

ES Reference: A1045419

22 February 2024

Canterbury Regional Transport Committee
draft Regional Land Transport Plan
Environment Canterbury Regional Council

Dear Sir / Madam

Combined Otago & Southland Regional Transport Committees Submission on the Draft Canterbury Regional Land Transport Plan 2024/34.

1. The Otago and Southland Regional Transport Committees (RTCs) thank the Canterbury Regional Transport Committee for the opportunity to submit on the Draft Canterbury Regional Land Transport Plan 2024/34 recently released for consultation.

Background and context

2. The RTCs have been meeting jointly since late 2014. The two committees came together and produced the first joint Otago Southland Regional Land Transport Plan for the 2015/18 period. The process was considered to be a successful joint venture and has been continued by subsequent Regional Transport Committees through to the current mid-term review of the 2021/31 RLTPs.
3. The RTCs are committees of their respective Regional Councils but in meeting jointly have been able to take a wider view of the transport network and the connections and dependencies throughout the South Island. The combined Otago Southland Regional Transport Committees therefore have vested interest in the transport network within Canterbury and beyond in the linkage across Cook Strait.
4. The RTCs wish to provide the following comment for consideration by the Canterbury Regional Transport Committee:
 - a) Refer - Page 42 Ashburton Tinwald Connectivity (Second Ashburton Bridge). The RTCs support the top priority afforded this project. The link between the freight hubs around Christchurch and the rest of the South Island is considered critical by the Otago and Southland RTCs. As demonstrated when the bridge was closed during a weather event the options for maintaining access to the lower South Island was severely compromised. Either provision of a second bridge or replacement of the existing bridge with upgraded capacity and designed to accommodate future climatic events is supported by the RTCs.

- b) Refer Page 54 - iRex (Inter-Island Connections). The RTCs consider the Cook Strait Ferries as being a critical component of the South Island transport network to allow the reliable movement of freight and people across the Strait. With the current Government cancelling the iRex replacement ferry project the Canterbury Regional Transport Committee are able to make strong representations on behalf of the lower South Island Regions to the Government in regard to a replacement ferry service. The RTCs support any representations the Canterbury Regional Transport Committee make to either the Government or to the Marlborough Regional Land Transport Plan to ensure the importance of the service to the South Island is understood.
 - c) Refer Page 55 – Extreme events require resilient connections to Otago. While the Canterbury RLTP addresses the cross-boundary issues between Canterbury and Otago the RTCs believe the importance of the connections can be strengthened by including the importance of those links through Otago to Southland. Any effects across the Canterbury Otago boundary and reflected also in Southland for all the reasons included in the Canterbury RLTP. The RTCs request specific comment on the linkages for freight and people movement into and through Otago to Southland be added to the RLTP.
 - d) Refer Page 17 - Public Transport – The Draft Canterbury RLTP includes details of current and some discussion on future public transport within larger population areas of Canterbury. Transport options for people living in smaller townships and between regional centres will become more critical in the future. While solutions may not be available at present or may not even have been investigated, we can expect a growing demand in the future. This does not necessarily mean options with public funding input but a more coordinated approach to inter-regional and intra-regional transport options needs to be considered for the future. Transport options for outside the main centres do not appear to have been considered in the current Draft RLTP.
5. The Otago Southland RTCs do not wish to present their submission in person but are happy to provide additional comment should the Canterbury RTC request it.

Conclusion

The Otago Southland RTCs thank the Canterbury Regional Transport Committee for the opportunity to provide this feedback on their draft RLTP 2024/34.

Should you require any further information please contact Russell Hawkes, Lead Transport Planner, Environment Southland

Cr Jeremy McPhail
Chair
Southland Regional Transport Committee

Cr Kate Wilson
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