

STAFF REPORT

TO: Chairman And Members, Engineering Services Committee
FROM: Transportation Manager
REFERENCE: T603
DATE: 24 January 2006
SUBJECT: Public Passenger Transport Funding

PURPOSE

To present to the committee the options available with respect to subsidised passenger transport funding (LTNZ Model).

BACKGROUND

A study on public transport was undertaken for Nelson City Council and Tasman District Council in June 2004.

The study analysed "The Bus" and SBL Services operating in Nelson/Richmond. This indicated that 72% of passengers on "The Bus" services were eligible for a concession fare and thus can be categorised as "transport disadvantaged". Of the four "The Bus" routes, only one could be considered to be operating satisfactorily. Passenger numbers on "The Bus" are low.

The SBL Services between Richmond and Nelson carry ten times the passenger numbers of "The Bus" and at no subsidy cost. Many of these passengers are school students.

Demand for all services is likely to increase as the population ages and increases. Peak hour congestion between Richmond and Nelson, the main bus route, is severe, but few commuters use "The Bus". Surveys indicated that people use the buses because they did not have access to a car. Reasons for not using "The Bus" included lack of suitable route, timetables and fares.

Several recommendations for improvements have been made. These include:

- Flexible dollar ride services;
- Increase frequency on the more popular of "The Bus" routes;
- Terminating some poorly patronised weekend "The Bus" services;
- Increased peak-hour services between Richmond, Stoke and Nelson;
- Increased off-peak frequency between Richmond and Nelson;
- New Richmond route;

- Improvements to the Stoke loop route;
- Lower fares on the SBL and “The Bus” services through the introduction of transfer, family, ten-trip and concession fares on all services;
- Better integration between “The Bus” and SBL Services;
- Improved bus shelter facilities;
- New once- or twice-a-week shoppers’ service between Wakefield and Richmond;
- Improved access to services between Motueka and Nelson;
- Encourage the introduction of “low-fall” buses; and
- Greater promotion of services.

The estimated ongoing annual cost of these changes is \$88,000, of which half would be available from Transfund New Zealand. The balance would need to be met by the local Councils.

COMMENT:

The above list was the findings as outlined in the Executive Summary of the report that was prepared in June 2004. Ian Hunter from Land Transport New Zealand will present a Powerpoint slideshow outlining the issues that Council needs to consider for passenger transport.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the report and presentation from Land Transport New Zealand be received.

Roger Ashworth
Transportation Manager