



Report 08.830
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Committee Council
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Park and ride (commuter parking) guidelines and programme

1. Purpose

To define the role of commuter parking and provide guidelines for the provision of park and ride (commuter parking) facilities in the region.

To identify the financial costs of commuter parking and outline how the maintenance, upgrade, and development of commuter parking facilities should be prioritised.

2. Consideration by Committee

The matters raised in this report were considered by the Transport and Access Committee at its meeting on 22 October 2008 (**Report 08.760 refers**). The Committee expressed some concerns about the maintenance standards and wanted assurance that any policy requirement to set minimum standards did not preclude the ongoing development of new car parks. The Committee was also concerned about the notion of setting up a reserve fund for future land purchases for new car parks. However, the Committee agreed to recommend to Council that it consider providing additional funding in the Long-term Council Community Plan:

- a) for the commuter parking and upgrade plan set out in **Attachment 3**
- b) for the establishment of the financial reserve for potential future land purchases for commuter parking facilities.

3. 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.

4. Background

Commuter parking is defined as the provision of park and ride facilities, which are linked to the central city and other commercial centres by the passenger transport network. These parking facilities are provided primarily for commuters travelling to and working in the central city and other commercial centres.

4.1 Current facilities

During the last seven years Greater Wellington has undertaken a major expansion in the number of rail commuter parking spaces from just over 2,000 spaces in 2001 to the current total of 4,428 spaces. These 4,428 spaces are located over 36 park and ride facilities on land or roads near railway stations and passenger transport interchanges across the region.

All commuter parking facilities are marked and signposted as Metlink park and ride facilities.

There is also evidence of informal commuter parking (not specifically marked as Metlink park and ride) along roads in the vicinity of railway stations and bus stops. This informal parking is not addressed in this paper.

A recent survey counted 4,137 vehicles at commuter parking facilities across the region. Commuter parking provides for approximately 29% of daily peak rail demand which is high compared to other New Zealand regions.

4.2 Current policies and previous decisions

The Passenger Transport Plan has a number of policies regarding commuter parking facilities. The key policies are:

Policy 1.14

Seeks to ensure the ongoing development of new and existing commuter parking facilities. The Policy explanation states that commuter parking provides access to the passenger transport network for people that live in areas where passenger services are not viable, such as areas of low density development.

The Policy also states that the development of commuter parking should be prioritised based on demand, benefits and costs, and catchment size.

Policy 2.1

Any new infrastructure is developed in a way which is consistent with the Regional Policy Statement, the New Zealand Urban Design Protocol, and the National Guidelines for Crime Prevention through Environmental Design.

Policy 2.2

To ensure that transport infrastructure assets are continuously improved to meet the needs of users. This is to be managed through tools such as Asset Management Plans.

Recent reports to the Committee have considered a number of matters relating to commuter parking, including:

- The trial of an integrated ticket at Paraparaumu involving the provision of free bus connections to trains to help relieve pressure on the commuter parking (refer **Report 08.158** and **Report 08.277**)
- A recent review study has identified a number of sites that could potentially be leased or purchased to provide another 1,800 commuter parking spaces over time but with a significant financial impact due to the costs of acquiring and developing land (refer **Report 08. 443**).
- The feasibility of charging for commuter parking with a decision not to charge at present but to consult the public as part of the Long Term Council Community Plan (refer **Report 08.505**).

5. Role of commuter parking, key success factors and policy guidelines

The role of commuter parking, key success factors and policy guidelines are set out below with further detail provided in **Attachment 1**. These guidelines are to be incorporated in the *Passenger Transport Operational Plan*.

5.1 Role of commuter parking

The main role of commuter parking is to transfer parking demand from the central city and other major commercial areas to suburban/urban fringe locations. Benefits include better utilisation of passenger transport capacity, reduced road congestion, increased parking capacity, and improved environmental outcomes.

Commuter parking also has an important role in the Wellington region to enable access to the passenger transport network where direct access is not feasible.

The role of commuter parking is reflected in the key success factors and policy guidelines set out below and should be considered when making investment decisions for commuter parking.

5.2 Key success factors

A strong commuter parking market will generally only develop in regions with relatively high parking charges in their central city and/or other major commercial areas and limited road capacity into these areas. The strong commuter parking market in Wellington is a factor of these and also of the high quality passenger transport network.

Provided the above conditions are met key success factors for individual commuter parking facilities include:

1. High quality passenger transport links
2. Well designed and located facilities
3. High degree of safety and security
4. Quality information and marketing

Facilities must also provide sufficient capacity to meet demand such that people using the facility on a regular basis have a reasonable chance of finding a parking space at that facility.

5.3 Guidelines

The following guidelines are intended to guide commuter parking decisions, including prioritising the maintenance, upgrade and development of commuter parking facilities, while taking into account the role of commuter parking and key success factors set out above.

These guidelines should be considered when making decisions on commuter parking:

1. Ensure sustainability of existing facilities

All commuter parking facilities should be managed to ensure people are not discouraged from using passenger transport services due to low levels of service, and to ensure the sustainability of the commuter parking infrastructure investment.

2. Ensure safe and secure commuter parking facilities

All existing commuter parking facilities and any new facilities should comply with minimum design and maintenance standards to ensure a safe and secure environments.

3. Ensure appropriate commuter parking capacity and locations

Commuter parking facilities should be located to provide sufficient capacity, taking into account current and future demand, and to maximise benefits and overall passenger transport patronage.

4. Ensure consideration and management of local effects

All local effects arising from development, including traffic impacts and environmental effects, should be appropriately managed in partnership with relevant stakeholders.

5. Ensure efficiency and cost effective commuter parking developments

Commuter parking developments should seek to maximise efficiency by utilising, where possible, existing capacity across the region and focusing on the cost effective development of catchments where capacity is most constrained. Commuter parking developments should also provide efficient and cost effective solutions compared to other access modes and must take into account available funding, including agreed budgets and any opportunities to charge for commuter parking.

6. Ensure consideration of alternatives

An assessment should be undertaken of any commuter parking proposal to ensure consideration of alternatives, including alternative access modes to the passenger transport network (e.g. walking, connecting bus services) and any demand management opportunities.

7. Prioritise development of commuter parking facilities

An assessment should be undertaken of any commuter parking proposal to enable the prioritisation of developments.

8. Secure land and develop partnerships to promote the efficient and effective operation of the passenger transport network

Long term land tenure should be secured for all commuter parking facilities to protect regional investments in commuter parking. Opportunities should also be investigated to secure long term land tenure of any land adjacent to current and future railway stations, bus stops and transport interchanges to be used for future commuter parking facilities or any other development that would support the efficient and effective operation of the passenger transport network.

Opportunities for partnerships with contributions from local authorities and other infrastructure owners should be promoted to achieve outcomes such as improved land use and transport integration, and implementation of growth strategies that benefit all communities.

6. Commuter parking infrastructure activities

The region's commuter parking activities have financial implications for the Council's Long-term Council Community Plan.

6.1 Priority order

In accordance with the guidelines in Section 4 the following priorities are recommended for commuter parking expenditure.

Maintenance and upgrades

The priority order for maintenance and upgrades to existing commuter parking facilities is :

- 1) General maintenance of existing facilities

- 2) Catch-up maintenance on existing facilities
- 3) Upgrade existing facilities to minimum standards

Development and expansion

Key factors for prioritising the development and expansion of commuter parking facilities in accordance with Policy 1.14 of the Passenger Transport Plan and the guidelines set out in Section 4 are:

- Current and future demand
- Benefits and costs
- Location and catchment size
- Opportunities to develop alternative access modes (e.g. walking, feeder bus services) within the catchment

In applying these key factors, officers recommend the priority order for the development and expansion of commuter parking infrastructure be as follows:

- 1) Focus on developing on-street parking within catchments where demand exceeds supply
- 2) Focus on developing off-street parking within catchments where demand exceeds supply
- 3) Consider further land development opportunities

These priorities are designed to best reflect the commuter parking guidelines by ensuring the sustainability and a safe and secure environment for commuter parking facilities across the region, while also allowing consideration of opportunities for further development and expansion as required. There also needs to be sufficient flexibility to secure land as it becomes available where such land is consistent with the key factors.

6.2 Maintenance and upgrades

The sustainability of the existing commuter car parking facilities is a key component of the continued use of passenger transport by the region's communities. Investing in maintenance of these facilities to ensure a safe and secure environment is essential. Thus we suggest that existing commuter parking facilities are maintained and upgraded in accordance with the *Commuter Parking Standards* set out in **Attachment 2**. This proposal is consistent with the *Passenger Transport Plan* policies 2.1 & 2.2.

6.2.1 Current condition of existing facilities

Over the last seven years the focus has been on expansion, with the number of car parking spaces doubling across the region. The maintenance budget has not been increased at the same rate to cover these additional spaces. As a result the

following issues are now occurring at the commuter car parking facilities; many of these issues have impacts in safety for the passenger transport users:

- A high number of car park surfaces are failing due to low maintenance, with surface cracking and pot holes being common in most car parks. This can cause serious injury to pedestrians and users property.
- Due to inadequate drainage facilities at some car parks water is often pooling on the surfaces which results in sunken areas especially in the heavy usage areas.
- Lighting is a particular problem in most car parks throughout the region and in most cases lighting levels fall below recognised standards AS/NZS/1158.3.1.2005. This has a huge impact on personal safety as visibility is low and lines of sight are poor reducing the perception of safety. Much of the lighting equipment is old and beyond its designed life, with some fittings being obsolete and thus being difficult to repair
- Many car parks have no clear road markings, which is causing problems with parking and safety for pedestrians and cyclists. Mobility bays are not clearly identified and in some cases not provided.
- Landscaping and clearance of nuisance plants and trees have not been kept to an acceptable standard to ensure a secure welcoming environment is provided, and overgrown plants/trees often encroach into parking bays that prevent the use of those spaces. Again this is a safety issue where facilities become hidden from view of general thoroughfares and sight lines are obstructed which increases the perception of an unsafe uninviting area.
- Current signage is old and does not clearly mark out the facilities that are available at the facility, and information signage and way finding is virtually non existent.
- Cycle storage facilities can only be found at certain car parks, mainly large car parks.

In our annual customer satisfaction survey safety both on trains and at rail facilities are in the top 10 importance factors for people using public transport. Thus to maintain and growth our customer base providing quality safe facilities is essential. It is something as a Council we can have a direct influence on as the main funder of the facilities.

6.2.2 General maintenance of existing facilities

The current maintenance budget for existing commuter car parking is only sufficient to cover the following items:

- monthly cleaning of the car park area and sumps
- minor repairs to pavement and car park surfaces

- minor repairs to lighting

The current funding level is not sufficient to provide typical regular maintenance costs for such items as: major repairs to surfaces and lighting, re-seals, annual re-lining of car park markings, annual landscaping and fencing repairs. These are the key areas where the existing car parks need immediate work.

The table below shows the current maintenance budget as stated in the 2008/09 Annual Plan and provided for in the current Long-term Council Community Plan.

| Year | Rates \$000's | NZTA Contribution \$000's | Total \$000's |
|--------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 2008/09 | 72 | 109 | 181 |
| 2009/10 | 74 | 112 | 186 |
| 2010/11 | 76 | 115 | 191 |
| 2011/12 | 78 | 118 | 196 |
| 2012/13 | 80 | 121 | 201 |
| 2013/14 | 82 | 124 | 206 |
| 2014/15 | 84 | 127 | 211 |
| 2015/16 | 86 | 130 | 216 |
| Total | 632 | 956 | 1,588 |

6.2.3 Priority deferred maintenance and upgrades

The following table shows the additional funding required for carrying out the deferred maintenance on such items as those mentioned above, the additional funding required to bring the existing facilities up to the *Commuter Parking Standards*, and the ongoing costs to ensure the facilities continue to provide this level of service to the passenger transport customers.

The figures in the table cover the period 2008/09 to 20015/16.

| | Rates \$000's | NZTA Contribution \$000's | Total \$000's |
|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Deferred Maintenance | 378 | 568 | 946 |
| Upgrades to Standards | 818 | 1228 | 2,046 |
| Additional ongoing maintenance to retain Standards | 622 | 932 | 1,554 |
| Total additional funding | 1,818 | 2,728 | 4,546 |

Please note the figures in the above table are indicative only.

Over the next 8 years this is an increase in total carpark maintenance expenditure of 186% and an increase in rates funding of 53%.

6.2.4 Alternative programme options

The preferred option is to progress the above work within the next eight years. However, in order to smooth the impact on Rates the following programmes could be undertaken:

1. Carry out the deferred maintenance, but undertake the upgrade programme over a greater number of years. However in the early years of the programme concentrate on: reseals, drainage, and lighting for security and safety priorities; or
2. Carry out only the deferred maintenance and increase ongoing maintenance to maintain the car parks to that level, and do not undertake any upgrades to minimum standards.

6.3 Development and expansion

Passenger demand for rail is projected to increase between 20% and 65% over the next 10-years (WTSM, 2008). The current commuter parking access mode share is 29% during peak periods.

Developing all 1,800, potential commuter parking spaces (a 40% increase) would potentially achieve a mode share of between 27% and 37% depending on the growth scenario. Once all these sites were developed there would be little opportunity for further expansion due to lack of suitable land and therefore it is not considered sustainable to maintain current mode share in the longer term. A more sustainable approach would be to improve walking and cycling access, promote transit oriented developments, and provide additional feeder bus services to achieve desired patronage growth.

Without any increase in commuter parking capacity the commuter parking access mode share would reduce to between 15% and 25%. Such a reduction could be considered consistent with regional targets that seek to reduce reliance on private cars and increase the mode share of active modes and passenger transport.

A review of commuter car park usage across the Region was undertaken in March 2008 and as a result the following car parks were shown to have the greatest usage demand and lack of capacity:

- Johnsonville Line – Crofton Downs and Simla Crescent
- Hutt Line – Silverstream
- Western Line - Porirua

Subsequent to the above review almost forty sites around the Region have been identified with the potential to provide an additional 1,800 parking spaces. Individual assessments of each site will be required to determine suitability for development. Whether developing a new facility or expanding an existing facility the designs and work should comply with the *Commuter Parking*

Standards set out in **Attachment 2**. The following gives a rough indication of developing and maintaining one car parking space

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| Land Purchase | \$2,250 |
| Build | \$3,000 |
| Maintenance per annum | \$80 |
| Total cost | <hr/> \$5,330 |

A prioritised development programme will be prepared once a development budget has been confirmed.

6.3.1 Focus on developing on-street parking

Across the region there are approximately 600 on-street car park spaces that could be developed. This type of parking is cheaper to develop as there is no land purchase costs involved. However, it can have adverse affects on local residential and retail parking. To develop this type of parking we would need to work in partnership with the local relevant Territorial Authorities to establish appropriate parking controls.

Once these sites are developed it will be difficult to identify further opportunities due to lack of suitable land and therefore could lead to an increase in land and development costs.

6.3.2 Focus on developing off-street parking

Across the region there is the potential to develop approximately 1,200 additional off-street parking spaces. This is a combination of expanding existing sites and developing new sites. This is a more expensive option as land purchase or leasing is involved and the opportunities to use existing street lighting and incorporating maintenance to existing local roading maintenance contracts can not be gained. Leasing can be an issue as long term contracts may not be able to be secured in some instances which affects Council's ability to capitalise on the large expense to develop the site. Thus purchasing land is the preferred option as it secures the Council's long term interests.

Off-street parking provides a better controlled safer environment for the passenger transport users, where traffic impacts can be managed and the impacts to the local communities can be minimised.

Once these sites are developed it will be difficult to identify further opportunities due to lack of suitable land, which could lead to an increase in land and development costs.

6.3.3 Funding

(a) Current funding

The following table illustrates the current level of funding, for the period 2008/09 to 2015/16, available in the Annual Plan 2008/09 and current Long-term Council Community Plan for rail facility improvements and developments.

| | Rates \$000's | NZTA Contribution \$000's * | Total \$000's |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Period 2008/09 to 2009/10 | 1,246 | 11,216 | 12,462 |
| Period 2010/11 to 2015/16 | 867 | 7,803 | 8,670 |
| Total current funding | 2,113 | 19,019 | 21,132 |

*Assumes 90% from NZTA which includes 60% from the national fund and 30% ongoing Crown allocation.

This money was intended to cover the following items:

- Rail platforms (heights, track alignments, and lengths);
- Rail station (lighting, shelters, signage, and seating);
- Commuter car parks (deferred maintenance, upgrades, cycle facilities, security, expansions and new sites).

The priority for the next two years is the remodelling of platforms at 22 stations which have been identified as requiring immediate alteration before the introduction of the new Matangi trains from 2010. Stations with curved platforms are a particular problem and whilst work is being carried out at these stations the opportunity is also being taken to raise/lower platforms heights to facilitate improved train boarding. Over time it is essential the remaining platforms in the network are also raised or lowered in order to improve boarding between train and platform.

This key work on platforms means there will be little funding available for any additional rail stations and commuter car park improvements.

Funding has been included within the Regional Rail Plan budget for enhancing car park facilities. This funding is subject to the regional prioritisation process.

(b) Future requirements

| Expenditure | Rates \$000's | NZTA Contribution \$000's ** | Total \$000's |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| On-Street | | | |
| Build Costs | 594 | 892 | 1,486 |
| On-going maintenance per annum* | 18 | 27 | 45 |
| Off-Street | | | |
| Lease costs per annum | 432 | 648 | 1,080 |
| Land purchase | 2,353 | 3,529 | 5,882 |
| Build Costs | 1,819 | 2,728 | 4,547 |
| On-going maintenance per annum | 61 | 92 | 153 |

*assumes 3% of build cost

**assumes standard 60% infrastructure financial assistance rate from NZTA

As can be seen in the table above the costs of on-street car parking is considerably cheaper to develop and maintain than the development of the off-street sites.

In terms of today's dollars, the cost of developing all of the 1,800 potential parking spaces together with the on-going annual maintenance costs are shown in the table below.

| Expenditure | Rates \$000's | NZTA Contribution \$000's ** | Total \$000's |
|------------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| On-Street | | | |
| Build Costs | 594 | 892 | 1,486 |
| On-going maintenance per annum | 108 | 162 | 270 |
| Off-Street | | | |
| Land purchase | 2,353 | 3,529 | 5,882 |
| Build Costs | 1,819 | 2,728 | 4,547 |
| On-going maintenance per annum | 367 | 551 | 918 |
| Total additional funding required | 5,241 | 7,862 | 13,103 |

**assumes standard 60% infrastructure financial assistance rate from NZTA

The impact on rates could be reduced by debt funding the capital development and land purchase costs.

6.3.4 Funding to secure land opportunities for future car park developments

Council has no funds set aside to enable strategic land acquisitions to secure land for future commuter parking and transit orientated developments. The decision to purchase land at anytime can be made by Council and is subject to NZTA funding. If funding is not approved by NZTA any purchase would require 100% rates funding.

Council could choose to put aside a financial reserve to provide for these opportunities and officers recommend that this should be a Long-term Council Community Plan decision. A reserve of around \$3 million would allow for the purchase and development of land sufficient for roughly 200 car park spaces.

7. Summary

The guidelines have been developed to provide a clear directing for decision making when prioritising the maintenance, upgrade and development of commuter parking facilities.

In order to sustain the existing investment in car parking infrastructure and retain and growth patronage by providing a safe and secure environment, deferred maintenance and upgrade to the *Commuter Car Park Standards* should be priority. However this requires an additional \$4.5 million in funding from the Annual Plan 2008/09 and Long-term Council Community Plan.

The initial areas that should be investigated for opportunities for alternative modes, on-street parking, expansion of existing facilities, or new development opportunities are: Crofton Downs, Simla Crescent, Silverstream, and Porirua.

The ability for Council to procure strategic land for possible future develops would be desirable, but as mentioned relies on the ability to provide earmarked reserves for this activity.

8. Communication

No communication is required

9. Recommendations

That the Council:

1. ***Receives the report.***
2. ***Notes the content of the report.***
3. ***Notes that the Commuter Parking Guidelines and Commuter Parking Standards are consistent with Policies 1.14, 2.1, and 2.2 of the Regional Passenger Transport Plan.***
4. ***Notes the Commuter Parking Guidelines set out in Attachment 1.***
5. ***Notes the Commuter Parking Standards set out in Attachment 2.***
6. ***Agrees that consideration be given to providing additional funding in the Long-term Council Community Plan for:***
 - a) ***for the commuter parking and upgrade plan set out in Attachment 3.***
 - b) ***for the establishment of the financial reserve for potential future land purchases for commuter parking facilities.***

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Attachment 1: Commuter parking guidelines

Attachment 2: Commuter parking standards

Attachment 3: Commuter parking catch-up and upgrade programme