

# What guides the NZTA's public transport investment

**260%**  
increase of public transport subsidies over the last 10 years

A number of key documents and processes guide investment in New Zealand's public transport system. Overarching these are the government's priority objectives for land transport in New Zealand:

Economic growth and productivity

Value for money

Improved road user safety

## Regional land transport programmes

Regional councils and approved organisations<sup>1</sup> prepare regional land transport programmes setting out what they want to achieve for the land transport network over the next three years. The NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) takes these programmes into account when we prepare our national investment programme (see National Land Transport Programme below).

## The Government Policy Statement on Land Transport Funding

The Government Policy Statement on Land Transport Funding (GPS) is a legal document issued every three years by the Minister of Transport, and applied to funding for activities in the National Land Transport Programme (NLTP). The GPS sets out what the government wants to achieve in land transport, and gives direction for the allocation of land transport funding.

The 2012-15 GPS sets out government requirements for public transport to provide alternatives to cars, improve access to economic activities, ease congestion, and help unlock the potential of our cities, particularly in Auckland. This GPS directs investment in public transport over the next three years to the tune of up to \$1.1 billion. It also directs decision makers to get more value from public transport investment, and to help reduce the need for increased taxpayer and ratepayer subsidies.

## Connecting New Zealand

*Connecting New Zealand* sets out government policy direction for the transport sector over the next 10 years. It helps stakeholders (including the NZTA) consider the government's intentions when they make their own investment decisions.

The document summarises a number of government policies, plans and strategies - the GPS, the National Infrastructure Plan, the NZ Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy, the KiwiRail Turnaround Plan, and the Safer Journeys Strategy.

*Connecting New Zealand* notes the NZTA and regional councils are expected to deliver more efficient and effective public transport services over the next 10 years. The document notes that over the last decade, public transport subsidies increased by 260% while passenger numbers only increased by 63%. In order to make public transport more sustainable, the government aims to reduce taxpayer and ratepayer subsidies by encouraging councils and operators to boost passenger numbers.

## The National Land Transport Programme (NLTP)

The 2012-15 NLTP gives effect to the GPS by focusing on a transport network that grows the economy, gives value for money and supports increased road safety. NLTP investments also reflect a focus on travel choices to suit different customer needs and a drive for more efficiency.

The NLTP is directed where investment is most needed, and focuses on a transport system developed for the long term. As a result, our investment gives higher priority to activities with nationally significant impacts.

The NLTP evaluation process endorses a 'one network' approach - the integration of land use and transport. It also acknowledges investment in the land transport system is a partnership between the NZTA and approved organisations<sup>1</sup>. To make the most of our investments, the NZTA and local authorities are increasingly working closer together - co-investing to improve local roads, state highways and public transport; and run all these components safely as 'one network'.

<sup>1</sup> Regional councils, territorial authorities, approved public organisations (the Department of Conservation, the Waitangi National Trust Board, and Auckland Transport).

# The Public Transport Effectiveness Action Plan

Improving the effectiveness of public transport is an important area of focus for the NZTA. In 2009 the Public Transport Leadership Forum (key transport sector stakeholders) agreed a sector action plan to improve public transport effectiveness. The plan contains a number of actions around three key themes: improving customer experience, integrating networks and strengthening leadership. The NZTA is managing the plan and the delivery of its actions by our partners.

## The NZTA Statement of intent

The NZTA *Statement of intent* outlines what we will deliver and how we will meet government goals for developing New Zealand's land transport system. For public transport, our 2012-15 *Statement of intent* focuses our work on increasing the number of people using public transport, and increasing the contribution fares make to overall costs of public transport services. We'll do this by improving customer service, improving network design and infrastructure, and making sure there is good governance.

## NZTA strategies

Our work is also guided by internal strategies that relate to our four long-term functions: planning land transport networks, investing in land transport, managing the state highway network and providing access to and use of the land transport system.

## Our public transport investment signals

Key features of our investment in public transport:

- The NLTP investment priority is to improve choice across the different types of public transport available in congested major urban centres.
- Most of the increase in investment (announced for the 2012-15 NLTP period) has been to cover increased costs in metro rail in Auckland and Wellington.
- NLTP investment is focused on the government priority outcomes (economic growth and productivity, value for money and safety).
- Additional NLTP investment sought for public transport services required reprioritisation or reallocation of funding across regions.
- New off-peak services are a very low priority for NLTP investment due to the need to target available funding to where most needed.
- The NLTP focus is on the best services within budgets, and on finding efficiencies that can be reinvested in the land transport system.
- It is important there is sound strategic planning with linkages between regional strategies, and other planning documents (eg regional policy statements, long-term plans), and other NZTA-supported strategies such as corridor plans.

