

**BOARD PAPER**

**Investment and Operations Committee**

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<b>Board function:</b>	Setting sector and organisational direction
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Update on Influencing Regional Land Transport Plans</b>



## PURPOSE

1. To update the Investment and Operations Committee on our work on influencing the content and quality of the draft Regional Land Transport Plans 2015-21, and to seek feedback on the issues, risks and opportunities arising from the RLTP development process.



## SUMMARY

2. Overall the 6-year Regional Land Transport Plans are well focussed on the right issues and outcomes as broadly set out in the NZ Transport Agency's National Transport Planning Overview. There are a few small gaps that we are addressing in our submissions and further conversations with the Regional Transport Committees. We are now in the process of analysing the proposed investment programmes to ensure they will contribute to delivering optimal transport solutions and outcomes.



## RECOMMENDATION

3. That the Investment and Operations Committee **notes** the assessment of the strategic contexts of the draft Regional Land Transport Plans.



## BACKGROUND

4. All Regional Transport Committees, and Auckland Transport, must prepare a six year Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP) under the Land Transport Management Act 2003 (the Act). RLTPs cover all the transport activities for which the region is seeking National Land Transport Funding, as well as activities that they intend to fully fund themselves. RLTPs are required to be publicly consulted before they are adopted, and the programmes of activities submitted for inclusion in the National Land Transport Programme.
5. Regional Transport Committees (RTCs) approve RLTPs and must be satisfied they contribute to the purpose of the Act, and are consistent with the Government Policy Statement on Land Transport (GPS), amongst other requirements. RLTPs do not require Agency approval. Our role, then, is to influence the development of the RLTPs so that they are focused on the main transport issues and opportunities, and are connected up on sub-national and national concerns. To achieve this we are using tools such as the business case approach, planning and investment signals, our evidence base (MapHub, National Transport Planning Overview, and other performance data), our relationships, and making formal submissions, if required, on the draft RLTPs.
6. All draft RLTPs have been publicly consulted on over the last three months, or are currently being consulted on, with the exception of Gisborne's RLTP which has been delayed. The table in Attachment 1 indicates where we have made a formal submission to support our signals and views provided at various workshops during development of the draft RLTPs. For some draft RLTPs we have not submitted because we have been a full partner in developing the draft RLTPs. At the moment we are still deciding whether to formally submit on Auckland's RLTP. We have submitted on the Wellington RLTP indicating our support for the direction and policy provisions and commenting on several key areas that could make implementation of the RLTP

more effective (eg 'one network', application of the business case approach, inter-regional links).

7. Final RLTPs are due to be delivered to the Agency by 30 April, so that they can inform and reflect content of the 2015-18 National Land Transport Programme (NLTP), which must be agreed by the end of June. The process for finalising the NLTP is set out in a companion Board paper 15/03/0896.
8. In October last year, the Committee received an update on our approach to the development of 30-year local government infrastructure strategies under the Local Government Act (paper 14/10/130 refers). The strategic context of RLTPs and other long term planning documents such as the Auckland Plan and Western Bay of Plenty's Smartgrowth outline the main problem areas and opportunities that inform the infrastructure strategies and RLTPs.



## THE INFLUENCING PROCESS

9. At its August 2014 meeting, the Board agreed the approach to be taken in engaging and communicating with its key stakeholders during the development of the 2015-18 NLTP. This was aimed at growing and embedding stakeholders' understanding of the process, their role in it, and ensuring it is fit for purpose and appropriate (refer to Board Papers 14/08 /0845).
10. The Agency has focussed considerable efforts on collaboratively shaping the development of RLTPs over the last 12 months. The main articulation of our expectations has been through a series of planning and investment signals. Guidance documents were issued to assist RLTP development in May 2014, September, and once the final GPS was released in December 2014, along with a number of workshops with regional council staff.

11. To determine how effective we've been, we have analysed the strategic contexts of the available RLTPs against the outcomes from the National Transport Planning Overview and a number of other criteria (refer to Attachment 1). This table highlights the areas we identified as either high or medium priority outcomes and also whether the RLTPs' priorities for each region correspond to these or not. It should be noted that while some of the outcomes or priorities are discussed elsewhere in the RLTP, this analysis focussed on the strategic context and whether there was alignment at the highest level between the RLTP and the National Transport Planning Overview (refer to the Resource Centre for an outline of this).



## KEY OBSERVATIONS

### **Clearer Priorities**

12. Of the 12 draft RLTPs (some are joint RLTPs) reviewed, the 4 clear top priorities/issues were: Affordability, Resilience, Economic Growth and Road Safety. This reflects well the Agency's priorities, our signals documents, and is consistent with the GPS. It shows that the conversations that Agency staff have had with the councils is coming through in the RLTP and they are not bringing any new or radical priorities to the surface.
13. However, as shown in Attachment 1, the RTCs are still focusing on too many priorities with most regions having identified 5-6 priorities within their draft RLTP. In reality, we know that they can only focus their efforts on 2-3 significant issues and deliver activities to address these. The majority of their investment should be focussed clearly on addressing fewer key issues.
14. At a very broad level, the key shaping conversations that we are involved in include efficient and reliable journeys, safety, resilience, freight journeys, and the Upper North Island Strategy.

We are looking at how transport work both between and within regions. With approximately 60% growth in population and 80% growth in freight projected for the upper North Island over the longer term, more work is needed that will involve investigation of both the demand and supply side. The ongoing commitment to delivering a full strategic freight network also flows through the RLTPs.

15. In areas of high deprivation, the government is undertaking regional growth studies that the transport sector will need to contribute to. RTCs, in developing their RLTPs, also need to more clearly make the link between regional growth strategies, areas of high deprivation, and the role that transport investment and services will play in removing the barriers to economic growth.
16. Looking across the main “regional clusters” we have identified the most significant priorities to be:

#### **Upper North Island**

- Integration and forward planning to support growth.
- Resilience especially due to severe weather events.
- Affordability concerns due to rising costs and reducing revenue.
- Safety concerns with some areas of high risk.

### **Central North Island**

- Need to improve regional connections and maintain strong networks especially for freight journeys.
- Affordability issues especially with road maintenance.

### **Wellington**

- Suppressed regional growth and economic productivity.
- Transport and land use needs to be coordinated to provide quality living environment and retain transport choice.
- Infrastructure vulnerable to disruption from unplanned events.

### **Greater Christchurch**

- Provide for freight demand and growth.
- Earthquake recovery.
- Improved road safety.
- Resilience and long term sustainability.
- Restructured transport network needs to provide choice for people.

### **Rest of South Island**

- Productivity and economic growth need to be supported by transport networks.
- Need networks that are capable of adapting to change and resilient to natural events.

## Improved Collaboration

17. The development of the draft RLTPs has seen increased collaboration across regional boundaries. In particular, Northland, Auckland, Waikato and Bay of Plenty have agreed a joint strategic transport statement (refer to Attachment 2) which outlines their agreed priorities and multimodal approach to addressing transport issues. It also reinforces their commitment to work together to enable the delivery of the required solutions and realise the desired outcomes.
18. The joint RLTP for Otago and Southland is another significant example of wider cross-regional issues being addressed in a more collaborative and coordinated approach. The councils at the top of the South Island also developed one strategic context, and then each region has its own supporting programme developed to deliver on this.



## RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

19. Many of the discussions to further shape the RLTPs will be focussed around the programme of activities and how these are addressing the priorities identified in the strategic context. In respect of some of the priorities, it may be that other interventions within the wider transport context – such as regulatory changes or other initiatives from stakeholders such as ACC – will play a major role in addressing these rather than specific RLTP activities. There is a need for some RLTPs to be strengthened to show how these ‘external’ interventions will help deliver on key priorities set out in their RLTPs.



## **Auckland's RLTP**

20. We consider that Auckland's RLTP still needs work to ensure that the proposed programme of activities will be effective in responding to the key priorities and issues identified for the region.
21. The proposed Auckland RLTP, and the transport programme it contains, has been developed in the context of the Auckland Plan (the 30 year spatial plan for Auckland) as well as the Government Policy Statement (GPS) for Land Transport. We consider that the strategic direction for Auckland transport is heading in the right direction (i.e. greater emphasis of public transport and active modes, better use of existing networks, and greater demand management alongside debate on how to address the likely funding gap). The draft GPS 2015 identifies that "an efficient and effective transport network for Auckland is crucial to improving the city's contribution to national economic growth."
22. The key priorities for Auckland identified in their draft RLTP are:
  - The existing network needs improvements to support Auckland's growth
  - More transport choice is needed
  - Need to mitigate adverse effects of the transport system
  - Affordability.

From our perspective, the information most lacking is how effective the programme will be at addressing the agreed problems. We will discuss this further with the Committee at the meeting.



## LESSONS LEARNT FROM OUR ENGAGEMENT

### **Business Case Approach**

23. The business case approach has been used in most RLTPs to varying degrees. Often this has been limited to undertaking an initial Investment Logic Mapping exercise to identify high level issues and opportunities. The subsequent development of a wider range of options to address these issues is generally lacking or has been lost in translation. This is an area for significant improvement in the next RLTP development round.

### **Road Policing**

24. Overall this round of draft RLTPs has a significantly higher level of visibility of Road Policing and the Police contribution to safety outcomes, compared to previous RLTPs. Although all RLTPs mentioned the importance of Police activities, not all RLTPs clearly outline the specific risks that have been identified by the Police. To improve communications between Police and RTCs we have been trialling a collaborative approach in Canterbury with some success. We will be applying the lessons from this trial to the rest of the country as needed.

### **Journey Approach**

25. Our work to address inter-regional issues through development of a journey approach has not been specifically mentioned within any RLTP. However this is not necessarily a problem as it is a tool, and success would see the journey approach influencing the outcomes sought and the programme of complementary activities to support these outcomes along a particular corridor including cross regional boundaries. The Waikato, and Horizons (Manawatu-Whanganui) RLTPs clearly discussed inter-regional journeys, which shows the influence of the journey approach.

We consider that this approach has been successful in focusing staff and RTCs on how transport users see the transport network and what is important to them.

## # NEXT STEPS

26. As signalled above, we will continue to work closely with RTCs to strengthen and finalise their RLTPs. Final RLTPs are due to be delivered to us by 30 April, so that they can inform and reflect the final content of the National Land Transport Programme (NLTP).
27. Development of the NLTP is currently focussed on national moderation of the proposed activities within each activity class to ensure that the investment addresses the issues prioritised in the RLTPs and our planning and investment signals.
28. The timeline for finalising the NLTP is set out in a companion Board paper (Ref Board Paper NLTP 2015-18 15/03/0899). On 2 April, the Board will consider the approval of NLTP programmes such as road maintenance, operations and renewals, and public transport. They will also receive a proposed communications and engagement strategy for release of the NLTP. At its 8 May meeting, the Board will consider Improvement activities, along with key issues and outcome trade-offs – such as optimisation across local roads, state highway and regional improvement activities, and the Road Policing Programme. At a special meeting on 19 June, the Board will make final decisions across the full set of NLTP programmes and activity classes. The RTCs may then update their RLTPs to reflect the final approved activities for their region.



## ATTACHMENTS

29. There are two attachments:

- Attachment 1 RLTP Strategic Context Review Table (A3)
- Attachment 2 Shared Upper North Island Land Transport Statement

An A3 graphic of the National Transport Planning Overview is available from the Resource Centre.