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Report to the Passenger Transport Committee
By Dr Dave Watson, Divisional Manager Transport

Major Commuter Carparks

1. Purpose

To make a decision on the release of \$396,500 of transport reserves provisionally allocated to fund major commuter carpark improvements.

2. Background

At the September Committee meeting the following resolution was adopted:

"(2) That the remaining \$396,500 of the unallocated reserves be allocated to fund major commuter carpark improvements subject to:

(a) Confirmation that the increased funding levels required from Transfund New Zealand are sufficient to cover the additional fuel costs of operators and

(b) The officers reporting back on commuter carpark requirements at the next Passenger Transport Committee."

3. Comment

It is not possible to establish what overall level of funding we will receive from Transfund for the current financial year. It is safe to assume that we will not receive less than we budgeted for the contracted bus and rail services at the start of the year. The patronage funding scheme adopted by Transfund New Zealand will provide the Council with more funding than expected for this financial year because:

- (a) The baseline funding for the year will be negotiated to a higher figure to incorporate higher rates to cover the long term depreciation costs of rail.
- (b) Patronage growth occurring during the year will attract increased Transfund funding.

On the basis of a 2% patronage growth per year and using the marginal extra Transfund funding for passenger funding a best estimate of the level of overall additional funding for patronage growth alone is \$1 m per year. This could therefore go some way to covering the contract inflation costs for the same period. Negotiation of the baseline funding would also address this issue. Overall expectations are that the inflation costs will be covered.

Patronage increases are likely to be generated by further development of commuter carparks. Over time these improvements could be self funding from patronage growth payments.

Finally, under the "Patronage Funding" scheme, being implemented by Transfund New Zealand from 1 November 2000, commuter carparks may be qualifying expenditure for kick start funding.

4. **Current Commuter Carpark Requirements**

Regular counts of Park n Ride usage are undertaken at each station to assess occupancy levels. Last year the Committee was updated with these figures as at 30 June 1999, when 11 of the 35 stations in the region that have Park 'n Ride sites were identified as being full or exceeding capacity. During the 12 months to June 2000 this list has grown and there are now 15 Park 'n Rides in this category. They are Upper Hutt, Trentham, Waterloo, Woburn, Petone, Featherston, Redwood, Porirua, Paremata West, Paraparaumu, Ngaio, Simla Crescent, Khandallah, Raroa and Johnsonville.

... Updated capacity figures are shown in **Appendix A**.

It is important to note that although the figures show the 15 Park 'n Ride sites to be full or exceeding capacity, they do not all need expanding. In the case of Upper Hutt, Simla Crescent, Khandallah and Raroa, although full most days, there is ample overflow capacity which is comfortably handling the numbers who park there.

This leaves the following sites, which are considered a priority for expansion:

Trentham – Expansion has been approved and design work is proceeding.

Waterloo – Proposals are in place to expand the North East carpark to accommodate a further 45 spaces at a cost of \$160,000. It has been programmed for next financial year.

Woburn – Land availability is an issue here. On street parking is now being taken up. Trans Rail are checking boundaries with Hutt City for possible expansion space. Expansion could cost \$80,000 and has yet to be approved.

Petone – Initial expansion has been approved and will be carried out this financial year. Longer term issues are being addressed separately by the working group involved in the station upgrade and will be reported on to the committee in December.

Featherston – Expansion has been approved and design work is proceeding.

Redwood – Expansion has been approved and design work is proceeding.

Porirua – This carpark is steadily expanding southwards on to vacant land which is not part of any lease agreement. Plans exist for the official parking area to be levelled and remarked to increase capacity at a cost of \$250,000. This will also improve the security problems experienced here. This expansion has yet to be approved.

Paremata West – Expansion has been approved and design work is proceeding. This carpark is suffering increasingly from vandalism which needs to be addressed. Commuter's cars are frequently being broken into and in some cases stolen. Regular users who have experienced these problems have enlisted the Mayor in looking for solutions. She has asked the police for more patrols but such measures are limited. The answer will probably involve camera surveillance, which could be included with the planned expansion. This would cost a further \$50,000.

Paraparaumu – Expansion is currently planned for next financial year and will cost \$200,000.

Ngaio – Tranz Rail are checking land boundaries for possible expansion. Expansion would cost \$30,000 and is not yet approved.

Johnsonville – Expansion has been approved but may cost more than the approved \$50,000. Land ownership issues could delay this project till next financial year.

5. Recommendation

That the remaining \$396,500 of the unallocated reserves be allocated to fund major commuter carpark improvements.

Report prepared by:

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Attachment : 1