

## RLTS Review – Legislative & Policy Context

### Legislative Context

This paper provides an overview of the national and regional legislative and policy context for development of the Wellington Regional Land Transport Committee (RLTS).

All regional councils are required by the Land Transport Act 1998 to produce a Regional Land Transport Strategy for the Council. Under section 175 of the Act:

- (1) *Every regional council must prepare a land transport strategy for its region.*
- (2) *Every regional land transport strategy must—*
  - (a) *contribute to the overall aim of achieving an integrated, safe, responsive, and sustainable land transport system; and*
  - (b) *take into account how the strategy -*
    - (i) *assists economic development; and*
    - (ii) *assists safety and personal security; and*
    - (iii) *improves access and mobility; and*
    - (iv) *protects and promotes public health; and*
    - (v) *ensures environmental sustainability; and*
  - (c) *take into account any national land transport strategy and National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy; and*
  - (d) *take into account the land transport funding likely to be available within the region during the period covered by the strategy; and*
  - (e) *avoid, to the extent reasonable in the circumstances, adverse effects on the environment; and*
  - (f) *take into account the views of affected communities; and*
  - (g) *take into account the views of land transport network providers; and*
  - (h) *take into account the need for persons and organisations preparing regional land transport strategies to give early and full consideration to land transport options and alternatives in a way that contributes to the objectives referred to in paragraphs (e) and (f) when preparing a regional land transport strategy; and*

- (i) *take into account the need to encourage persons and organisations preparing regional land transport strategies to provide early and full opportunities for persons and organisations listed in section 179(1) to contribute to the development of those regional land transport strategies; and*
  - (j) *identify an appropriate role for each land transport mode in the region, including freight traffic, public passenger transport, cycling, and pedestrian traffic; and*
  - (k) *include any regional passenger transport plan (within the meaning of section 47 of the Transport Services Licensing Act 1989) that has been prepared by the regional council that has prepared the strategy; and*
  - (l) *identify land transport outcomes sought by the region and the strategic options for achieving those outcomes; and*
  - (m) *identify any strategic options for which co-operation is required with other regions; and*
  - (n) *identify persons or organisations who should be involved in the further development of strategic options; and*
  - (o) *include a demand management strategy that has targets and timetables appropriate for the region; and*
  - (p) *provide for the strategy to be independently audited; and*
  - (q) *take into account any guidelines issued by the Minister for the purposes of this section.*
- (3) *A regional land transport strategy may not be inconsistent with any regional policy statement or plan that is for the time being in force under the Resource Management Act 1991.*
- (4) *A regional land transport strategy may not be inconsistent with any national land transport strategy that is for the time being in force at the time of preparation of the regional land transport strategy."*

The RLTS must be kept current for at least three years, but not more than 10 and be reviewed every three years.

## **Policy Framework**

### **New Zealand Transport Strategy (NZTS)/National Framework**

The NZTS was released in December 2002. The strategy is about creating a sustainable transport system that is also affordable, integrated, safe and responsive to our needs. Its five objectives have been built into the Land Transport Management Act 2003, and resulting amendments to other pieces of legislation.

This included a number of amendments to the LTA 1998 and its requirements for producing a RLTS [s175(2)]. The requirements for producing a RLTS were amended to better reflect the vision, principles and objectives of the NZTS, to ensure vertical integration of national, regional and local transport policy (see legislative context above).

The NZTS identifies several overarching key focus areas for the transport system, through its vision and principles. These translate to achieving the outcomes of an increased proportion of travel by public transport, reduced congestion, improved road safety, greater use of travel alternatives such as telecommuting, and the provision of walking and cycling infrastructure.

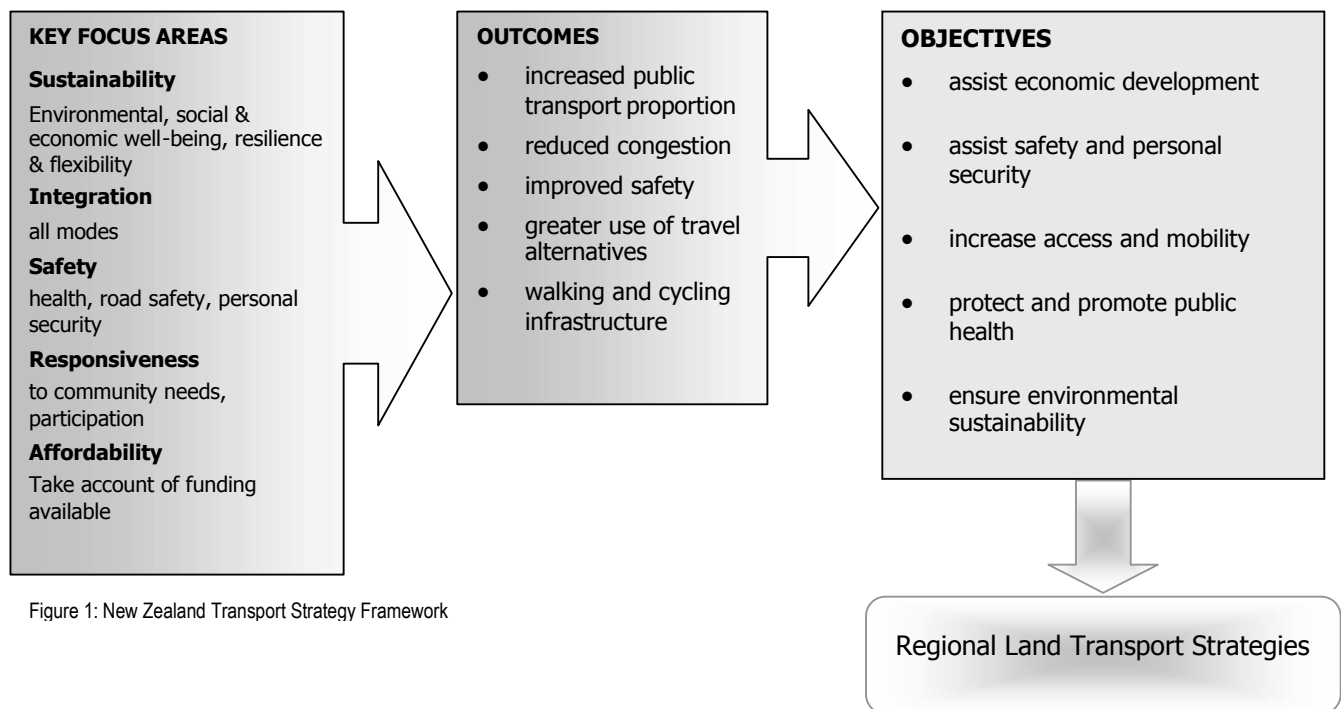


Figure 1: New Zealand Transport Strategy Framework

In addition to outlining the framework in figure 1, the NZTS is clear in describing transport as a service and not an end in itself. Transport systems serve to facilitate access to economic and social opportunities. This point is important in determining outcomes for transport, and thus recognising that these outcomes are there to aid delivery of greater community outcomes. This becomes significant at a regional level when adapting the national framework to deliver our transport and hence, community needs. Linking the RLTS with the Greater Wellington (GW) Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) is therefore necessary and is discussed below.

Integration with the national framework, as required by the LTA 1998, has in a sense predetermined the RLTS objectives as being, at least, the five established by the NZTS. However, opting for the national objectives is not limiting, therefore analysis was necessary to ensure consideration of regionally specific objectives required in addition to those of the national framework.

The need for compatibility with the national requirements is also reinforced by changes to the Land Transport NZ Allocation Process. RLTS's that are not integrated with the national framework, or proposals that do not stem from such a RLTS, are unlikely to be included in the National Land Transport Programme (NLTP).

## Greater Wellington's Long Term Community Council Plan .

[Will need updating once draft LTCCP is adopted]

In addition to meeting national framework requirements, the revised RLTS needs to be consistent with the LTCCP outcomes for the greater Wellington region. The draft LTCCP 2006 - 2016 outlines ten community outcomes, and seven activity groups which collectively contribute to achieving the community outcomes. Transport is one of the activity groups and the key transport related outcome is a 'Connected Community'. However, there are several other outcomes which have key implications for transport. These are 'Healthy Environment', 'Prepared Community', 'Essential Services', and 'Healthy Community' (figure 2).

The LTCCP outcomes align well with the national framework and further enable an integrated approach for the RLTS review. The RLTS will play a role in achieving regional outcomes, while also contributing to national objectives.

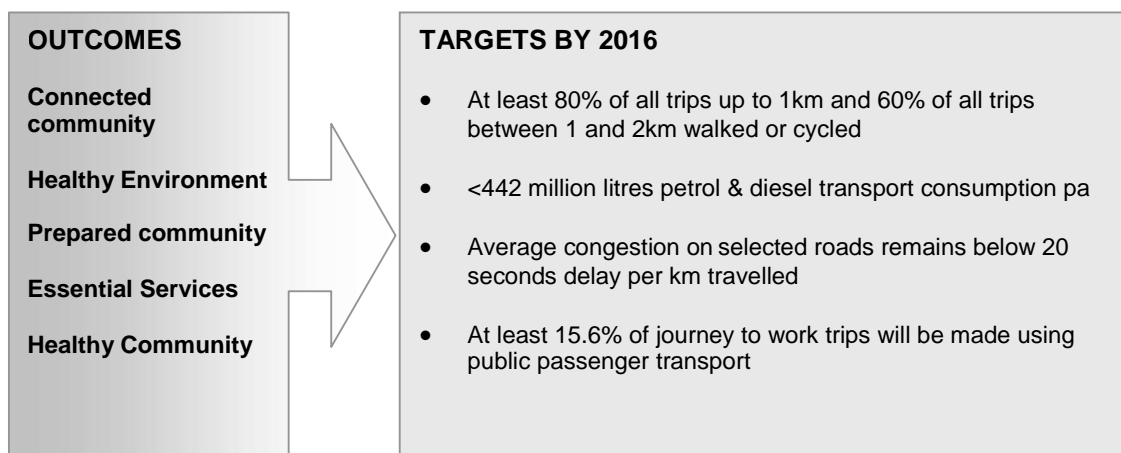


Figure 2: GWRC LTCCP framework for transport outcomes.

## Wellington Regional Strategy (WRS)

The WRS is a joint project involving Greater Wellington, the nine territorial authorities of the region, and Positively Wellington Business working together to build an internationally competitive Wellington. It is primarily a growth strategy with an outlook to 2050. More detailed focus of action and priority will also be developed for the next 10 to 20 years to compliment other regional strategy processes with shorter outlooks. The WRS aims to determine an agreed direction for growth. The WRS is a regional sustainable growth framework.

The WRS is firmly based on the proposition that growth for the region is necessary and desirable. It is aimed at sustainable economic and population growth which will protect the region's sense of place, build competitiveness, increase our quality of life and protect the values and communities that contribute to making the Wellington region different to anywhere else. Transport outcomes identified in this strategy will play a significant part in facilitating the growth sought by the WRS.

## Regional Policy Statement (RPS)

The Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) requires each regional council to produce a RPS in order to promote sustainable management of the region's resources. The purpose of a RPS is to achieve "sustainable management" by providing an overview of the resource management issues of the region and policies and methods to achieve the integrated management of the natural and physical resources of the whole region. It is an overview document, which provides the framework for managing the resources of our region in a sustainable way (WRC 1995 p2).

Wellington's Regional Policy Statement was made operative in May 1995, with a full review required 10 years after it became operative. Greater Wellington's review process commenced with a State of the Environment Report in December 2005. A proposed new policy statement is expected to be available in September 2007 following the remainder of the review process. It is a requirement of the LTA 1998 that the RLTS must not be inconsistent with the RPS.

The policy guidance set out in the current RPS relate primarily to managing the effects of transport on the environment, the use of transport infrastructure to capacity before new infrastructure is built, and integration between transport infrastructure and regional growth. In particular, the RPS recognises the need for a sustainable land transport system which uses energy efficiently and reduces emissions wherever possible. In addition, amendments made in 2005 to the RMA gave a new function to regional councils of "the strategic integration of infrastructure with land use".

## National Energy Efficiency & Conservation Strategy (NEECS)

The Land Transport Management Act 2003 introduced amendments to the Land Transport Act 1998, including the new requirement under the amended Section 175 (2)(c) that every Regional Land Transport Strategy (RLTS) shall take into account the National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy (NEECS).

The National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy was released by the Minister of Energy in September 2001. The Strategy's purpose is 'to promote energy efficiency, energy conservation and renewable energy and move New Zealand towards a sustainable energy future' (EECA, 2004).

NEECS sets two specific energy efficiency targets for the national economy:

- A 20% improvement in energy efficiency by 2012
- An additional 30 Petajoules (PJ) of consumer energy from renewable sources by 2012.

Transport is our country's single largest energy consumer and transport energy use continues to grow. Within New Zealand, transport accounts for over 43% of all consumer energy use and it emits 46% of the country's carbon dioxide emissions (NZCCO, 2005).

The key strategic objectives of NEECS as they relate to the transport sector are as follows:

- Reduce energy use by reducing the need to travel
- Progressively improve energy performance of the transport fleet
- Greater provision and use of low energy transport options

## National Rail Strategy

The National Rail Strategy to 2015 (NRS) was developed by the Ministry of Transport (MoT) under the umbrella of the New Zealand Transport Strategy (NZTS). The National Rail Strategy provides a framework for the development of the rail network in a way which recognises the government's focus on shifting passenger and freight traffic from road onto rail wherever this is appropriate. This is expected to contribute to reducing congestion, providing environmental benefit, improving safety, personal security, and health.

The objectives of the NRS are to enhance rail's contribution to sustainable economic development, to improve rail safety and personal security, to maintain and develop access to rail passenger services, to promote positive health outcomes through enhanced use of rail, and to enhance rail's contribution to an energy efficient and environmentally sustainable land transport system.

While it is not a statutory requirement for a RLTS to take account of this strategy, it provides a relevant national framework for the consideration of rail issues at the regional level.

## Transit New Zealand's Strategic Plan

Transit's Strategic Plan 2004 responds to the new requirements under the LTMA and the New Zealand Transport Strategy, which emphasise the need for a sustainable land transport system. A number of other Transit planning documents sit below the strategic plan, such as the National State Highway Strategy, Key Issue Plans (eg. Transit NZ Environmental Plan 2004), and the 10-Year State Highway Forecast.

There is no statutory requirement for a RLTS to take account of these strategic planning documents. However they do provide a framework for understanding Transit's planning and decision making process. The primary external drivers for Transits decisions are the NZTS and regional land transport strategies.

## Other relevant policy documents

There are number of other national policy documents which provide relevant references for the development of a RLTS. These include, but are not limited to:

- New Zealand Health Strategy
- New Zealand Tourism Strategy
- New Zealand Disability Strategy
- Getting there – on foot, by cycle
- Road Safety to 2010