Discussion Document

For the Review of Waikato Regional Public Transport Plan

May 2018
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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this discussion document

Waikato Regional Council is undertaking a review of the Waikato Regional Public Transport Plan (RPTP or the Plan). The RPTP guides the development and management of public transport services within the region.

The current RPTP was adopted in 2015 and is required to be updated to ensure the Plan is aligned with national and regional transport policy, and in particular the new 2018-21 Government Policy Statement on land transport, the updated 2018-48 Regional Land Transport Plan and other key strategic planning work such as the Access Hamilton Strategy review.

The purpose of this discussion document is to facilitate feedback from key stakeholders on matters that should be considered by Waikato Regional Council when preparing the RPTP. This discussion document is informed by the RPTP Strategic Case, and is the first part of the RPTP preparation process - the next phase will involve preparing a draft Plan, which will be issued for full public consultation in August 2018.

1.2 Stakeholder consultation

The RPTP must be prepared in accordance with the Land Transport Management Act 2003 (LTMA). The LTMA requires that the RPTP takes into account a wide range of national and regional policies and strategies. The LTMA also requires Waikato Regional Council to consult with a wide range of stakeholders and the public. In particular, section 125 of the LTMA requires that when preparing a draft RPTP, Waikato Regional Council must consult with the following key stakeholders:

- Regional Transport Committee
- All territorial authorities in the region
- the Ministry of Education
- NZ Transport Agency
- KiwiRail
- Public transport operators in the region.

Waikato Regional Council is seeking feedback from these key transport stakeholders and other partners on this discussion document. Over June 2018, Waikato Regional Council staff will undertake a roadshow to a number of territorial authorities and key operators in the region. The feedback will be used to assist in preparing the draft RPTP.

Waikato Regional Council is particularly interested in your response to the consultation questions as listed in this discussion document but would also welcome feedback on any other matters in relation to the RPTP.

Please send your feedback to Lisette Balsom at Lisette.balsom@waikatoregion.govt.nz by 22 June 2018.
1.3 Document structure

This discussion document is divided into a number of sections which reflect those intended to be included in the draft RPTP when prepared.

Stakeholder feedback is particularly sought on the proposed integrated network structure identified in Section 5, and the policy framework for the RPTP as outlined in Section 6.

1.4 RPTP development process from here

We will be taking the steps set out in the following table to prepare the draft RPTP. The timetable provides for the final RPTP to be adopted in December 2018.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Key actions</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stakeholder consultation on discussion document</strong></td>
<td>Discussion document approved by the RPTP Development Subcommittee for stakeholder feedback</td>
<td>18 May 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stakeholder consultation on Discussion Document in accordance with section 120 of the LTMA (including roadshow engagement with councils)</td>
<td>May-June 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stakeholder feedback on the discussion document closes</td>
<td>22 June</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Draft RPTP development and public consultation</strong></td>
<td>Prepare draft RPTP</td>
<td>May-July 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RPTP Development Subcommittee endorse draft RPTP</td>
<td>30 July 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WRC Strategy and Policy committee approve draft RPTP for public consultation</td>
<td>7 August</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public consultation and hearings</td>
<td>15 Aug-end Oct</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Adoption of new RPTP 2018-28</strong></td>
<td>Prepare final RPTP</td>
<td>Sep-Nov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WRC Strategic and Policy committee approve final RPTP</td>
<td>4 December</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WRC adopt the final RPTP 2018-21</td>
<td>13 December</td>
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2. Background

2.1 Purpose of the RPTP

The Regional Public Transport Plan provides a means for the Waikato Regional Council, public transport operators and other key stakeholders to work together in developing public transport services and infrastructure.

This Plan sets out the priorities and needs for public transport services and infrastructure in the Waikato region, in accordance with the provisions of the Land Transport Management Act 2003 (LTMA).

The RPTP describes the public transport network that Waikato Regional Council proposes for the region, identifies the services that are integral to that network over the next 10 years, and sets out the objectives and policies that apply to those services.


2.2 RPTP Review process

The Plan review process has been undertaken by the Waikato Regional Public Transport Plan Development Subcommittee (RPTPD Subcommittee) in close collaboration with the NZ Transport Agency, territorial authorities, the Ministry of Education, the Waikato District Health Board, the University of Waikato, the Waikato Institute of Technology, and other key stakeholders from the access and mobility sector.

The RPTPD Subcommittee constitution and members are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Names</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Waikato Regional Council</td>
<td>Cr Russ Rimmington (Chair)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cr Hugh Vercoe (Deputy Chair)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton City Council</td>
<td>Cr Dave Macpherson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cr Leo Tooman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Territorial Authority Funders</td>
<td>Cr Toby Adams (Hauraki District Council)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cr Dynes Fulton (Waikato District Council)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cr Grahame Webber with Cr Judy Bannon as alternate (Waipa District Council)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NZ Transport Agency</td>
<td>Andrew McKillop, Megan Kettle and Cole O’Keefe</td>
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The 2017-18 review of the RPTP is following the NZTA Business Case process, with the purpose of reviewing the current plan and bringing it up to date with changes in the transport policy context, in particular the new 2018-21 Government Policy Statement on land transport, the updated 2018-48 Regional Land Transport Plan, and progress with other key strategic work such as the Access Hamilton Strategy review.

More specifically, the review followed the principles of the NZTA Business Case Approach to determine:
1. The core PT problems that need to be addressed in this RPTP
2. The consequence of not addressing these problems
3. Expected benefits/outcomes that can be realised from addressing the problems
4. Whether the existing policy framework is still fit for purpose and/or any different policy intervention is required.

A Strategic Case for the RPTP review was compiled based on the outcomes of discussions on the above, and is available on Waikato Regional Council website. The Strategic Case forms an important part of the RPTP review process, and it helps to guide a range of strategic and policy matters contained in this Discussion Document.

2.3 Our current public transport system

The Waikato region has the fourth largest contracted bus service in New Zealand behind Auckland, Christchurch and Wellington. Waikato Regional Council contracts out the provision of public transport in the region. In Hamilton city, Waikato Regional Council rates residents to provide PT services. In the rest of the region, funding is provided from Territorial Authorities for PT services in their districts.

Bus patronage in the region rose from 1.7 million trips in 2002/03 to over 4 million trips in 2016/17. The past two years saw a decline in patronage, consistent with other regions across New Zealand, however patronage has begun to increase again over the last six months.

The existing public transport bus network in the Waikato region can be broadly classified into three categories – Hamilton urban, satellite commuter and rural regional services, as show in Figures 2-1 and 2-2 below.

*Figure 2-1: current Hamilton urban public transport network*
Services within Hamilton account for over 90 per cent of the region’s public transport services, and is comprised of 27 routes with most operating Monday to Saturday. There are 14 key routes that operate on Sundays and public holidays. All public buses within the region are wheelchair accessible.

Bus services are provided between Hamilton and a number of towns within the Waikato, including: Huntly, Ngaruawahia, Raglan, Te Awamutu, Cambridge, Morrinsville, Te Aroha and Paeroa.

Outside of Hamilton and surrounding towns, services also provide connections for Taupo, Tokoroa, Mangakino, Meremere, Te Kauwhata, Mercer and Tuakau. Limited bus services are also provided between Tuakau/Port Waikato and Pukekohe, managed by Auckland Transport.

Waikato Regional Council also manages the Total Mobility Scheme within the Waikato region. The scheme currently operates in Hamilton, Taupo and Tokoroa. The scheme provides subsidised taxi travel for people with disabilities.

The Waikato region is similar to most cities around the world where passenger fares do not cover the full cost of providing public transport services. Subsidies are required to ensure the ongoing operation
of public transport. The total gross cost of public transport contracts in the region is approximately $25 million per annum and is funded through:

- Fares from users
- Government subsidies from the National Land Transport Fund
- Local share collected through rates.
3. Key issues for public transport in our region

3.1 Key problems

Over 2017, the Regional Public Transport Plan Development Subcommittee in conjunction with key stakeholders from the health and education sectors had undertaken a strategic assessment for the review of the Regional Public Transport Plan. The outcomes of the strategic assessment have been summarised into the RPTP Strategic Case, which outlines three key problems relevant to public transport and the Waikato region, and the potential benefits of addressing them.

The problems identified in the Strategic Case are broadly consistent with the problem and benefit statements developed by the Regional Transport Committee for the updated Regional Land Transport Plan 2018-48, and in particular address elements of the RLTP Problem 1 around high growth, and Problem 3 around people’s accessibility to essential services and employment.

**Problem 1: High population growth and increasing dependency on cars is causing congestion in our towns and city, hampering economic development and community wellbeing.**

Our towns and city are experiencing both higher than expected population growth, and increasing dependency on cars instead of more efficient travel such as public transport, which has implications for health, land use, the environment, and economic and community wellbeing.

Significant population growth in parts of the region is increasing transport demand. Waikato people are also increasingly using their cars. Meanwhile, urban design continues to prioritise cars over other modes, perpetuating people’s preference to use private cars. Hamilton city in particular is experiencing increasing congestion because of this population growth and increasing use of cars. As a result, there is evidence that our health and wellbeing are worsening because of the increased use of cars.

**Problem factors:**

- Significant population growth in parts of the region is increasing transport demand
- Waikato people are using their cars more often and travelling longer distances
- Land use planning continues to prioritise cars over other modes, making the network less efficient
- Increasing congestion because of population growth and increasing use of cars, particularly in Hamilton
- Our health and wellbeing are worsening due to the adverse impacts of the congestion.
Problem 2: Lack of suitable transport options is limiting access to essential services and employment, impacting on economic and social viability of communities.

The region currently has a lack of publicly available and accessible transport options with appropriate routes, frequencies, and times, in particular for rural populations in Waikato. The problem includes the lack of coordination between transport providers, how available services are communicated to communities, and the affordability of services, both for funders and for users.

Essential services and employment opportunities are limited, in particular in rural areas. For most people living outside of the main urban areas, there is a need to travel to access essential services. Transport options to take people to essential services and employment are also limited.

A lack of coordination between transport services may result in reduced benefits for providers and their communities. The limited availability of essential services, employment and transport options results in higher costs for people who live outside of main urban areas, reduced opportunities for participation in their communities, and therefore reduced health and wellbeing of these communities.

Problem factors:
- Transport options to access to essential services and employment are limited, particularly in rural areas
- Lack of coordination between transport providers is resulting in reduced value for money from public expenditure and less effective services for communities
- The limited availability of essential services, employment and transport options results in higher costs for people who live rurally, reduced opportunities for participation in their communities, and therefore reduced health and wellbeing of these communities.

Problem 3: Poor perceptions and journey experiences are a barrier to growing Public transport patronage, resulting in reduced value for money spent on transport infrastructure and services.

There are currently problems with public perceptions and experiences using public transport in our region. Research from 2016 to identify why patronage in Hamilton in particular was falling revealed a high level of overall user satisfaction with functional aspects of the bus network. However, the study also highlighted the two key reasons noted below as to why public transport use had declined.

The most important challenge is that public transport is not currently perceived as less affordable or more convenient than the private car use. Bus travel is also not currently seen as safe or pleasant by non-users.

Problem factors:
- Bus travel is not currently seen as safe or pleasant by non-users
- Public transport is not currently perceived as an affordable or more convenient alternative to the use of a private car.
3.2 Benefits of addressing the problems

The benefits of addressing the problems identified equate to our long term vision for the Waikato region, which is twofold:

**Benefit One: A transport system that increasingly:**

- provides capacity for population growth and economic development
- enhances the health and wellbeing of our people, particularly transport disadvantaged\(^1\)
- makes our cities and towns more liveable
- is affordable for users and funders.

A key benefit of moving people more efficiently and effectively is the corresponding improvement in community wellbeing, particularly in our urban areas. Decreasing the priority of planning for cars while increasing public transport priority will also result in more attractive places to live and efficient use of land.

**Benefit Two: People having increased choices in how they get to where they need and want to be.**

There is strong evidence that there are significant economic, social and health benefits to enabling people to travel independently and safely around their local community using an affordable and flexible transport mode. Communities that move around also interact with each other and are strengthened in the process.

Key policy focus areas to work towards this long term vision are outlined in the future public transport system section of the Plan.

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\(^1\) Transport-disadvantaged (as defined in the Land Transport Management Act) means people who the regional council has reasonable grounds to believe are the least able to travel to basic community activities and services (for example, work, education, health care, welfare, and shopping).
4. Delivering an improved public transport system in the region

4.1 Our vision

Delivering an improved transport system is critical to achieving the national strategic priorities of improving road safety, improving transport access, and contributing to environmental and value for money outcomes.

Our long term vision for the Waikato region is to have a transport system that increasingly moves people more efficiently and affordably, influencing the way land is used to increasingly enhance the attractiveness and liveability of our urban areas. We also want people to have increased suitable transport choices in how they get to where they want to be.

Realising our vision would require a different approach for the network design and planning to increase ‘people throughputs’ and move people more efficiently and effectively across the network. This will involve decreasing priority of planning for cars while providing for increased public transport solutions.

As public transport takes up less room per person to move people than single occupancy vehicles, more people can be moved using less space, creating increasing efficiencies for the network. Economies of scale will allow for public transport to become more affordable, attracting increased demand for more public transport (and correspondingly pedestrian)-friendly environments. Environments which prioritise people over cars are more attractive to residents, and contribute to greater perceptions of safety and wellbeing, and therefore liveability of urban areas.

Addressing poor perceptions and journey experiences of public transport and the quality of facilities and services will increase use of public transport in the region. Greater participation in public transport will remove motor vehicles from roads. Increased use of public transport therefore has environmental benefits, in particular reducing congestion and increasing traffic flow efficiency.

Increasing traffic flow efficiency also carries economic benefits as goods and services are able to get to their destinations more quickly and predictably.

There are many obvious benefits to population health through increased participation in active transport modes and getting more people, more active, more often.

Providing good transport choices can immensely improve the liveability of an area. There is strong evidence that there are significant social benefits to enabling people to travel independently and safely around their local community using an affordable and flexible transport mode. Communities that move around also interact with each other and are strengthened in the process.

The ability to take public transport to locations such as school, town and recreational facilities contributes to engagement in activities and to the vibrancy of a community. There is also evidence to suggest that pedestrians will linger for longer in shopping centres and thus potentially spend more. Pedestrians also tend to make use of their local neighbourhood shops.
Increased participation in public transport will therefore have economic, environmental, and health benefits that have flow on effects for the community.

4.2 Strategic responses

To address the problems identified for public transport in the Waikato region, and work towards the long term vision, a list of ‘strategic responses’ have been developed by the RPTPD Subcommittee and key stakeholders, and these are:

1. **Move** from a coverage based network to a mass transit oriented network in Hamilton and surrounds over time

2. **Increase public transport mode share** through targeted travel behaviour change initiatives

3. **Connect regional towns** via improved public transport services

4. **Within regional towns, encourage demand responsive services** for the first and last miles

5. **Improve end to end journey** experiences and monitoring thereof

6. **Plan and implement** transport solutions with transport disadvantaged at the forefront of our thinking.

These strategic response are discussed in more detail as follows.

**Strategic Response 1: Moving from a coverage based network to a mass transit-oriented network in Hamilton and surrounds over time**

Population growth within the Waikato is most acute within Hamilton and the neighbouring Waikato and Waipa Districts. Population growth combined with high rates of low occupancy private motor use is causing increased levels on traffic congestion. This in turn:

- constrains our ability to accommodate further growth and development,
- places constraints on the productivity of our existing economy
- impacts our individual and collective wellbeing
- makes our city and towns less liveable

Hamilton City’s transport strategy (Access Hamilton) anchors a strategic direction to increase public transport mode share as a mechanism to accommodate further growth and help manage the adverse impacts of increasing traffic congestions. Access Hamilton also recognises that significant numbers of people commute into Hamilton each day and the need to increase public transport mode share is a sub-regional issue.

Strategic Response 1, proposed to be anchored in the updated RPTP, acknowledges the direction set out in Access Hamilton and recognises that we cannot build our way out of traffic congestion. Continually adding capacity to roads to accommodate more cars is neither practical nor affordable in the long term. Even if it was affordable, the approach contributes to urban sprawl, reduces the liveability of our urban environments and contributes to other adverse environmental impacts.

Evolving our current public transport network from a coverage based system to mass transit oriented system over time will enable us to move a lot more people efficiently and affordably with a much lower demand for valuable urban land compared to car dominated system.
Importantly, the strategic response also recognises that we do not need a comprehensive mass transit system today. Rather the system needs to evolve and be progressively developed year on year over the next 50 years as the city and surrounds grow and develop.

This approach recognises that conditions do not currently exist to enable significant increases in the public transport use and creating such conditions requires infrastructure and land use interventions that can have long lead times and significant price tags.

In essence the strategic response seeks to make progressive gains in public transport mode share over the coming years while building a foundation that makes it possible to implement mass transit solutions as and when they are needed in the longer term.

This RPTP Discussion Document has outlined a new network structure and policy provisions to give effect to Strategic Response 1, and these are discussed in sections 5 and 6.2.

Strategic Response 2: Increase public transport mode share through targeted travel behaviour change initiatives

This strategic response is made up of three key areas for intervention: information and promotion, direct travel behaviour change interventions, and pricing intervention. The objective is to improve visibility of travel options and attractiveness of public transport.

The information and promotion component of this option involves improving the visibility of travel options for people in the Waikato. It includes making known the comparative costs of different modes of travel, and providing real time information to assist with journey planning.

Direct travel behaviour change interventions include advocating for disincentives for school drop off/pick up, and supporting corporate travel planning to favour the use of public transport.

The pricing intervention involves assessing the price of fares so they are affordable and a realistic alternative to private motor vehicles, and in particular looking at pricing for families.

Benefits of this option are that increased numbers of people convert to active travel modes, benefiting health and decreasing congestion.

This RPTP Discussion Document has set out the relevant policies in section 6.2 (Fares and Ticketing) and section 6.3 (Marketing and Promotion) that aim to improve the attractiveness of public transport.

Strategic Response 3: Connect regional towns via improved public transport services

This strategic response covers provision of regular public transport services, connecting key regional towns with employment and essential services. The response includes prioritising investment to target communities of greatest need. The overall objective of this strategic response is to enhance community wellbeing by enabling access to education, healthcare and social opportunities.
Because Total Mobility is funded by Territorial Authorities, this strategic response involves these authorities reviewing and considering the availability of Total Mobility in their districts.

Since many people who qualify for subsidies through the Total Mobility scheme also rely on footpaths for local participation, the strategic response also includes targeted improvements to connections between the places people live, and public transport services (ie bus stops). The response requires coordination between regional and local councils where public transport services are provided, so that improvements can be prioritised and their impact monitored and valued.

**Strategic Reponse 4: Within regional towns, encourage demand responsive services for the first and last miles**

Strategic Response 4 provides for investigating the viability of demand-responsive services (DRS) to provide coverage where population density is low and/or during periods of low demand. As detailed in Problem Two above, essential services and employment opportunities are currently limited in rural areas, as are transport options to take people to these places. For more urban areas, public transport options become more limited in after hours or weekend periods, disadvantaging those reliant on this transport to access essential services and employment.

The provision of DRS in areas of low demand will also provide useful information to assist with future network planning, including a better understanding of user demand by time of day and travel patterns. Investigating locally specific demand/needs will allow the DRS to be tailored in each area to provide a flexible, integrated and customer-centric transport option.

Operational and vehicle technology will also be a key element of a success DRS, and Council will be working closely with the NZ Transport Agency and other technology providers to identify appropriate technology to support the implantation of DRS.

An overall objective of this option for services provided in Districts other than Hamilton City would be to move from a currently dispersed and unconnected network, to one where centres or hubs around the region have regular public transport services, and smaller services can be leveraged outwards from these hubs.

**Strategic Response 5: Improve end to end journey experiences and monitoring thereof**

Bus users’ current perceptions of bus services are very high, but there is room for improvement, particularly in the parts of the journey that provide access to public transport. To improve these journey experiences and overall monitoring, this strategic response includes improving service
reliability, actual and perceived safety for public transport users, and access to and quality of bus stops. The benefits are that journeys to and from transport services are improved and measured.

Specific actions that address this strategic response are:

- integrating transport modes so that people’s journeys are more seamless and easy to understand and do
- promoting payment options off-bus so that buses are not delayed by passengers paying by cash and requiring change, nor needing to top up stored value cards
- planning and building park and ride facilities so that people who live further away from public transport routes can still easily access their nearest connection
- using CCTV to monitor behaviour on and around public transport for accurate monitoring
- Addressing any behaviour issues with action so people understand that poor behaviour is not tolerated
- Promoting monitoring and improvement of footpath accessibility to bus stops and the quality of bus shelters, acknowledging the importance of the whole journey which includes travel to and from bus stops and waiting for the bus in all seasons.
- Overall monitoring of users which includes diversity of users during trip and arriving at destinations, and assessing against diversity of demographic groups living in catchment areas. Analysis of this monitoring should also consider access to vehicles and socioeconomic deprivation.

This RPTP Discussion Document has set out the relevant policies in sections 5 (Integrated public transport network framework), 6.2 (Fares, ticketing and farebox recovery), 6.4 (Tendering and contracting) and 6.5 (Monitoring and review).

**Strategic Response 6: Plan and implement transport solutions with transport disadvantaged at the forefront of our thinking**

Waikato Regional Council believes there are a range of personal or locational attributes that are likely to restrict accessibility and/or mobility due to physical ability, financial circumstances or distance. These include:

- Age (young or old)
- Lack of income
- Inability to drive and/or access to a vehicle
- Disability
- Residential location remote from basic community activities or essential services.

Taking these attributes into account, the following groups are considered to be more likely to be “transport disadvantaged” in the Waikato region:

- People with disabilities
- People without a driver licence or access to a vehicle
- Children or elderly
- People with low income and/or living in ‘high deprivation’ neighbourhoods
People living in isolated communities with no easy transport access to essential services.

The RPTP will address the needs of transport disadvantaged in a number of ways.

A key response to address the needs of the transport disadvantaged in the Waikato region, and work towards the long term vision, is to plan and implement a comprehensive public transport system with transport disadvantaged at the forefront. We will do this be ensuring that the impact on different passenger types is taken into account when prioritising services and infrastructure improvements.

Council will also increasingly target service to assist public transport to meet different needs. We need to ensure that public transport is able to be used by everyone. This means exploring initiatives for specific groups to ensure inclusive and equitable access to public transport. This entails supporting transport initiatives that target the transport disadvantaged, that is, people in rural areas, those with no drivers’ licence where no other transport option exists, and people with disabilities. While a substantial amount of this objective will be covered by the implementation of demand responsive services, some specific additional initiatives are required, and these include:

I. Identify service delivery attributes and trade-offs such as pricing and travel speed by persona and define target system design criteria
II. Tailor service design to specific customer needs to the extent practicable and affordable
III. Identify and implement universal features for improving journey experiences both on and off public transport
IV. Integrate and coordinate public transport infrastructure and services so that people’s journeys are more seamless and easy to understand and do
V. Improve actual and perceived safety for public transport use
VI. Improve access to and quality of bus stops
VII. Improve access to public transport information
VIII. Ensure consideration is given to those who are transport disadvantaged

These initiatives will be considered as part of the RPTP development to assist the transport disadvantaged. Further detail on specific policies aimed at the transport disadvantaged are set out in section 6, including network design, vehicle specifications, fares and total mobility services.

Section 4 consultation questions:

- Do you have any comments on the Strategic Responses discussed in section 4.2, and in particular how these will contribute towards the long term vision?
- Do you have any comments on how the needs of the transport disadvantaged are being considered in the RPTP?
5. Integrated public transport network framework

The following section sets out an integrated network structure to be included in the RPTP that provides certainty in relation to provision of public transport in the short term while enabling a transition to a mass transit oriented system over the longer term.

The new integrated transport network seeks to anchor a network design philosophy for the region and includes a layered service approach and service level guidelines, and signals core infrastructure requirements.

5.1 Network design objectives and principles

Good network planning and design is essential for public transport success. To achieve the strategic responses identified in section 4.2, the Council proposes to establish an integrated public transport network framework to guide the development of the public transport network over time.

In doing this, the overall objectives of the framework are to:

- Deliver an integrated public transport network that caters for different mobility needs
- Ensure consistent journey experiences and levels of services based on the role and function of services and supporting infrastructure
- Guide the prioritisation of public transport infrastructure, services and systems
- Support the integration of land use to unlock housing and urban development opportunities.

To achieve these objectives, the following underpinning principles have been identified to ensure the public transport network is designed to:

- Provide safe, efficient and reliable public transport services
- Provide great customer/journey experience and to encourage travel behaviour change
- Support integration between modes and systems
- Provide transport choices, particularly for the transport disadvantaged
- Ensure optimal use of public transport resources and public subsidies
- Support technology and innovation.

5.2 Network design philosophy – a network solution that can cater for different user requirements

For public transport to become a more realistic and attractive alternative to the private car use, the network must ensure that it can cater for different user groups and their travel needs. However, different user requirements will often conflict and there is no one-size-fits-all network solution, as illustrated in the diagram below.
The challenge for the network design is therefore to come up with a network response that could make balanced trade-offs between various user requirements, efficient allocation of public transport resources and funding availability.

A key to achieving this goal is through the development of an integrated network with different layers of service that target to different user groups at different times of the day. This layered service approach is the cornerstone of this integrated public transport network framework and is set out in further detail below.

### 5.3 Layered service approach

The Council proposes to establish a new network structure with six service layers that contribute towards an integrated public transport system, with each layer designed to offer specific journey experience and service standards. The new layered network structure is shown in Table 5-1 below, along with further detail on the role and function of each layer.

**Table 5-1: Proposed layered network structure for public transport services in Waikato**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service layer</th>
<th>Role and function</th>
<th>Key characteristics</th>
<th>Desired service levels</th>
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</table>
| **Urban Express** | • A core bus network that connects key activity and employment centres within urban areas.  
• Provides fast, frequent, express services that offer travel time advantage over private vehicles  
• Influence future development patterns by encouraging more                                                                 | • Fast and direct routes with limited stops  
• High frequency  
• High capacity vehicles  
• Extensive hours of operation | All day 7 days/week (6am-11pm).  
Frequency:  
• 5-15min weekdays |
intensive urban development in the key growth centres it serves

| Regional Express | • Provides fast and express services between urban centres and key sub-regional towns, and on corridors experiencing adverse effects of congestions.  
• Provides an attractive and viable alternative to car travel at peak times, and provides regular and reliable off-peak travel options. | • Fast and direct routes with limited stops  
• High frequency  
• High capacity vehicles  
• Extensive hours of operation | • 15-30min evenings / weekends  
All day 7 days/week (6am - 9pm). Frequency:  
15-30min weekdays  
30- 60min evenings / weekends |
| Urban Connector | • Provides frequent and reliable services within urban centres that connect to Urban/Regional Express services  
• Provides competitive travel times to private vehicles  
• Provides network coverage to growth areas and key corridors not served by Urban/Regional Express services  
• Supports more intensive housing development in areas served | • High speed  
• High frequency  
• Medium capacity vehicles  
• Reasonably direct routes that balance speed and coverage  
• Extensive hours of operation | All day 7 days/week (6am-9pm). Frequency:  
30-min peak/day,  
60-min evening |
| Regional Connector | • Provides quality and reliable services between urban centres and key sub-regional towns  
• Enables good access to employment, education and essential services  
• May connects to Regional Express services to provide further coverage.  
• Supports more intensive housing development in areas served | • Moderate speed and frequency  
• Medium/low capacity vehicles  
• Reasonably direct routes that balance speed and coverage  
• Extensive hours of operation | Minimum All day 7 days/week (6am-9pm). Frequency:  
60-min weekdays,  
120-min evenings / weekends |
| Community Connector | • Providing basic services within or connecting to regional towns  
• Enables basic access to employment, education and essential services  
• Emphasises coverage and accessibility from low-density areas | • Low frequency with service levels dependant on demand and funding  
• Medium/low capacity vehicles  
• Moderate/low hours of service subject to demand | Minimum 1 return trip per weekday |
| Demand Responsive Service | • Provides demand responsive services in areas of low demand and/or a scheduled service is considered not feasible/practical  
• Connects to express/connector services to provide additional network coverage | • Flexible door-to-door service  
• May utilise taxis or mini vans as well as regular bus vehicles, dependant on cost and demand | Service levels dependant on demand and funding |

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2 Regional towns with population above 10,000 and growing
*Important note: the desired service levels set out in this table are only indicative, and are subject to further technical assessment and agreement with funding partners*

The proposed layered service approach outlined in this RPTP responds to the network design objectives and principles by setting out an integrated network structure for the region’s public transport system that provides enhanced network coverage, journey experience and service levels. The layered service approach provides for the specification of consistent levels of service or standards that match with different user requirements/needs. It is also used to represent an interconnected hierarchy of services, where lower-order layers generally support services within higher-order layers to provide improved network coverage and frequencies.

For some rural communities or new growth areas, an extension of the scheduled public transport network may be an appropriate response. However in many cases, the costs of providing anything other than a basic service are likely to be prohibitive. In these situations, there may be opportunities to provide more flexible and cost-effective public transport options, such as community connector or demand responsive services. These services will supplement the existing Express or Connector network by providing additional network capacity or coverage, particularly in areas or during periods where demand is low.

Decisions about individual public transport service will require trade-offs to be made between various user requirements – travel time, frequency and coverage. Figure 5-1 shows how different types of public transport services lie on a continuum between these user requirements. The layered service approach and the guidance on network characteristics and service levels set out in Table 5-1 are designed to further assist with decision-making when these trade-offs need to be made.

*Figure 5-1 Integrated public transport network structure and expected user experience*

The main change from the current network pattern will be the much stronger focus on integration between services to cater for different mobility needs. This requires an equally strong focus on the development of convenient interchange facilities, particularly on the core Express public transport routes where they connect with Connector services.

Although some passengers will need to transfer between services to complete a particular trip, this will be minimised by the provision of good interchange facilities, integrated ticketing, and improved frequencies particularly for the Express bus routes.
5.4 Planning and delivery of supporting infrastructure

To support network structure, a number of public transport infrastructure improvements will be required, particularly to support the functions of the Express/Connector networks. It is envisaged that the proposed network structure will be incorporated into relevant local transport strategies and asset management plans (eg Access Hamilton Strategy and Mass Transit Plan) to help guide the ongoing investment of infrastructure. Particular guidance around future infrastructure requirements to support the new network structure is outlined in the table below.

Table 5-2 Guidance on future infrastructure requirement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service layer</th>
<th>Infrastructure requirement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Urban Express         | • Shared right of way with extensive PT priority measures, including bus lanes and signal priority in congested areas  
                        | • High quality and accessible bus shelters and passenger facilities  
                        | • High quality interchange facilities at key transfer stations  
                        | • High quality                                                                 |
| Regional Express      | • Shared right of way with extensive PT priority measures, including bus lanes and signal priority in congested areas  
                        | • High quality and accessible bus shelters and passenger facilities  
                        | • Potential park and ride facilities within key regional centres    |
| Urban Connector       | • Shared right of way with PT priority measures, including signal priority in congested areas  
                        | • Shelter and seating to be provided at major boarding stops and transfer locations    |
| Regional Connector    | • Shared right of way with PT priority measures, including signal priority in congested areas  
                        | • Shelter and seating to be provided at major boarding stops and transfer locations    |
| Community Connector   | • Shelter and seating to be provided at major boarding stops and transfer locations     |

5.5 Implementing the new network structure

The new network structure outlined in this RPTP is intended to guide the provision of new services based on the role of public transport as set out in Table 5-1 and funding availability.

The layered service approach will be used to allocate service types to existing services, as set out in Table 5-1 during future service reviews. During a service review, existing services will be reviewed and updated as appropriate. If current services do not meet the minimum service level guidelines for their service type this might indicate that service enhancements are justified (or vice versa) or alternatively might indicate a different service type would be more appropriate.

5.5.1 Future network concepts

The changes to the network structure outlined in this Plan represent a significant change in the way that public transport services are delivered in the region. At a high level, the Council has identified
some broad network concepts to guide the development and evolution of the public transport network in the region over time.

Figures 5-2 and 5-3 show the future network concepts for Hamilton and surrounds, and across the whole region, noting that exact public transport routes are not yet specified.
Map 5-2: Future Hamilton urban network concept – aspirational only (For RPTP Development Subcommittee discussion)
Map 5-3: Current regional network (below left) and future regional network (below right)
5.5.2 Moving towards the new network concepts – policies and actions

The Council recognises that moving towards the new network concepts will take phased implementation over a long period of time. It will require detailed assessment of the existing network and route structure, as well as extensive engagement with relevant funding partners and affected communities to ensure that local needs are identified and taken into account.

It is expected that incremental changes to the network and infrastructure will lead us towards our objectives in a stepwise approach. To develop our network towards the future system, the Council has identified the following provisions that will be applied.

Integrated land use planning

An important contributor to the successful delivery of public transport is a supportive land use planning framework. The nature and location of urban development can have a strong influence on the ability of the public transport system to provide effective and efficient travel options. Likewise, a carefully planned public transport system can positively affect land use, in particular intensification around public transport centres or hubs.

The policy in this section recognises the need to encourage a land use planning environment that is supportive of and encourages public transport. It also recognises the need for close working relationships between the council and its strategic partners to enable the public transport system to reach its potential.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy:</th>
<th>Promote a collaborative and integrated approach to the planning and management of public transport and land use to maximise opportunities for public transport.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action:</td>
<td>The council will work collaboratively with transport partners to undertake strategic planning to assess new opportunities for public transport routes at the earliest stages of strategic growth planning initiatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action:</td>
<td>The council will work with strategic partners to ensure an integrated package of transport interventions, including public transport solutions, are investigated and implemented to ensure the long term protection of strategic corridors that have sufficient space to enable an evolution of mass transit modes over time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action:</td>
<td>The council will promote public transport supportive land use practises through its participation in statutory and non-statutory land use planning processes, including district plan changes, designations, major resource consent processes and structure planning and growth strategies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action:</td>
<td>The council will work with territorial authorities to support land use intensification at locations that are serviced by the Urban/Regional Express services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action:</td>
<td>The council will work with territorial authorities to review parking strategies and pricing policies to effectively manage parking supply around transport interchanges to encourage public transport growth.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Infrastructure planning and delivery

Coordinated planning is an anchor philosophy that underpins the RPTP. Our objective is to allow for the allocation of space, enabling a footprint which allows mass movement over single occupancy vehicles that is flexible enough for future modal solutions enabled by developing technologies.
Road controlling authorities\(^3\) are generally responsible for planning and implementing public transport infrastructure, with the regional council primarily responsible for planning and contracting public transport services. Road controlling authorities are not bound by the RPTP. These circumstances highlight the need for coordinated planning of infrastructure and services by the relevant agencies.

The policies and actions in this section provide high level guidance for how the council and road controlling authorities, particularly Hamilton City Council, will work together to develop and implement an agreed framework for the provision of public transport services and infrastructure.

**Policy:** Encourage investment in public transport infrastructure and facilities that improve public transport attractiveness and that are accessible, safe, affordable and operationally efficient.

**Policy:** Ensure a coordinated approach to planning and delivery of public transport infrastructure and services, including in new development areas.

**Policy:** Ensure the following measures are taken into account when prioritising service and infrastructure improvements:

- Passenger impact assessment
- Provision of efficient and reliable access to key employment centres
- Reliability performance – on time performance of bus services on key public transport corridors
- Number of bus vehicle movements (peak and off peak)
- Impact on different passenger types (eg transport disadvantaged, shoppers, commuters, etc)
- Impact on other travel modes
- Economic and environmental impact assessments as appropriate.

**Policy:** Investment priorities for public transport infrastructure will be developed through the Network Operating Framework in Hamilton, and through service level agreements with territorial authorities in other parts of the region.

**Policy:** Promote the protection of land that may be appropriate for future public transport corridors, park and ride facilities and transport interchanges.

**Hamilton city and surrounds**

A Mass Transit Plan is being developed in Hamilton and will provide a sound basis for the Waikato Regional Council, Hamilton City Council and the NZ Transport Agency to work together and engage with stakeholders to identify and implement network priorities across all modes. The key ambition is to set aside dedicated space to be able to deliver future public transport objectives.

The Council proposes to use an improved approach to public transport provision, based on an integrated network structure as outlined earlier in section 5. The core of the new system will be an integrated network of fast and high-frequency all-day services, which will provide connections between key locations, including the city centre, key employment and activity hubs.

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\(^3\) Territorial authorities (eg Hamilton City Council) are responsible for local roads, while the NZ Transport Agency is responsible for state highways.
The Express service network will provide frequent services during the peak periods, and will operate on high capacity or mass transit corridors that provide strong and reliable links between key employment nodes and growth centres. The Express service network and its support infrastructure will support intensification and development at key locations, and this in turn, will provide certainty for developers, investors, businesses and residents.

The Express service network will be complemented by a range of other services, as outlined in Table 5-1. These include a network of urban connector services that provides connections between residential areas and the core Express service network, and demand responsive services to allow further network coverage in areas where population density is low, or during periods of low demand.

A network of integrated services as proposed in the RPTP will provide significant long term benefits for Hamilton and surrounds, including:

- Efficient use of infrastructure/corridors by improving people ‘throughput’ within the network
- Support for land use intensification along high capacity/mass transit corridors and centres as people choose to live and work in areas served by the Express and Connector services. As the frequency services tend to operate on key commuter routes, decongestion benefits are likely to result on these roads.
- A beneficial circle is created, where quality public transport supports land use intensification, which in turn support further increases in service frequency and capacity as demand grows over time.

To support the delivery of this network concept, the Council will work with Hamilton City Council, the NZ Transport Agency and relevant district councils to implement the following infrastructure improvement projects:

- 0-6 years – Undertake mass transit demonstration projects, creating the value proposition for more significant projects and future proofing
- 6+ years – Implement significant infrastructure and service improvements, transitioning towards a mass transit network
- 20+ years – Construct the system which provides for active modes as the preferred method of travel over the private motor vehicle, realising the long term vision

The Council has also identified the following policies and actions to guide the management of the existing network, and to support the transition towards the new network concept as depicted in Figure 5-2.
Regional focus

The objective for public transport for our wider region is to enhance community wellbeing by providing integrated transport solutions within and between our regional towns. Moving towards our future system requires multiple organisations to undertake key actions in and around our city, and in our region.

We want to enable/support and leverage existing community transport initiatives and demand responsive services, and better coordinate funding and service provision across multiple entities. Currently, in addition to public transport services provided by the Waikato Regional Council, transport services are provided through Waikato District Health Board for outpatient services, University of Waikato to transport students from outlying towns to the Hamilton campus, and community transport services provide various shuttles for both health and recreation purposes in a number of locations. These services are provided independently of one another. Working together to identify potential opportunities to align and coordinate transport service provision will help to identify possible routes or times to trial coordinated services. Efficiencies in working together can then be identified and trialled, which may lead to more people being able to access more services, and/or more often.

To support the delivery of the network concept for the region, the Council will work with Hamilton City Council, the NZ Transport Agency and relevant district councils to implement the following infrastructure improvement projects:

- 0-3 years – Demonstrate the viability of a core public transport network between town centres, supported by demand responsive services
- 3-6+ years – embed, grow, mature, and deploy successful models in more places and with more partners
- 10+ years – Continue the system so that the region is well-connected and accessible.

**Policy: Develop a network of integrated services in Hamilton urban area that meets the minimum levels of service as set out in Table 5-1, and to achieve a network coverage target of 100% of households within Hamilton have access to public transport options between the hours of 6am to 9pm.**

Action: Develop a core network of Urban Express services within Hamilton overtime, supported by public transport priority measures that enable travel time advantage at peak time.

Action: Provide network coverage into developing/lower density areas via the extension of urban connector and demand responses services that anchor on key hubs and activity centres.

Action: Develop a network of key transport interchanges and hubs on high capacity/mass transit corridors to facilitate convenient connections between public transport services and active transport modes.
Relevant actions include key organisations wider than the Regional Council, local councils and NZ Transport Agency working together to find areas of mutual objectives, and therefore how they could each contribute to funding and/or service provision.

**Policy: Council will partner public and private entities with shared objectives to better coordinate service delivery and achieve greater value for money spent on transport.**

Through planning and investment in regional public transport to support this policy council will undertake the following actions:

Action: Develop inter-regional links with Auckland to provide travel time certainty and help reduce adverse effects of congestion on the state highway network.

Action: Work with territorial authorities to progressively plan and fund a network of scheduled public transport services, connecting regional towns and enabling access to employment opportunities and essential services

Action: Prioritise regional service improvements to communities of greatest need first

a. Territorial Authorities will review and consider the availability of Total Mobility in their districts.

b. Since many people who qualify for subsidies through the Total Mobility scheme also rely on footpaths for local participation, Territorial Authorities will also consider targeted improvements to connections between the places people live, and public transport services (ie bus stops).

Action: Partner with others to develop, support and/or deliver demand-responsive services to provide coverage and service within regional towns and to connect to scheduled inter-town services.

a. Investigate establishing a shared coordination framework across various service providers and funders of community transport services, health and education shuttles.

i. For example, the council will work with the University of Waikato to transport students from regional areas into the Hamilton Campus.

b. Develop a coordination/shared solution pilot between these providers/funders to determine the feasibility of any longer term coordination.

c. Consider provision of grants/funding to support community initiatives, to provide better rural commuter connections, and to provide ongoing governance and support through shared human resources between local government and the health sector.

d. Where appropriate, provide targeted services that can be tailored to specific community needs or to cater for peak travel demand, such as for school transport.
Passenger Rail

The growth of Auckland and Hamilton, coupled with high land and house prices in these cities and the comparatively lower prices within the Waikato and Waipa districts, is increasing the number of people who access the transport corridor between Hamilton and Auckland.

This population growth is also putting significant pressure on the transport corridor because of the number of residents that commute between Hamilton, the North Waikato and South Auckland. A lack of integration between land use and transport planning, particularly in new residential developments along the transport corridor, has led to suburbs, villages and towns being developed that are predominantly car focused. Limited public transport options are leading to behaviour changes, and an increase in the number of people that use their private vehicle for short trips and commuting.

In Hamilton high reliance on private vehicles is putting pressure on the transport network and impacting on ease of access to the network, and how people get in, around and out of the city. In the North Waikato people do not have access to appropriate services such as education and health care, or employment opportunities, and there is a lack of public transport options. People in these communities therefore travel by car to Hamilton or Auckland to access services and/or employment opportunities.

These problems may increase further with future population growth. For example, in the South of Auckland, areas such as Pukekohe, Drury, Paerata, and Takanini are expected to contain 42,000 new homes by 2045. In the North Waikato, an additional 8,000 new houses will be built in Tuakau, Te Kauwhata and Pokeno. While in Hamilton, greenfield areas in Rototuna, Rotokauri, Ruakura, and Peacocke will provide infrastructure for the development of approximately 9,600 new homes.

The preferred option to address these problems is to operate an inter-regional passenger rail service between Hamilton and Auckland. A passenger rail service between Hamilton and Auckland supports the Government’s interest in investing in inter-regional commuter rail services to support housing and employment opportunities.

Policy: Support the planning and provision of passenger rail service to enable growth, housing and economic development opportunities.

Action: Subject to the outcomes of investigations and funding, introduce a ‘start-up’ passenger rail service between Hamilton and Auckland.

Action: Support the extension of passenger rail services between Hamilton and other regional centres.

Action: Make provision for the upgrade of rail infrastructure to improve service reliability, capacity and efficiency.

Action: Investigate and plan for a more frequent and express passenger rail service, connecting Auckland, Hamilton and Tauranga.

Improving journey experiences

We aim to retain and grow patronage by ensuring people have positive experiences on public transport in our region.
Bus users’ current perceptions of bus services are very high, but there is room for improvement, particularly in the parts of the journey that provide access to public transport.

We need to ensure that public transport is able to be used by everyone. This means exploring initiatives for specific groups to ensure inclusive and equitable access to public transport. This entails supporting transport initiatives that target the transport disadvantaged, that is, people in rural areas, those with no drivers’ licence where no other transport option exists, and people with disabilities. While a substantial amount of this objective will be covered by the implementation of demand responsive services, some specific additional initiatives are required.

**Policy:** Council will increasingly target service design to assist public transport to meet different needs.

Individual operational policies will be specified based on the strategic policy direction set out in this section.

To support this policy, specific actions are to:

1. Identify service delivery attributes and trade-offs such as pricing and travel speed by persona and define target system design criteria
2. Tailor service design to specific customer needs to the extent practicable and affordable
3. Identify and implement universal features for improving journey experiences both on and off public transport
4. Integrate and coordinate public transport infrastructure and services so that people’s journeys are more seamless and easy to understand and do
5. Improve actual and perceived safety for public transport use
6. Improve access to and quality of bus stops
7. Improve access to public transport information
8. Ensure consideration is given to those who are transport disadvantaged.

**Section 5 consultation questions:**

- Do you agree with the proposed layered service approach in section 5.3 and the layers within the approach?
- Do you support the infrastructure requirements outlined in section 5.4 for each service layer?
- Do you have any comments on the proposed future network concepts and the underpinning policies and actions set out in section 5.5?
6. Public transport policies

This section sets out the policies and actions that assist to deliver the objectives for public transport as outlined in this document, and will guide the management and development of public transport in the region.

The policies are grouped by key policy areas:

- 6.1: Targeted services
- 6.2: Fares, ticketing and farebox recovery
- 6.3: Information and promotion
- 6.4 Tendering and contracting
- 6.5 Monitoring and review

6.1 Targeted services

School services

Overview

Access to education is an essential service critical to the wellbeing and prosperity of our communities. School travel is a key element in access to education, and is an important component of public transport for three key reasons:

1. School students are a core user group whose use of public transport generates economies of scale that enable the council to offer a better service delivery for users
2. Accommodating more education journeys via walking, cycling and public transport can offer significant benefits in terms of health and wellbeing, minimising congestion and reducing reliance on cars
3. Safe and reliable access to education via public transport can also deliver indirect benefit for families by making it easier for caregivers to participate in employment and other activities.

The council’s objectives in the provision of public transport which carries school students are:

- To enable independent access to education opportunities and increase the proportion of education based trips being undertaken via active modes and public transport
- To cater for as much school transport as possible as it frees up the network for other purposes and enables broader social and economic benefits, for example by allowing children to independently and safely travel to and from school which in turn may enable caregivers to access employment
- To accommodate school transport in a way that ensures a positive journey experience for all user groups where appropriate
- Providing affordable transport choices through school children receiving concessions.

There are multiple school travel service providers in the Waikato region:

- The council
- The Ministry of Education
- Schools themselves
- Commercial services.
Within Hamilton, bus travel to schools is primarily delivered by public bus services administered by the council. Outside of Hamilton, bus travel to schools is primarily covered by commercial services or the Ministry of Education where there are no alternatives provided by the council. The council is not involved in school services that are procured commercially between individual schools and bus operators.

The Ministry of Education has a policy of being a transport provider only where suitable public transport does not exist. The council therefore must carefully consider the implications for school travel and capacity on the public transport network when expanding or changing services, as this can trigger a withdrawal of Ministry of Education-provided services. Withdrawal of these services can have a significant impact on the regional public transport network where there is insufficient capacity on existing public transport services in the peak time to accommodate additional school children. To service this demand would potentially require new services being put on during peak times. The school services are also currently fully funded by the Ministry of Education, providing a free service for students. Transfer to public transport services will result in students being charged on a ‘user pays’ basis in accordance with the council’s concessionary fare scheme.

**Policy:** The council will work with the Ministry of Education to better integrate the delivery of publicly funded bus services, in accordance with the following principles:

- Any initiatives must result in a better value for money from a whole of government perspective, rather than a transfer of costs from one public entity to another
- Any initiatives must be informed by prior consultation with key stakeholders, including affected schools
- Any initiatives must result in a safe and practical transport solution for school children.

The public transport network is optimised to cater for as many groups as possible. As a preference, the network will accommodate for school children as much as possible on scheduled services.

**Policy:** Where possible, Waikato Regional Council will provide for school travel on the public transport network. This may require school students to transfer between different services.

School travel is also a unique component of public transport. Currently about a third of patronage on the Waikato public transport network is undertaken by people under the age of 15, and a significant proportion of this travel is associated with school travel. Catering for increasing demand can be relatively expensive as it generates the need for additional buses and drivers that are only required for short durations in the mornings and afternoons at peak school travel times. Encouraging active modes and making best use of existing public transport resources is important in order to maximise value for money from public funding and to help keep passenger fares as low as possible over time.

In growing the number of education-based trips on the public transport network, careful consideration needs to be given to the potential implications for other user groups and therefore the ability to grow patronage from these other groups. For example, high proportions of students on buses can make services less attractive for other user groups.

**Policy:** During peak school travel times, the council may provide targeted school bus solutions where:

- general access bus services regularly exceed 80% of the vehicles’ total capacity and over 50% of passengers are students, or:
- schools or clusters of schools (within 500m of each other) have rolls or combined rolls of 1000 students or more, or:
- schools are willing to coordinate start and finish times to minimise congestion on the roading network and enable more efficient provision of school bus solutions, or;
- services are funded by third parties such as educations providers and/or others.

Special events

Overview

Special events are key to Hamilton, and the wider Waikato region. They provide opportunities for increased tourism and economic benefits, as well as contributing to making our region a better place to live in. Dedicated public transport services fully funded by event organisers are currently provided for special events, including major sporting and community events, in the Waikato region.

Public transport enables increased accessibility to events and can minimise the impact of congestion caused by large movements of attendees. Services to special events can also provide broader opportunities for marketing the public transport system, as well as exposing potential non-users to the benefits of public transport use.

Public transport is a significant component of many of our region’s special events and council provides support to a number of events such as Fieldays and Balloons over Waikato.

Policy: Where there are opportunities and benefits for promoting public transport such as exposing non-users to the benefits of public transport, council may support delivery of public transport for special events by:

- undertaking promotional/marketing activities
- leveraging the existing public transport network through provision of discounted travel for specific purposes and limited duration
- contracting and managing service provision on behalf of event organisers, provided funding for those services is secured by event organisers.

Policy: The council may consider contributing to the provision of public transport services for large scale non-commercial special events, subject to:

1. sufficient public funding being available, and
2. event organisers demonstrating they can meet all of the following eligibility criteria via a formal written funding request submitted to the council:
   - the event has free entry for attendees
   - the event is expected to have more than 20,000 attendees on any one day
   - the event must take place within the Waikato Regional Council boundaries
   - the event will result in demonstrable benefits for the wider community.

Total Mobility service

Overview

Total Mobility is a national transport scheme involving disability support agencies, approved transport providers and local government. The Total Mobility scheme is designed to meet wider public transport objectives by increasing the mobility of people with disabilities to enhance community participation. There are some variations in the scheme from region to region to reflect local differences.
Waikato Regional Council manages the Total Mobility scheme within the Waikato region. It is currently operating in Hamilton, Taupō and Tokoroa.

The scheme is jointly funded by local and central government and can be provided by taxi organisations and potentially other suppliers such as private hire and volunteer organisations. Within Hamilton, local share funding comes from WRC. Outside of Hamilton, local share funding is provided by respective district councils.

The scheme is not intended to be a substitute for public transport services or other transport services that are provided by government agencies (eg District Health Boards, Ministry of Social Development) or rest home providers.

**Policy:** *Waikato Regional Council will continue to administer and oversee the operation of the Total Mobility scheme [LINK], for the mobility impaired whose needs are not met by the regular public transport network, in towns within the Region where an appropriate operator and public funding exists.*

**Action:** The council will encourage territorial authorities to fund the local share for Total Mobility services to enable extension of the service to other parts of the region.

**Eligibility of users**

The Total Mobility scheme provides subsidised/discounted travel options to people who have an impairment that prevents them from undertaking any of the following components of a public transport journey unaccompanied, and in a safe and dignified manner:

- getting to the place from where transport departs
- getting onto the transport service
- riding securely
- getting off the transport service
- getting to the destination.

**Eligibility of providers**

In 2016, legislative change to small passenger services reduced the criteria required for these services to operate legally in New Zealand. Following the legislative change, the council has established new eligibility criteria for applications from transport providers and will include safety requirements within agreements.

The objective of these new criteria is to support users to comfortably access and use the scheme, while recognising the extra challenges those with disabilities face using transport. Accessibility for Total Mobility users is both of information (eg how to access the system and how to agree fares) and of physical access.

**Policy:** *In the provision of Total Mobility services, the council will:*

- require any potential transport provider to enter into a service agreement with the council
- require any potential transport provider to comply with all applicable New Zealand legislative requirements.

**Policy:** Council will require eligibility criteria additional to those specified in legislation, for Total Mobility service agreements to ensure continued safety and accessibility of Total Mobility users.
Providers must demonstrate to the council’s satisfaction that the following (but not limited to) eligibility criteria can be satisfied:

- Ability to electronically integrate with council’s Total Mobility administration system
- Provision of on board cameras, footage of which is accessible to the council
- Provision of an auditable method for providing pricing certainty to Total Mobility users before they travel. Council requires that Total Mobility users are well-informed about fares, and are not having to negotiate fares by verbal agreement. Provision of pricing certainty can be by providing a pricing structure or price per km to users
- Ability to provide total mobility service 24/7 within Hamilton and Taupo
- Ability to provide minimum hours of operation in other areas, assessed on a case by case basis. As a guide, minimum hours of operation should cover 6am-10pm, 7 days per week
- Proof that the service provider is a reputable and legally recognised business entity that has operated for at least 12 months prior to lodging an application to be a Total Mobility service provider. The council may use discretion regarding the length of operation requirement where demand requires.

Other matters the council will consider in assessing applications from potential transport providers are:

- Viability of introducing a service where others may already exist/demand is already well-serviced. Council will take into account the impact on other Total Mobility providers of another provider joining the market
- The council’s ability to efficiently and effectively administer the scheme.

**Policy:** The council may grant exceptions to Total Mobility service provider eligibility criteria where a lack of service providers exists.

**Policy:** The council may provide a funding contribution towards the installation of electronic equipment necessary to comply with the Total Mobility service provider criteria on the following basis:

- there must be a proven demand for the service;
- all costs must have the prior approval of Council;
- the vehicle owner and or taxi company must sign a suspensory loan agreement;
- there is sufficient funding available to meet installation costs

**Subsidy levels**

**Policy:** Council will subsidise eligible Total Mobility trips by 50 per cent of the total fare, up to a set maximum fare subsidy. The maximum fare subsidy may vary by location.

**Policy:** Council may implement measures to ensure the financial viability of the Total Mobility scheme. These measures may include, but are not limited to:

- limiting the number of trips per user that can be subsidised through the scheme
- adjusting maximum fare subsidies.

Wheelchair hoists installation and payment
Wheelchair accessible vehicles are an integral part of the Total Mobility scheme. In areas with sufficient demand, the council may assist Total Mobility providers to provide a vehicle capable of carrying wheelchairs.

**Policy:** Council may provide funding for the installation of ramps or hoists in wheelchair-accessible vehicles of approved Total Mobility providers on the following basis:

- there must be a proven demand for the service;
- all costs and vehicle specifications must have the prior approval of Council;
- the van owner and or taxi company must sign a suspensory loan agreement;
- there is sufficient funding available to meet installation costs.

A flat rate payment to Total Mobility providers currently exists for each hoist trip made. This payment is to compensate Total Mobility providers for the increased costs in operating a hoist vehicle, vehicle replacement and loading time.

The payment is administered by the council, and is 100 per cent funded by the NZ Transport Agency.

**Policy:** Council will administer and monitor the Flat Rate Payment for hoist trips, provided the New Zealand Transport Agency continues to fund 100% of the payment.

**Ticketing/system improvements**

The Total Mobility scheme currently uses a manual voucher system. It is expected that affordable electronic ticketing systems may become available for the scheme.

**Policy:** The council will support technological improvements for access to and use of Total Mobility subsidies and the administration of the scheme.

**Action:** Council will implement an electronic system for transactions and administration of Total Mobility.

### 6.2 Fares, ticketing and farebox recovery

**Fares and ticketing**

**Overview**

Improving the fares and ticketing system is a significant element in the modernisation of Waikato’s public transport network. It is Council’s intention to deliver an integrated fares and ticketing system across all public transport services with the goal of enhance customer experiences. The objectives for fares and ticketing is to Implement a fares and ticketing system that:

- Provides simplicity for customers to understand and is simple to administer;
- Reflects the costs of running the service;
- Represents value for users and funders
- Supports increased use of public transport; and
- Supports integration of public transport services across the region

**Fare structure**

The future fare structure for the Waikato region is based on a comprehensive fare structure review undertaken in 2016/17 which is a key action identified in the operative RPTP 2015-25. The 2017 review
confirmed a proposal to introduce a simpler, zone-based, integrated fare structure across all public transport services in the region.

Under a zonal fare system, fares will be based on the number of zones travelled in as part of a journey, irrespective of the bus routes. There are nine fare zones included in the new fare structure, encompassing the entire region and extending to Auckland. The fare zone boundaries are illustrated in Figure 6-1.
Figure 6-1: Waikato Public Transport Fare Zone Boundaries

Key
- Bus route
- Zone 1
- Zone 2
- Zone 3
- Zone 4
- Zone 5
- Zone 6
- Zone 7
- Zone 8
- Zone 9

This map is indicative and should be used as a guide only. For detailed information on fare and zone boundaries, please refer to www.huntco.nz.
The new fare structure will enable the fares system to fully support the new electronic ticketing system, and will provide integrated payment and business support systems that will make using public transport more convenient.

**Policy:** Public transport services will be delivered under an integrated zonal-fare structure that covers the Waikato Region.

**Policy:** Council will undertake a comprehensive review of the fare structure at least once every six years.

**Ticketing system and fare products**
The Waikato fare system provides a range of fare products aimed at making travel easier for passengers.

For smartcard users, transfers between services will be free on all services - meaning there will be no additional cost for users if they transfer from one vehicle to another during their journey, provided the transfer between services is made within the prescribed transfer time limit.

A daily and weekly fare cap will also be available, which will limit the amount that customers will be charged for travel in any given day or week. The fare caps will help incentivise greater use of public transport and reward those that are already frequent users. The cap will be applied automatically, and will not require any specific action by customers.

Fare levels will be set by Waikato Regional Council, and will be subject to regular review and adjustment to ensure that user charges keep pace with changes in operating costs, and to meet the farebox recovery targets as set out in section 6.3.3 of the Plan.

Fare levels will be set to incentivise use of the smartcard in preference to cash fares, i.e. cash fares will be set at a standardised premium to standard (adult) smartcard fares. The ability for smartcard users to transfer between services without financial penalty will further incentivise smartcard uptake. To further encourage smartcard use and less use of cash on bus services, free transfers will no longer be available in association with cash tickets or products.

Increased use of smartcards will be more affordable for passengers, improve boarding speeds and service reliability. It will also reduce cash handling costs and security risks.

**Policy:** Council will seek to implement a common integrated ticketing system on all contracted public transport services within the Region.

**Policy:** Council will encourage the use of electronic ticketing and seek to minimise the use of cash on public transport services.

**Policy:** The value of cash fares will be set 40% higher than equivalent smartcard fares on all services. Free transfers will be available on all services for smartcard users only for travel within a prescribed transfer time and/or trip limit as published by Waikato Regional Council.

**Policy:** Daily and weekly fare caps will be available for smartcard users on all Hamilton public transport services. Fare caps may be provided on other services within the region subject to agreement from respective District Councils.
**Policy:** Council may implement temporary promotional fare and ticketing products to encourage uptake of public transport from time to time.

**Fare concessions**

Fare concessions offer discounted fares for specific user groups and are distinct from ticketing products, which are available to all users. The concession discount rate will be standardised at 30% off the standard (adult) smartcard fare for all concession groups and products (except children under 5 and SuperGold card holders, which are free).

The Council recognises fare concessions are a way to support improved access for the transport disadvantaged, and will continue to provide concessions to targeted user groups such as children under 5 and SuperGold card holders.

The child and school student concession recognises the significant impact of school travel on congestion and the ability for school students and caregivers to pay for public transport services. This concession applies to all children between the age of 5 and 15, in student uniform, or with valid ID confirming proof of age or attendance at an education facility up to a secondary education level or equivalent.

Waikato Regional Council will propose to phase out the senior 60 plus concession over time as this concession scheme is superseded by the SuperGold card scheme. Under the approach persons who currently utilise the 60 plus concession would continue to be able to do so, but new 60 plus concessions would no longer be issued. Any decision to phase out the 60 plus concession will be subject to public consultation as part of this RPTP review. In the meantime the concession will remain.

Waikato Regional Council also recognises the opportunity and benefit to work with tertiary providers and other major business sectors to introduce ‘third party concessions’. This concession scheme will enable any organisation or entity to introduce a concession provided the concession is funded directly by the third party entity.

**Policy:** Children under the age of 5 are able to travel for free on all services.

**Policy:** SuperGold card holders will be able to travel for free during off-peak periods (9am to 3pm and after 6.30pm weekdays, and all day weekends and public holidays) on services included within the SuperGold card scheme.

**Policy:** SuperGold card concession scheme eligibility criteria and benefits may be amended from time to time in accordance with or in response to changes to central government policy.

**Policy:** A Standard Concession Fare Discount will be set 30% lower than the equivalent standard adult smartcard fare on all services.

**Policy:** A Standard Concession Fare Discount will be available to the following user groups:
- Children between the age of 5 and 15, in student uniform, or with valid ID confirming proof of age or attendance at an education facility up to a secondary education level or equivalent.
- Persons aged 60 years or over on services within Hamilton only during off-peak periods (9am to 3pm and after 6.30pm weekdays, and all day weekends and public holidays).
**Policy:** Council may work with any entity to introduce additional fare concessions for specific user groups provided the concession is funded directly by a third party to off-set any public subsidy costs.

## Farebox recovery

### Overview

The NZ Transport Agency requires regional councils to include a farebox recovery policy in their regional public transport plans, including a target farebox recovery ratio. In essence, the farebox recovery ratio measures the proportion of total service costs that are recovered by passenger fares and is a product of three key factors:

- Fare levels – the amount of money a passenger pays per trip.
- Patronage – the total number of passengers using services.
- Service costs – the cost to provide public transport services.

The farebox recovery policy adopted by Council seeks to achieve a balance between these factors, in particular ensuring that fare levels remain affordable and do not undermine ongoing patronage growth.

The **objective** for the farebox recovery policy is to implement a farebox recovery policy that seeks to achieve an equitable balance between user charges and subsidies, while taking into account the affordability of users, especially the transport disadvantaged.

### Farebox recovery target

The current farebox recovery ratio in the Waikato region is 38% (2016/17). The NZ Transport Agency farebox recovery policy is to move to a national average farebox recovery ratio of 50%. The national target is expressed as an average, and does not require that all regions achieve 50%.

However, there is an expectation from the NZ Transport Agency that the Waikato region will increase its farebox recovery ratio over time to ensure an equitable balance between passenger fares and subsidies from the NZ Transport Agency and ratepayers. This will require a regular review of fare levels over the period of this plan.

**Policy:** Council will maintain and improve the farebox recovery ratio for public transport services in the region, in accordance with the target ranges as set out in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service type</th>
<th>Service cost</th>
<th>Patronage levels</th>
<th>Farebox recovery target range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban Express</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>20-30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Express</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium-High</td>
<td>20-30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Connector</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium High</td>
<td>30-40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Connector</td>
<td>Low-Medium</td>
<td>Low-Medium</td>
<td>30-40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Connector</td>
<td>Low-Medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>20-30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Achieving farebox recovery target

Waikato Regional Council plans to achieve the farebox recovery target through various means, including improving the efficiency of existing services, monitoring and optimising service delivery, undertaking regular fare reviews, and by achieving patronage growth through service enhancements and innovations such as real time information and ticketing improvements.

The farebox recovery ratio is intended to continue to improve over the course of the plan in accordance with the target. This will not only improve value for money for ratepayers and the NZ Transport Agency as co-investors, but also provide greater flexibility to consider service enhancements and other options. This is particularly important for possible intervention options that have the potential to reduce farebox recovery in the shorter term (e.g. trial services, new concessions) but increase patronage and/or farebox recovery in the longer term.

The farebox recovery objectives are to be balanced against other objectives and considerations set out in this plan when making decisions, including patronage growth and affordability. A wide range of potential interventions will be considered as part of each annual fare review to improve farebox recovery levels, including:

- patronage increases
- service optimisation
- fare increases
- service innovations, such as improved electronic ticketing and real time information system improvements.

Policy: The council will seek to achieve the farebox recovery target by:
  a. Continuously monitoring and optimising the delivery of existing services. Optimisation is defined as maintaining patronage with reduced resources or increasing patronage within existing resources.
  b. Encouraging increased patronage by identifying and implementing targeted innovations such as real time information, ticketing and service improvements.
  c. At least annually reviewing and adjusting fare levels generally in line with movements in baseline public transport operating costs or in response to patronage growth slowing or declining.

6.3 Information and promotion

Marketing and promotion

Marketing and promotion are an important component of provision of public transport, aimed at increasing patronage by ensuring people have an awareness of services available and potential benefits of using services. Passenger growth resulting from marketing can serve to reduce public funding requirements through increasing fare revenue.

Policy: Council will deliver a range of marketing, communications, and community engagement initiatives on an ongoing basis to promote growth in the use of the public transport system.
Branding

A strong and consistent brand can help to ensure an attractive and readily identifiable public transport network which helps attract and retain patronage.

**Policy:** Council will maintain a consistent, well recognised, unique brand for public transport throughout the region. The brand shall be consistently applied to all public transport vehicles, infrastructure (where appropriate), marketing and communications

**Policy:** Council will maintain a consistent, well recognised, unique brand for public transport throughout the region. The brand shall be consistently applied to all public transport vehicles, infrastructure (where appropriate), marketing and communications

Communication

The provision of information, in conjunction with marketing and promotion, enables potential and existing customers to find the information they need to make a journey. This information has to be simple to find, easy to understand and be provided via convenient channels, including for people with disabilities. With developing technologies, digital channels are often a more convenient and cost-effective means of both disseminating and receiving information. However, not all user groups are readily able or willing to use digital channels.

**Policy:** Council will maintain and improve the following channels for the provision of public transport information:

- Printed timetables
- Web-based applications
- Website information
- Freephone call centre
- Customer service counter (Hamilton Transport Centre)

**Policy:** Council will enable provision of certain information, such as service arrivals, departures and service disruptions, in real time to enhance journey experiences for passengers

**Policy:** Council will actively encourage users to transition to digital means for accessing public transport information.

Commercial advertising

Council can generate revenue by making space available on buses and public transport infrastructure. Allowing advertising on buses can help to reduce the costs of service provision, but needs to be managed so it does not interfere with the branding and marketing of the bus network, or compromise the attractiveness and ease of use of bus services. The council expects that any revenue generated from advertising is reinvested into the public transport system.

The following sets out broad policies in relation to advertising. Detailed requirements are specified in relevant contracts between the council and service providers.

**Policy:** Council will ensure that advertising on vehicles and infrastructure does not undermine the regional public transport brand or user recognition of the public transport system.
**Policy:** Council will seek to avoid advertising content on vehicles and infrastructure that promotes products or services that are known to cause harm, such as alcohol or nicotine products, and will require that all advertising adheres to the New Zealand Advertising Authority Advertising Code of Ethics.⁴

**Policy:** Commercial advertising on buses will be limited to bus backs, but may be considered on other areas on a case by case basis, provided it is limited in duration and does not unreasonably obscure passenger visibility.

### 6.4 Tendering and contracting

#### Procurement

The Land Transport Management Act 2013 (LTMA) is the primary transport legislation that governs the planning, procurement and provision of public transport. The purpose of the LTMA is “to contribute to an effective, efficient, and safe land transport system in the public interest”.

The LTMA was amended in 2013 to introduce a new operating model for the delivery of public transport in New Zealand, known as the Public Transport Operating Model (PTOM).

Section 115 of the LTMA includes a set of principles fundamental to PTOM, designed to guide the actions of organisations such as the Waikato Regional Council in undertaking their public transport functions. These principles are:

- Council and public transport operators should work in partnership to deliver the public transport services and infrastructure necessary to meet the needs of passengers.
- The provision of services should be coordinated with the aim of achieving the levels of integration, reliability, frequency and coverage necessary to encourage passenger growth.
- Competitors should have access to regional public transport markets to increase confidence that services are priced efficiently.
- Incentives should exist to reduce reliance on public subsidies to cover the cost of providing services.
- The planning and procurement of services should be transparent.

The policies in this section are designed to support the procurement process and to give effect to the PTOM requirements.

The public transport services that are integral to the region are described in the final RPTP, and provide the basis for identifying the public transport units that will be implemented in the region. These public transport units will be provided under contract to Waikato Regional Council. Services that do not form part of the region’s core public transport network will be exempt from operating under contracts and will be identified as exempt services.

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⁴ [http://www.asa.co.nz/codes/codes/advertising-code-of-ethics/]
**Policy:** The council will establish units (groups of services) that are integral to the public transport network based on unit design principles set out in XX of this plan.

The overall procurement approach adopted in this RPTP is to build commerciality-based partnership relationships between the council (procuring authority) and public transport operators. It is also designed to:

- encourage councils and operators to work together on the design and operation of units
- improve opportunities for competitors to access the public transport market
- create incentives to reduce a reliance on public subsidies
- provide a more transparent approach to procurement and service management.

Procurement of public transport services in the Waikato Regional will be carried out in accordance with Waikato Regional Council’s Procurement Strategy and the NZ Transport Agency’s Procurement Manual.

The Procurement Strategy sets out the preferred approach to contracting passenger transport services in the Region. This includes contract length, standard key performance indicators, and the financial incentive mechanism to encourage operators to increase patronage on their services, in accordance with the Transport Agency procurement rules. It also includes the tendering schedule and will be reviewed regularly.

**Policy:** Public transport services will be contracted in accordance with the latest Procurement Strategy adopted by the council and endorsed by the NZ Transport Agency. <LINK>.

**Vehicle quality**

In order to encourage use of public transport, an efficient, well-maintained and user-friendly public transport fleet is required. Comfort is recognised as a factor that influences use of public transport. Minimum vehicle quality specifications are a mechanism to encourage and maintain the attractiveness and accessibility of both urban and rural public transport vehicles. Vehicle quality specifications cover such features as vehicle age, door and aisle widths, priority seating areas, handrails, security, information systems and advertising.

Vehicle specifications are a means of supporting improved amenity and access to public transport for the transport disadvantaged.

The council outlines the minimum standards of vehicle required for bus services during the tendering process. These specifications differ for different services to reflect different service requirements. For example, there are currently bike racks on regional services which support multi-modal travel. There are also additional features on all newly contracted services to meet safety and quality requirements - CCTV, Wi-Fi and dedicated wheelchair spaces.

All regional councils that receive NZ Transport Agency funding for bus services are required to adhere to standard Requirements for Urban Buses in New Zealand (RUB).

**Policy:** The council will ensure contracted bus services use vehicles that meet the national Requirements for Urban Buses in New Zealand quality and safety standards and any specific Waikato region amendments.
Policy: The council may depart from the above requirements on a trial basis for a limited duration where appropriate in order to prove the viability of a service.

6.5 Monitoring and review

Monitoring of units

The council regularly monitors existing and potential services in the region. Transport service monitoring includes seeking passenger feedback, checking adherence to timetables and compliance with contract conditions.

There is a need to ensure consistency with safety and service quality standards as well as ensuring that services operate according to the registration/contract provisions. The council is able to require unit operators to provide information about patronage and fare revenue for the services they operate, through the LTMA. Monitoring passenger numbers on specific routes and days provides a means of validating the figures supplied by operators.

Waikato Regional Council will monitor the performance of individual public transport units, to ensure they contribute to the overall plan objectives. Performance indicators for units will be set out in the individual contract, but as a minimum will include the key performance indicators specified in the NZ Transport Agency's Procurement Manual. This information will be used to inform the annual business planning process with operators and a continuous programme of service optimisation.

Waikato Regional Council will work with operators to ensure they collect and provide the data necessary for the regular review and monitoring of service, unit and system performance.

Policy: The council will monitor the performance of individual public transport units against the key performance indicators specified in the NZ Transport Agency's Procurement Manual, including:

- annual patronage growth
- farebox recovery ratio
- average seat utilisation
- service reliability and punctuality
- customer satisfaction.

Action: The council will prepare a regular monitoring report on the unit performance.

Action: The council will use the monitoring information, and work with operators to introduce variations to services where required to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the network.

Monitoring of the Plan

A set of performance measures have been developed to enable Waikato Regional Council to monitor the progress of public transport provision against the objectives of this plan.

The diagram below sets out key performance measures for this plan based on goals and strategic priorities for public transport.
The council will implement a regular monitoring system to ensure the data required to report on these key performance indicators is collected, analysed and reported on a regular basis. This will help to inform future reviews of the plan. The council will also monitor the performance of individual public transport units, to ensure they contribute to the overall plan objectives.

**Significance policy**

**Introduction**

The following policy sets out how to determine the significance of variations to the plan, as required by the LTMA. The plan can be varied at any time but consultation will be required in accordance with Section 125 of the LTMA if the variation is significant.

This policy outlines what is considered significant in terms of variations to the Regional Public Transport Plan. It provides criteria and procedures that the regional council will use in assessing which variations are deemed significant and the subsequent consultation requirements.

**Assessing significance**

The council will determine the significance of a variation on a case by case basis. A significant variation will be one that is likely to have an impact that is more than minor on:

- the ability to achieve the goal and strategic priorities set out in this plan
- the ability to achieve the objectives of the Regional Land Transport Plan
- the amount and allocation of funding available to public transport across the region.

In determining significance, the council will consider:

- whether the proposed variation will have a material effect on the overall level, quality and use of public transport services in the region
- the number of people affected by or interested in the proposal, and whether there is a substantial impact or consequence for affected persons
- the extent to which the variation has already been consulted upon, and the manner in which this has been undertaken
- the extent to which the variation is inconsistent with the Regional Land Transport Plan.
This policy does not preclude the council from undertaking special consultative procedures for a variation that does not meet the significance criteria, if the benefits of that consultation are considered to outweigh the costs.

Significance is a continuum, from variations of high significance through to variations of low significance. Matters that will always be considered ‘significant’ are:

- variations that amend this significance policy.

Matters that will always be considered ‘not significant’ are:

- minor editorial and typographical amendments to the plan
- minor changes to fare levels in accordance with current policy and funding levels.

Matters that will usually be considered ‘not significant’ are:

- those on which the council has recently consulted. ie the addition, removal or amendment of any matter on which the council has already consulted in accordance with its special consultative procedure
- minor changes to service descriptions after a service review. eg changes to the frequency and hours of a service that result in the same, or a better, level of service
- changes to the description of services or service groupings as a result of an area-wide service review, as long as there is no significant increase in cost.

Consultation

Targeted stakeholder engagement will be undertaken where variations do not trigger the significance policy, but may affect a sector of the community or industry.

If the council determines that a proposed variation is not significant, targeted consultation will be undertaken as follows:

- **Consultation for service reviews**: As service reviews affect only a part of the region, full consultation will generally not be required. Instead, key stakeholders (including the relevant operators, the NZ Transport Agency, territorial authorities and the affected community) will be included in preliminary consultation on the development of options. Targeted public consultation may follow once options have been identified.

- **Consultation for minor changes in the delivery of public transport services**: Minor changes in service delivery that are required to improve efficiency, such as minor changes to routes, frequencies, operating hours and fare adjustments that are consistent with the policies in this plan. In these cases, consultation will generally be undertaken at a low level with the operators involved, and may also include the relevant territorial authorities and passengers who use the services.

- **Other non-significant variations**: Waikato Regional Council will work through any proposals for changes that affect only a sector of the community or the industry (such as a change in Total Mobility provision or a change to specific vehicle quality standards) with those most likely to be affected, as well as other relevant stakeholders.
Appendices

Legislative requirements

Legislative matters addressed in the plan:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Matters we must address</th>
<th>How we have addressed them</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How the plan contributes to the purpose of the Act: “to contribute to an effective, efficient, and safe land transport system in the public interest.”</td>
<td>The plan contributes to the purpose of the Act through its goal, strategic priorities and policies that seek to develop an efficient, effective, affordable and integrated public transport network that supports economic growth of the region and achieves value for money.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation of the plan in accordance with NZ Transport Agency guidelines.</td>
<td>The NZ Transport Agency’s guidelines were considered in the development of the plan. Regular meetings have been held with NZ Transport Agency staff to review the process and proposed contents of the plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply the principles of section 115A(1) of the Act:</td>
<td>The council has applied the principles of section 115(1) by working in partnership and collaboration with territorial authorities to deliver the regional public transport services and infrastructure necessary to meet the needs of passengers. The principles of the Plan aim to achieve integration, reliability, frequency, and coverage necessary to encourage passenger growth. The Plan also emphasises the importance of collaboration between Waikato Regional Council, local authorities and operators to ensure the integration of public transport services and infrastructure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) regional councils and public transport operators should work in partnership and collaborate with territorial authorities to deliver the regional public transport services and infrastructure necessary to meet the needs of passengers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) the provision of public transport services should be coordinated with the aim of achieving the levels of integration, reliability, frequency, and coverage necessary to encourage passenger growth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) competitors should have access to regional public transport markets to increase confidence that public transport services are priced efficiently</td>
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<tr>
<td>(d) incentives should exist to reduce reliance on public subsidies to cover the cost of providing public transport services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) the planning and procurement of public transport services should be transparent.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take into account any national energy efficiency and conservation strategy.</td>
<td>The National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy sets out an objective of a more energy-efficient transport system, with a greater diversity of fuels and alternative energies. The plan proposes a network that will supply better frequencies with the existing level of resources thereby enabling more users to travel by public</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
transport and reduce single occupancy vehicles on the roading network.

Take into account any relevant regional policy statement, regional plan, district plan. Included in the appendices of the Plan is consideration of relevant regional documents.

Take into account the public transport funding likely to be available in the region. The funding likely to be available will be included in the final RPTP.

Take into account the need to obtain best value for money, having regard to the desirability of encouraging a competitive and efficient market for public transport services. The procurement approach is covered in section 6.5.

Take into account the views of public transport operators in the region. Public transport operators will be consulted during the June 2018 discussion document roadshow.

Consider the needs of persons who are transport disadvantaged and describe how the network will assist these people. How the RPTP considers the needs of transport disadvantaged is outlined in Strategic Response 6: Plan and implement transport solutions with transport disadvantaged at the forefront of our thinking.

Identify the public transport services integral to the public transport network that the Waikato Regional Council proposes to provide. Services integral to the network will be described in the final RPTP.

Provide an outline of the routes, frequency, and hours of operation of the services that are integral to the network. Descriptions of services are included in section 5.

Arrange all of the public transport services into units. All public services are arranged into units, and will be described in the final RPTP.

Indicate the date each unit commences. Commencement dates of units will be noted in the final RPTP.

Identify units for which Waikato Regional Council intends to provide financial assistance. Relevant units will be identified in the final RPTP.

Identify any taxi or shuttle services for which Waikato Regional Council intends to provide financial assistance. Relevant services will be identified in the final RPTP.

Specify any objectives and policies that apply to any unit, and any taxi or shuttles services for which Waikato Regional Council provides financial assistance.

May describe exempt services, but may not make them subject to the objectives and policies applying to units.
For units, include policies on:

1. accessibility, quality and performance
2. fares and the method or formula or other basis for setting and reviewing those fares
3. the process for establishing units
4. the approach that will be taken to procuring the delivery of the services in a unit
5. how the procurement of services will be phased in over time
6. managing, monitoring, and evaluating the performance of units.

Any procurement of units that Waikato Regional Council does not intend to provide financial assistance for must be approved by the NZ Transport Agency.

Include a policy on significance for reviews.

**National context**

**Government Policy Statement on Land Transport**

The Government Policy Statement (GPS) on Land Transport is a document issued by the Minister of Transport every three years. It details the Government’s desired outcomes for land transport and funding priorities across different types of transport activity (e.g. roading, public transport, road safety).

The Government Policy Statement on Land Transport 2018-21 (GPS 2018) was released in April 2018 and will come into force on 1 July 2018. The GPS 2018 contains four key priorities – safety, access, environment, and value for money.

**Safety – key priority**
- signals the need for an increased and sustained effort to achieve a long term vision of a transport system that is free of death and serious injury.

**Access – key priority**
- covers three objective areas:
  - increased access for economic and social opportunities
  - enables transport choice and access
  - a land transport system that is resilient.
- focuses on nationally important freight and tourism connections
- supports investments in transport infrastructure to support high growth urban areas (and Housing Infrastructure Fund)
- supports sustainable economic development of regions (activities complementary of Provincial Growth Fund and the government’s goals for tourism)
- supports investment in public transport, walking and cycling and increased mode shift
- focuses on urban centres and reducing single occupant motor vehicle travel
supports improved network resilience for most critical connections.

**Environment – supporting priority**
- supports investment that will reduce transport’s negative effects on the local environment, public health and on the global climate (lower emission forms of transport).

**Value for money – supporting priority**
- focuses on delivering the right infrastructure and services to the right level at the best cost.

The GPS 2018 contains three key themes:
1. a mode-neutral approach to transport planning and investment decisions
2. incorporating technology and innovation into design and delivery of land transport investment
3. integrating land use and transport planning and delivery.

**Rail funding**

GPS 2018 enables some passenger rail projects to progress through a transitional rail activity class:
- existing and new interregional commuter rail services, including implementation of trial services to support housing and employment opportunities
- improving urban rail services.

A second stage GPS will consider funding of rail.

**Activity class framework**

The strategic direction will:
- increase investment in safety, public transport, walking and cycling, regional improvements
- shift investment away from state highway improvements (around 11% decrease).

The framework links results to objectives rather than to activity classes.

New activity classes in GPS 2018 are:
- Rapid transit
- Transitional rail
- Demand management (attached to road safety promotion).

The provision of public transport in the Waikato region as proposed in this Plan will contribute to the GPS key priorities of safety and access, and supporting priorities of environment and value for money, which align particularly well with the Waikato region’s priorities as articulated in the Waikato’s draft RTLP.

The region’s public transport network will be developed and delivered at levels appropriate to their patronage and network function to increase the overall transport system productivity. Public transport will also be provided to support transport choices in urban areas where there is a sufficient demand to support cost effective public transport. The GPS 2018 also supports public transport investment in areas outside of major urban centres for services that connect people to employment and education, a key objective of this RPTP.

**Public Transport Operating Model (PTOM)**

Under the LTMA 2003, the RPTP must give effect to the Public Transport Operating Model (PTOM). The model contributes to the Government’s goal for public transport to grow patronage with less reliance on subsidy. It was developed with two overarching objectives:
• to grow the commerciality of public transport services and create incentives for services
to become fully commercial to grow confidence that services are priced efficiently and
there is access to public transport markets for competitors.

This model is a planning, procurement and business development framework. A key feature of the
model is an emphasis on regional councils and operators taking a partnering approach to the
planning and delivery of public transport services in regions. This is achieved through mechanisms
such as collaborative business planning, joint investments, and financial incentives.

Key principles of the PTOM are embedded in a set of principles in section 115 of the LTMA, to which
the RPTP must give effect. The NZ Transport Agency has also developed operational policy to
implement the PTOM through:
• guidelines for the development of regional public transport plans
• the NZ Transport Agency Procurement Manual.

Regional context

Regional Land Transport Plan

The Regional Land Transport Plan 2015-2045 (RLTP) sets the policy framework for the long term
development of the transport system in the Waikato region over the next 30 years. It identifies
strategic issues and objectives for transport in the region and associated priorities to guide the
development and management of the regional transport system.

The RPTP is required by the LTMA to be consistent with the relevant RLTP, and this plan has been
developed in relation to the RLTP to ensure a consistent policy approach for public transport.

The RLTP’s land transport priorities, objectives and policies are reflected in the RPTP goals for the
region. In particular, the RLTP’s direction towards improving transport access and mobility through
the provision of a multi-modal integrated transport system that meets the social, cultural and
economic needs of the region.

Regional Policy Statement

The Waikato Regional Policy Statement (RPS) sets the overarching framework for the integration of
land use with infrastructure in the region.

The RPS contains policies and implementation methods to ensure the development of the built
environment occurs in a planned and coordinated manner that encourages a compact urban form,
which in turn supports the efficient and effective delivery of public transport. Policies of particular
relevance to public transport include those that require:
1. new development to be coordinated with the development, funding, implementation and
   operation of transport and other infrastructure
2. the efficient and effective functioning of the region’s strategic transport corridors is
   maintained
3. The Future Proof area to implement development density targets to achieve compact urban
   environments that support multi-modal transport options, and allow people to live, work
   and play within their local area
4. regional development to be undertaken in accordance with general development principles
   that include promoting compact urban form, minimising the need for private motor vehicle
   use, and encouraging walking, cycling, use of public transport and multi-modal transport
   connections.
District plans prepared under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) are required to give effect to the RPS. Many district councils within the region are reviewing their district plans and as a result the framework for integrating land use with infrastructure in the region is being further cemented into these plans.

This, in turn, will provide greater certainty for public transport planning and lead to network efficiencies, lower costs and better integration of public transport services and infrastructure.

Other strategic influences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Policy implications</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NZ Transport Agency farebox recovery policy</td>
<td>Seeks a national farebox recovery ratio for public transport of 50 per cent, averaged across all public transport services in New Zealand. ie 50 per cent of public transport costs will be recovered through passenger fares.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy</td>
<td>Promotes energy efficiency, energy conservation and renewable energy in New Zealand. It proposes Government objectives, targets, and the means by which these will be achieved. The objective for the transport sector is: “A more energy efficient transport system, with a greater diversity of fuels and alternative energy technologies.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>NZ Transport Agency Investment Assessment Framework (IAF)</td>
<td>The NZ Transport Agency’s Investment Assessment Framework (IAF) communicates the NZ Transport Agency Board’s investment intentions. It’s a high-level direction-setting and prioritisation tool that helps the NZ Transport Agency balance competing priorities and select the best possible mix of activities for funding, with the ultimate goal of advancing progress against the objectives of the Land Transport Management Act 2003 (LTMA) and the GPS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Land Transport Programme</td>
<td>The National Land Transport Programme (NLTP) contains all the land transport activities that are expected to receive funding from the NZ Transport Agency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018-2028 Long Term Plan</td>
<td>Waikato Regional Council’s 2018-2028 Long Term Plan (LTP) is prepared under the Local Government Act 2002 and identifies desired community aspirations with respect to social, economic and environmental wellbeing, the council’s intended contribution towards those aspirations, and how they will be funded. The LTP is prepared and reviewed every three years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access Hamilton</td>
<td>An integrated transport strategy to guide the development of transport infrastructure planning for Hamilton over a 30-year period. Takes the high level settlement patterns in</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Future Proof and Hamilton Urban Growth strategies, and aims to improve coordination between transport and land use in the city. Access Hamilton is currently under review.