

Consideration of the Draft Regional Land Transport Plan 2018-28

Recommendation

That the Regional Transport Committee:

- i. Delegate authority to a sub-committee of the Regional Transport Committee and request that this sub-committee report back with a finalised draft 2018-2028 Auckland Regional Land Transport Plan to the 1 February 2018 meeting of the Committee; and
- ii. Note that the 2018-2028 Auckland Regional Land Transport Plan will be consulted on in conjunction with consultation on Auckland Council's Long Term Plan (LTP) over 28 February to 28 March 2018 and that full details of the consultation approach, including advice around delegation of authority to receive verbal feedback, will be reported back to the Committee on 1 February.

Executive Summary

1. The Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP) sets out a ten-year capital and operating programme for transport in Auckland. It covers transport activities delivered by Auckland Transport, the NZ Transport Agency (Transport Agency), Auckland Council and KiwiRail.
2. Since the 2015 RLTP was prepared, Auckland's population growth has increased at a much faster pace than was envisaged. By 2028, the population of Auckland is expected to be around two million people – four years earlier than projected in 2015. Significant investment in transport infrastructure and services will be required to meet the increasing needs of these additional people both to service new housing required to match growth and to service many more customers. The Auckland Transport Alignment Project (ATAP) study provides a framework for this investment.
3. At the same time technology is changing rapidly and the expectations of customers, from how they are communicated with, to how they pay for services and even the role of public transport and road network performance, is evolving at a fast pace.
4. Legislation requires that the RLTP is revised every six years and reviewed after three years. At its meeting of 24 October 2017 the Auckland Transport Board agreed that the level of change warrants a full review of the RLTP, along with public consultation to take place in conjunction with consultation on Council's Draft 2018-2028 LTP, between 28 February and 28 March 2018.
5. The Draft RLTP (Attachment 1) has been prepared in an environment of uncertainty around funding and delivery. At the time of writing this report, the Mayoral Proposal is yet to be issued, but early indications are that funding levels will not match the required levels of investment.
6. It appears likely that funding for new projects within Auckland Transport's capital programme will be dependent on additional support from the Transport Agency, Central Government and specialised funding sources, such as targeted rates and Housing Infrastructure Funding through a Special Purpose Vehicle. The final funding amount will not be known until May 2018 when Council makes its final budget decisions.

7. The recent change of Government will result in a review of the Government Policy Statement on Land Transport (GPS). The previous Government released a Draft GPS for consultation in February 2017. The new Government has indicated that a new draft GPS will be released by the end of 2017 and has signalled a number of likely changes to assist regional transport committees in preparing their RLTPs. In a letter dated 20 November 2017 the Minister of Transport set out the following likely revisions to the draft GPS which RTCs should take into account in preparing RLTPs:
 - Giving public transport greater priority in cities and expanding the public transport system to support new housing and interregional commuting;
 - Increasing the use of rail to enable efficient passenger and freight use;
 - Supporting regional development;
 - Increasing support for active modes – walking and cycling;
 - Delivering health, safety and environmental improvements;
 - Reducing the environmental impact of transport; and
 - Mode neutrality in freight transport planning.
8. The revised draft GPS will be available as an engagement draft in early-2018. The Minister has also signalled that more fundamental changes to the scope of the GPS and changes to local, regional and national transport planning are likely to occur at a later date but will not affect the GPS 2018. A review of ATAP is also underway.
9. In addition to the above revisions to the GPS, it is likely that the new Government will seek to implement a number of initiatives in Auckland specifically, including:
 - LRT from the city centre to Auckland Airport, and also potentially to the north-west;
 - North-west bus rapid transit acceleration; and
 - A regional fuel tax, likely at 10c per litre (likely to raise around \$130 million per annum).
10. The Draft RLTP will need to be finalised in early February 2018 to meet consultation timelines. At the RTC meeting on 1 February a final draft document for consultation will need to be adopted. This will also provide an opportunity to give full advice on Auckland Council's proposed consultation approach and details of all transport-specific consultation and engagement opportunities for the public and key stakeholders. It will also be necessary for the RTC to delegate authority to certain Auckland Transport staff to formally receive verbal feedback on the Committee's behalf at local consultation events, as required under the Local Government Act 2002.

11. As reported to the 2 October CFC meeting, staff are also initiating a review of the Regional Public Transport Plan (RPTP) and the two documents will need to align. Consultation on the RPTP will be occurring at the same time as the LTP/RLTP consultation, and the intention is for the consultations to be aligned, possibly with some joint consultation or engagement events, but not fully integrated given the existing complexity of integrating the RLTP consultation with the LTP and the Annual Plan Refresh.
12. The final capital programme must be published and submitted to the Transport Agency prior to the expiry of the third year of the current Plan on 30 June 2018.

Previous Deliberations

13. The Auckland Transport board received an update on the process for development of the RLTP on 24 October 2017 and resolved to establish a Sub-Committee to oversee development of the RLTP, RPTP and SOI, and to ensure consistency between the three documents. The Sub-Committee is meeting fortnightly. The attached draft of the RLTP reflects discussion at the first meeting.

Strategic Context

14. The RLTP is required be consistent with the Government Policy Statement on Land Transport (GPS). The Draft RLTP acknowledges the significant opportunities available through adoption of new technologies, which is a particular area of focus in the draft GPS 2018. At this stage, it is uncertain when the GPS will be finalised although clearer direction by Christmas is expected.
15. The Auckland Plan sets a high-level 30-year strategy to improve Auckland's economic, environmental, social and cultural wellbeing and gives direction about the location and timing of future growth and the necessary infrastructure to support that growth. The Auckland Plan Refresh process is currently underway, and an updated vision of Auckland being a "world class city where talent wants to live" has recently been announced by the Mayor. The Auckland Plan focuses on achieving six key outcomes, one of which "access and connectivity for everyone" relates specifically to transport. The RLTP is proposed to align with the strategic directions and focus areas identified in the draft updated Auckland Plan.
16. The Auckland Transport Alignment Project (ATAP) has led to high level agreement amongst the key stakeholders on the long-term strategic approach to the development of Auckland's transport system and the likely sequencing of major investments over time to address the most critical challenges facing Auckland. ATAP provided support for an expanded capital programme – targeted to the most significant challenges – alongside a greater focus on making better use of existing networks and maximising new opportunities to influence travel demand. ATAP will form a solid base for funding decisions but will not plot the course for where Auckland needs to be in ten years.

Background

17. The Land Transport Management Act 2003 (LTMA) requires that the Regional Transport Committee (RTC) prepare a RLTP every six years, which sets out the region's transport priorities for the next ten years, and must contribute to the purposes of the LTMA and be consistent with the GPS.
18. The RLTP contains:
 - Auckland region's transport objectives, policies and measures;
 - A statement of transport priorities for the region;
 - A forecast of revenue and expenditure on activities;
 - All regionally significant expenditure on transport to be funded from sources other than the National Land Transport Fund (NLTF);
 - Identification of activities of inter-regional significance.
19. It covers the activities of AT, the Transport Agency, Auckland Council and KiwiRail.
20. Section 18CA of the LTMA requires that the RTC complete a review of the RLTP during the six months prior to the end of the third year of the Plan, to ensure that the Plan is relevant, aligned with the strategic context and gives effect to the GPS. Public consultation is required if the RLTP is revised.

Business Case Approach

21. The Transport Agency requires RLTPs to be prepared in accordance with its Business Case Approach. While we are required to meet prescribed requirements for format and content, and while this is a joint document and not simply AT's, we should be visionary in our approach. The Transport Agency approach involves the following elements:
 - Problem definition, with a clear evidence base
 - Benefits statements
 - Explore options and build clear, logical case for response
 - Informed discussion by relevant parties through the development process

22. The ATAP process has covered off many of these elements, and as presented to the 13 July CRC meeting, staff have worked with the Transport Agency and Council to reframe the ATAP challenges as problems, and to identify the key benefits from addressing these problems. A further problem statement has been retained from the 2015 RLTP around addressing adverse impacts from the transport network. This is intended to focus on environmental and cultural impacts of the transport network, as well as the significant upward trend in deaths and serious injuries on the Auckland network in recent years.

- **Problem 1:** The existing transport network does not adequately support growth, particularly in Special Housing Areas (SHAs) and live-zoned greenfield areas
- **Problem 2:** Accelerated growth and rising travel demand will exceed the capacity of the transport system, undermining access to jobs for people living in large parts of the west, and some parts of the south
- **Problem 3:** Increasing demand for travel is resulting in greater congestion and unreliable travel times
- **Problem 4:** Public and active transport modes are under-utilised relative to other modes, leading to less effective use of the transport network
- **Problem 5:** Increasing interactions between users of the transport system are creating adverse health, safety, cultural and environmental effects
- **Benefit 1:** The transport network will support a faster rate of housing and business growth
- **Benefit 2:** Access to employment/labour will improve relative to current levels, supporting economic growth and increasing productivity
- **Benefit 3:** Congestion will improve relative to projected levels – in particular travel time and reliability in the peak period will improve, and congestion will not become widespread during working hours
- **Benefit 4:** Public transport and active mode shares will increase relative to vehicle use
- **Benefit 5:** There will be a reduction in harm from the transport system on people and the environment
- **Benefit 6:** Public investment in the transport system delivers value for money

Issues and Options

23. Over the past 15 years, transport investment in Auckland has increased four-fold, from around \$500 million per year in 2000 to over \$2.1 billion per year in 2015. This investment has enabled significant progress to be made in catching up with demand, for example through the development and electrification of the rail network and continued development of the motorway network (particularly completion of the Western Ring Route).

24. However, the next decade will be even more challenging for transport in Auckland as growth continues to accelerate. Under the proposed RLTP, the major infrastructure investment will continue, with completion of the City Rail Link and AMETI, and the start of investment in some form of Mass Rapid Transit. This decade will be made more complex, however, by the increasing focus on travel demand and getting more out of our existing assets and services.
25. Customers are expecting more and more from transport services and infrastructure. They expect to have continuous access to online services, and to be able to use this to streamline their journeys. Businesses expect to have reliable connection times so they can reach their markets around Auckland and more widely. Within ten years, we can expect some level of uptake of autonomous vehicles, potentially in the form of autonomous buses in transit lanes.
26. The RLTP document needs to tell this story, and link the strategy to the ten-year capital and operating programme.

The Regional Public Transport Plan

27. The initiatives and policies in the RPTP impact directly on the operating programmes in the RLTP, and the ten-year funding requirements. These include:
 - The future public transport network, including the role of Park & Rides
 - The bus priority programme
 - Initiatives for facilitating mobility as a service
 - Assisting the transport disadvantaged
 - Fares and ticketing

Constrained Funding

28. Until Auckland Council makes decisions around funding levels for transport in May 2018, and central government review the GPS, significant uncertainty remains.
29. In relation to Central Government funding, it could be several months before the new GPS on Transport is issued. Decisions will be made over the coming months on which agency will deliver some of the major roading projects (e.g. Mill Road). The Transport Agency has offered to “front-load” some projects. AT and the Transport Agency have entered into an agreement for AT to deliver the Matakana Link Road with “front-loading” of funding from the Transport Agency if required. However, the agreement requires funding to be repaid during the three-year construction period of the road. While these types of arrangements do not provide additional funding, they do smooth funding availability over time.

External Consultation/Engagement

30. Where a review determines that significant changes are required to the RLTP, it is necessary for a full public consultation to take place, as set out in the Local Government Act 2002. The LTMA notes that it may be appropriate for RLTP consultation to be undertaken jointly with the LTP.
31. Early engagement was undertaken with Local Boards in sub-regional cluster briefings throughout August. Approximately 40 Local Board members attended these sessions. Further engagement and formal consultation with local boards will take place during February/March 2018.
32. Early engagement has taken place with mana whenua representatives in November and is ongoing. Staff are also working with Council to identify opportunities to engage with other communities, particularly ethnic communities and Mataawaka, prior to and during public consultation.
33. Other key stakeholders will be invited to attend targeted events in March 2018. Full details on the proposed format of these events will be reported to the Committee on 1 February.
34. Written and online feedback will also be sought, and staff will report to the Board on the results of public consultation in May 2018, to ensure that any changes as a result of consultation are incorporated into the final document for publication prior to 30 June 2018.



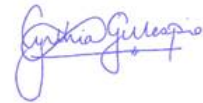
Next Steps

35. The Transport Agency requires that we submit a draft RLTP to inform the development of the National Land Transport Programme on or before 16 December 2017. Staff will work with the Transport Agency to ensure that it is understood that this draft is still subject to change and is not the final draft for public consultation.
36. We recommend that the RTC delegate a subgroup to develop a final draft for consultation. AT staff will work with Council to agree on the content of consultation documents, Council's online feedback form, and other collateral as it pertains to the RLTP. Staff will also determine the level of resourcing required for the public consultation period including the coding and analysis of submissions, and will report back to the 1 February meeting of the RTC to finalise these matters and recommend the adoption of the final draft for consultation.
37. Further pre-consultation engagement will take place with local boards in February, and formal engagement with mana whenua is ongoing.
38. Consultation starts on 28 February. Changes will be made to the document as a result of public consultation and further information about funding availability. A targeted transport stakeholder event with a particular focus on local boards focusing exclusively on the RLTP is expected to occur in the week beginning 5 March, and another targeted transport stakeholder event covering the LTP, Annual Plan Refresh, and RLTP has been scheduled for 14 March. It is recommended that representatives of the RTC attend both these events, in addition to delegated staff, to receive in-person feedback from key stakeholders.
39. The new RLTP, incorporating any changes as a result of public consultation, must be published prior to the expiry of the third year of the current Plan on 30 June 2018.

Attachment

Attachment Number	Description
1	Draft Regional Land Transport Plan 2017-2028

Document Ownership

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