address this, the package of options for P2G includes proposals to increase roading capacity between Grenada and the future Transmission Gully Motorway (TG) interchange at Linden. Options currently proposed include either increasing capacity on the existing SH1 through widening between Grenada and Linden or a new two-lane link road through Takapu Valley.

These north-south capacity improvements are just one possible solution set to address the forecast traffic volumes. Other options within a wider network perspective should be identified and considered in order to get the best network outcome. Greater Wellington Regional Council has identified an alternative option to enhance the rail network (in line with the Regional Rail Plan), in conjunction with other demand management measures. The NZ Transport Agency also wants to investigate alternatives such as hard shoulder running.

#### **4. Proposed investigation and decision-making process**

Following discussions between Greater Wellington Regional Council and NZ Transport Agency, it is proposed that the following process be adopted to examine, confirm how best to resolve the identified strategic network issues relating to Hutt Valley – Porirua Links:

- The NZ Transport Agency, Greater Wellington Regional Council, Wellington City Council, Hutt City Council, Upper Hutt City Council, Porirua City Council and Kapiti Coast District Council agree to collaborate on a whole of network approach to resolving strategic network issues arising from the Hutt Valley – Porirua Links.
- A new steering group be established, comprising the chief executives (or their senior delegates) of the territorial authorities and Greater Wellington Regional Council and the Regional Director (or delegate) of the NZ Transport Agency. This group will provide direction to the project managers, resolve conflicts and ensure that elected officials from individual councils are kept fully informed to enable them to participate in any discussion at the Regional Transport Committee. A joint officer Working Group will continue to provide operational oversight of the project.
- Further investigation will be undertaken of options to manage forecast traffic volume increases on SH1 north of Grenada. This will include considering alternative measures to shift trips towards the rail network and manage demand on the network to avoid the need for an increase in roading capacity as well as the option of a ‘managed motorway’ (ie hard shoulder running).
- This next stage of investigation will be completed before the end of 2014, and reported back to this Committee to enable the preferred option to feed into the Regional Land Transport Plan process (if required).

## 5. The decision-making process and significance

The matter requiring decision in this report has been considered by officers against the requirements of Part 6 of the Local Government Act 2002 (the Act). Part 6 sets out the obligations of local authorities in relation to the making of decisions. It is considered to have low significance as it is part of an ongoing process.

## 6. Recommendations

*That the Committee:*

1. ***Receives the report.***
2. ***Notes the content of the report.***
3. ***Endorses the process outlined to consider and resolve the further investigation of issues relating to the Hutt Valley – Porirua Links.***
4. ***Notes the importance of a regionally agreed solution to this key part of the regional transport network.***

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