

## MINISTERIAL BRIEFING NOTE

<b>Subject</b>	Greater Christchurch Public Transport Futures – Mass Rapid Transit Indicative Business Case Update
<b>Date</b>	3 May 2023
<b>Briefing number</b>	BRI-2758

Contact(s) for telephone discussion (if required)				
Name	Position	Direct line	Cell phone	1 <sup>st</sup> contact
Brett Gliddon	Group General Manager, Transport Services	s 9(2)(a)		✓

### Action taken by Office of the Minister

- ☐ Noted
- ☐ Seen by Minister
- ☐ Agreed
- ☐ Feedback provided
- ☐ Forwarded to
- ☐ Needs change [please specify]
- ☐ Withdrawn
- ☐ Overtaken by events

3 May 2023

**Hon Michael Wood – Minister of Transport**

## **GREATER CHRISTCHURCH PUBLIC TRANSPORT FUTURES – MASS RAPID TRANSIT INDICATIVE BUSINESS CASE UPDATE**

### **Purpose**

1. This briefing provides you with an update on the Greater Christchurch Public Transport Futures – Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) Indicative Business Case (IBC) to assist you with your attendance at the Greater Christchurch Urban Growth Committee meeting on 12 May 2023.
2. On 10 March 2023, you announced additional funding to support the delivery of the Public Transport Futures Combined Business Case.

### **Background**

3. Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency has been working with the Greater Christchurch partners to progress the Greater Christchurch Public Transport Futures – MRT IBC. It is being progressed in parallel with the Greater Christchurch Spatial Plan (GCSP) to ensure integration between land use and transport.
4. The MRT IBC is one of the business cases that form the Greater Christchurch Public Transport Futures programme. The other business case is the Public Transport Futures Combined Business Case.
5. The Public Transport Futures programme seeks to proactively respond to the need for a public transport (PT) system with significantly increased patronage and mode share that:
  - a. delivers high-frequency PT options to existing Key Activity Centres and planned growth areas;
  - b. provides reliable services with journey times that are competitive with private vehicles;
  - c. is attractive and safe to use for customers;
  - d. takes people where they want to go when they want to get there; and
  - e. provides a catalyst for desired land use development.
6. The Whakawhanake Kāinga Komiti (the Urban Growth Partnership for Greater Christchurch) is considering the MRT IBC and the GCSP for endorsement on Friday, 12 May 2023. It will then be reported to the individual partner organisations, followed by the Waka Kotahi Board in July.
7. The MRT, and the wider PT Futures programme, is expected to help reduce overall transport emissions in Greater Christchurch and contribute to the city meeting its light vehicle Vehicle-Kilometre-Travelled reduction target as a Tier 1 urban area, as part of encouraging behaviour change away from private vehicle usage.

### Preferred way forward for MRT

8. The MRT IBC tested the value proposition of the following scenarios:
  - a. heavy rail with limited stop opportunities but competitive travel times;
  - b. motorway street running with limited stops focused on competitive travel times that follows the motorway corridors; and
  - c. arterial street running (corridor focused) with more frequent stops focused on placing more households within the walk-up catchment, at the expense of travel time competitiveness.
9. The preferred way forward recommended in the MRT IBC is an arterial street running MRT within Christchurch City (Hornby through the City centre to Belfast), combined with direct bus services to the districts.
10. The connections to the districts will be delivered earlier through the Public Transport Futures Combined Business Case and optimised under MRT, including:
  - a. better intra-district public transport connections;
  - b. direct bus services from the Districts to the Central City principally using the motorway corridors;
  - c. direct connections to the MRT system; and
  - d. 'enhanced' park-and-rides.
11. The MRT IBC does not determine the MRT mode (bus rapid transit or light rail). The MRT mode will be determined in the next phase.
12. The IBC's 95th percentile cost estimates are between \$3b to \$4b (mode dependent), with a benefit-cost ratio between 1.1 to 1.5 (mode dependent). The ongoing cost of operating the service will depend on the technologies selected and is expected to incur a net additional cost of \$40m per year: MRT operational cost would be around \$60m per year but would replace some existing services, saving around \$20m per year.

### Spatial Plan and MRT community engagement

13. A GCSP/MRT community engagement exercise was held in February/March 2023. There were over 7,000 responses. Outputs from the engagement are:
  - a. 86 percent overall agree with the proposed direction of the draft GCSP to focus growth through targeted intensification in centres and along public transport corridors.
  - b. Overall, 53 percent of respondents agreed with the proposed 'turn up and go' (MRT) route. Respondents who lived in suburbs along the proposed route were most supportive (75 percent) as were younger people, while those who lived in the districts were least supportive (40 percent support). For those respondents not supportive, the main concerns were that the 'turn up and go' didn't go all the way to Rangiora and Rolleston, and to a lesser extent, to the East / Sumner.

- c. The most crucial factors which would encourage respondents to use MRT were that it was reliable, frequent and had well-located stops.

### Next Steps

14. Currently there is no funding allocated in the 2021-2024 National Land Transport Plan for the Detailed Business Case (DBC).
15. If the MRT IBC is endorsed, prior to commencing the development of the DBC, it will be necessary to determine the programme of works (key investigations such as land use integration and network integration with MRT), sequencing, lead authority, governance, and funding arrangements among Greater Christchurch partners.
16. The indicative programme durations anticipate scoping, procurement, and award of professional services to occur within a 12–18 month period. This is then followed by a 24-36 month design, consultation, and planning period. When the DBC is completed and endorsed, the planning approvals, land acquisition and construction will proceed.
17. One of the objectives of the next phase is to achieve clarity on funding arrangements in time for the relevant 2024-34 Long Term Plans' and the 2024-27 National Land Transport Programme.

### It is recommended that you:

1. **Note** the content of this briefing.



.....

**Brett Gliddon**

Group General Manager, Transport Services

.....

**Hon Michael Wood, Minister of Transport**

Date: 2021