

Executive summary

This report reviews the Taranaki Regional Council's performance and achievement on its regional land transport planning and passenger transport functions for the 2007/2008 year.

Set out below is a summary of the main activities carried out in 2007/2008:

- Implemented the regional component of the *Regional Land Transport Strategy* and *Regional Passenger Transport Plan for Taranaki*.
- Implementation of the regional component of the Strategy focused on the:
 - Continuation of a two year trial period on the New Plymouth passenger transport services, including increased service frequencies, increase in the number of routes, increase in the number of people eligible for concession fare and free travel for WITT students and staff.
 - Continued provision of a subsidy to assist in the delivery of Total Mobility services to people with disabilities in the Taranaki region.
 - A range of advocacy, liaison and collaborative activities.
- Carried out advocacy activities in relation to Government funding policy proposals and funding programmes, including identifying appropriate Regional (R) Funding priorities.
- Continued to facilitate the State Highway 3 Working Party, to identify priorities for safety improvements along State Highway 3 and make recommendations to Transit New Zealand.
- Convened the Stratford to Okahukura Working Party to identify a way forward for reinstating passenger excursion trains on the Railway Line.
- Continued to monitor stock truck effluent disposal facilities in Taranaki in conjunction with the district councils, Transit New Zealand, Western Central Districts Road Transport Association, Opus International Ltd and Federated Farmers.
- Implementation of the following three new once-a-week bus services in South Taranaki, in conjunction with the South Taranaki District Council:
 - Waverley to Hawera
 - Opunake to Hawera
 - Opunake to New Plymouth
- Implementation of a once-a-week bus service from Inglewood to New Plymouth, in conjunction with the Inglewood Community Board and New Plymouth District Council.
- A total of 87,692 passenger trips were undertaken on Total Mobility services in New Plymouth, Bell Block, Waitara, Stratford and Hawera, with a net expenditure of \$424,161.
- Implementation of a Total Mobility I.D. card system.
- At the conclusion of the 2007/2008 year, the Total Mobility Scheme had a client base of approximately 1,662 involving 25 agencies affiliated to the Disabled Persons Assembly.
- Total expenditure of \$530,947 on concessionary fares (children, tertiary students, elderly, disabled users, beneficiaries and WITT students/staff) on urban bus services in New Plymouth (involving a total of 318,545 concession fare passenger trips). Total passenger trips on New Plymouth urban bus services for 2007/2008 were 343,686.
- Through a contestable tender process a contract was awarded to Tranzit Coachlines to operated the New Plymouth, Bell Block, Waitara and Oakura bus services as of 1 July 2008.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This report reviews the Taranaki Regional Council's performance and achievements on its regional land transport planning and passenger transport functions for the 2007/2008 year.

1.2 Background

The Taranaki Regional Council is responsible for promoting an integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable land transport system within the region. This involves a range of activities including: the preparation and implementation of a *Regional Land Transport Strategy* and *Regional Passenger Transport Plan for Taranaki*, registering public transport operators, and providing for the reasonable needs of the transport disadvantaged through the provision of passenger transport services.

The Land Transport Act 1998 requires the Taranaki Regional Council to prepare a regional land transport strategy for its region. This Strategy is to identify the land transport outcomes sought by the region and the strategic options for achieving those outcomes. The most recent review of the *Regional Land Transport Strategy for Taranaki* was completed in 2005/2006.

The development of a regional passenger transport plan is a requirement of the Transport Services Licensing Act 1989. It is prepared by the regional council and provides the mechanism through which the Council specifies the passenger services proposed for the region, both generally and in respect of the transport disadvantaged. A revised *Regional Passenger Transport Plan for Taranaki* was completed during 2005/2006 and is included as Part II of the *Regional Land Transport Strategy*.

The Taranaki Regional Council's role in public transport is primarily that of planning, as well as the contracting out or subsidising passenger transport services. Historically the Council has allowed market forces to largely determine local transport service delivery throughout the region, with Council's involvement limited to the provision of subsidies for users of the Total Mobility services in several urban centres, and concessionary fares on bus services in the New Plymouth City area. However, over the last two to three years, as part of its review of the *Regional Passenger Transport Plan for Taranaki*, the Council agreed to consider a range of new public transport initiatives for implementation in 2007/2008. These initiatives are outlined in more detail throughout this report.

The following report therefore outlines progress made by the Taranaki Regional Council in implementing the objectives and programmes of the Council's *2006/2016 Long-Term Council Community Plan* relating to regional land transport planning and passenger transport within the region.

1.3 Objectives

The overall objective for regional land transport planning for 2007/2008, as set out in the Council's *2007/2008 Annual Plan*, is to:

"Promote an integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable land transport system within the region".

The overall objective for passenger transport in Taranaki is to:

"Promote the provision of community passenger transport in Taranaki and assist the special transport needs of the transport disadvantaged".

1.4 Performance measures

In response to the above objective for regional land transport planning activities, the Council adopted the following performance measures for 2007/2008 as set out in the Council's *2007/2008 Annual Plan*:

- Implement the regional component of the *Regional Land Transport Strategy for Taranaki* as identified in each annual regional land transport programme.

In response to the above objective for passenger transport, the Council adopted the following performance measures for 2007/2008 as set out in the Council's *2007/2008 Annual Plan*:

- Provide Total Mobility subsidy assistance, to qualifying persons through the Land Transport New Zealand supported Total Mobility Scheme, for people with a serious mobility constraint which prevents them from using public passenger transport services who need access to taxi services in New Plymouth, Waitara, Inglewood, Stratford and Hawera.
- Implement passenger transport trials in the New Plymouth urban areas and regional Taranaki consistent with the *Passenger Transport Plan*, subject to funding approval from Land Transport New Zealand.
- Subject to the aforementioned trials, implement longer term service arrangements for passenger transport in the region consistent with the *Passenger Transport Plan*, subject to funding approval from Land Transport New Zealand.
- Provide funding assistance to the Ironside Vehicle Society and MS Taranaki, subject to eligibility criteria being met.
- Receive and register within 14 days, appropriate applications to operate a passenger transport service.

2. Report on progress

2.1 Regional Land Transport Strategy for Taranaki

The Council completed the most recent review of its *Regional Land Transport Strategy* and *Regional Passenger Transport Plan* during the 2005/2006 year. The review was undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Land Transport Act 1998 and the Land Transport Management Act 2003.

The revised *Regional Land Transport Strategy* was adopted in February 2006. The following is an overview of the implementation of the regional component of the Strategy that occurred in 2007/2008.

2.2 Implementation of the regional component of the Strategy

2.2.1 Overview

An annual report on the implementation of the Strategy during 2006/2007 was developed and forwarded to the Secretary of Transport, Land Transport New Zealand, Transit New Zealand and the Commissioner of Police within three months after the close of the 2006/07 financial year. This report was also made available to the public as required by the Land Transport Act 1998.

In 2007/2008 implementation of the regional component of the Strategy focused on the following activities:

- The continued provision of a 50% subsidy to assist in the delivery of Total Mobility services to people with disabilities in the New Plymouth urban area, Bell Block, Waitara, Stratford and Hawera, with funds received in part from Land Transport New Zealand and in part from general rates (refer to section 2.3.3 of this report).
- The provision of a subsidy to assist the delivery of an enhanced Concessionary Fare Scheme for children, tertiary students, people with disabilities, the elderly, beneficiaries and WITT students/staff using urban bus services in the New Plymouth wider urban area, with funds received in part from Land Transport New Zealand and in part from a targeted rate on New Plymouth District ratepayers (refer to section 2.3.4 of this report).
- Discussions held with the Disabled Persons Assembly Taranaki, taxi companies and user groups regarding the operation of Total Mobility services in Taranaki.
- The provision of a subsidy through a Concessionary Fare Scheme established with the Ironside Vehicle Society to assist with the transportation of people with disabilities in the New Plymouth wider urban area, Waitara and Inglewood, with funds received in part from Land Transport New Zealand and in part from general rates (refer to section 2.3.4 of this report).
- A revised public passenger transport service for New Plymouth, Bell Block, Waitara and Oakura was implemented on an eighteen month trial period (beginning 1 July 2006). This eighteen month period was later increased to two years. With the scheme ended 30 June 2008, a new passenger transport contract was entered into with Transit Coachlines to provide the same bus services (with some minor amendments) as those previously provided by Okato Bus Lines (refer to section 2.3.5).

- The following three South Taranaki passenger transport services were implemented on 1 July 2007 with the assistance from the South Taranaki District Council (refer to section 2.3.5):
 - Waverley to Hawera once-a-week return service operating on a Thursday
 - Opunake to Hawera once-a-week return service operating on a Thursday
 - Opunake to New Plymouth once-a-week return service operating on a Friday.
- With assistance from the Inglewood Community Board a once-a-week Inglewood to New Plymouth passenger transport service commenced operating on 1 November 2007 (refer to section 2.3.5).
- The continued administration (under the Resource Management Act) of the *Regional Policy Statement for Taranaki*, and the Taranaki Regional Council's four regional plans, to promote the sustainable and integrated management of natural and physical resources in relation to land transport infrastructure and activities in the Taranaki Region.

In addition to the core activities outlined above, the Council was active during the year on a range of advocacy, liaison and collaborative activities. These activities were undertaken to advance the land transport needs of the region and the objectives of the Strategy, and included the following:

- Preparing (in consultation with district councils and Transit New Zealand) a revised programme of Regional Funding priorities for Taranaki; submitted those priorities to the Regional Land Transport Committee for discussion and agreement; and forwarded the agreed priorities to Land Transport New Zealand by the due date (refer to section 2.2.2).
- Making a submission to Transit New Zealand on its draft *2008/09 Land Transport Programme and 10-Year Financial Forecast* (refer to section 2.2.2).
- Making a submission to the Ministry of Transport on their *Sustainable Transport: Update of the New Zealand Transport Strategy* Discussion Paper (refer to section 2.2.2).
- Making a submission to the Transport and Industrial Relations Select Committee on the Public Transport Management Bill and Land Transport Management Amendment Bill (refer to section 2.2.2).
- Making submissions on the *New Plymouth Strategic Transport Study* which aims to develop a long term strategy for upgrading the road network to cater for future traffic volumes and develop a traffic management plan for managing the existing road network (refer to section 2.2.2).
- Maintaining the State Highway 3 Working Party to promote improvements to State Highway 3 (refer to section 2.2.3).
- Preparing a State Highway 3 Working Party review document which outlines the progress made by the Working Party since it was established in 2002 (refer to section 2.2.3).
- Developing a Stratford to Okahukura Working Party to identify a way forward for reinstating passenger excursion trains on the SOL Railway Line (refer to section 2.2.4).

- Helping establish a Waikato Inter-regional Transport Study to assess the appropriate land transport provision and network requirements in the future for Waikato and neighbouring regions (refer to section 2.2.5).
- Further to the development of a *Regional Walkways and Cycleways Strategy for Taranaki* in 2007/08, the development of a Walkways brochure for the Taranaki region (refer to section 2.2.6).
- Maintained the Stock Truck Effluent Disposal Working Party (refer to section 2.2.7).
- Continuing correspondence with Land Transport New Zealand noting our concerns over Phase One and Two of a reviewed Total Mobility Scheme (refer to section 2.3.3).

2.2.2 Regional advocacy on roading and funding issues

Next Steps Review

With the recent introduction of the Land Transport Management Amendment Act 2008 (which implements the outcomes of a Government review of the land transport sector called the "Next Steps Review"), regional councils are now responsible for the development of new types of regional land transport programmes for their region. This is a significant change from 2007/08 when regional land transport programmes only dealt with regional council expenditure.

These new regional land transport programme are now required to include the state highway programme for the region and involve a process of prioritising all major transport projects in the Taranaki. They also require close alignment with district council transport programmes, with the first one to be set up for the start of the 2009/10 financial year. State highway, regional and district land transport programmes also change from annual programmes to three yearly programmes and the regional council is required to consult on its regional land transport programme in conjunction with its LTCCP consultation process.

Consequently this has a significant impact on the administrative workloads for regional council staff. The Taranaki Regional Council has therefore worked closely with Land Transport New Zealand and Transit New Zealand staff throughout the 2007/08 year to identify the implications of what this means for regional councils in the future. This has involved making submissions on proposed legislation (as noted later in this Report) and participation in various workshops which aimed at providing regional councils with all the necessary information to enable them to plan for a smooth transition to this new regime. Further comment is provided later in this report on the 'Implementation of the Next Steps Review' that will occur in 2008/09.

National Land Transport Programme for 2007/08

The Council received a copy of the *National Land Transport Programme for 2007/2008* which allocates \$2.4 billion for land transport infrastructure and services nationwide. This was \$0.1 billion increase from the \$2.3 billion allocated in 2006/2007. Total allocation to Taranaki across all output classes in 2007/2008 was \$42.6 million, a 39% increase from the \$30.65 million allocated in the previous year.

Indicative major roading projects included in the 2007/2008 Programme relating to the Taranaki region were as follows:

- Construction of the Bell Block Bypass (including Mangaone Hill 4 Laning)

- Construction of the Rugby Road underpass
- Design and construction of the Normanby Overbridge Realignment
- Investigation, design and construction of the Finnerty Road Right Turning Bay
- Design and construction of three passing lanes
- Design and construction of the Tangahoe Bridge widening project
- Construction of cycle facilities – Bell Block to Waiwhakaiho River Cycleway and Devon Intermediate Pedestrian Facilities.

Other district roading projects included in the Programme were:

- Carrington Road Bridge Replacement
- Ngatoto Road North Bridge Replacement
- Saunders Road Culvert Replacement
- Tarawai Road Bridge Replacement
- Toii Road Bridge Replacement
- Construction of the Eastern Cycle Route
- Wiremu Road Bridges 123, 125 and 126 Replacement
- Moki Road Seal Extension.

Maintenance allocations for the region increased by \$2.83 million on the previous year, bringing the total for 2007/2008 to \$30.8 million.

Regional Funding allocations

The 2007/2008 year was the fourth year of allocating Regional Funding (or 'R Funds') in addition to National Funds, under the National Land Transport Programme. This followed a Government decision announced in December 2003 to provide an increase in land transport funds to be distributed on a regional basis, according to population. The extra funds resulted from an increase of 5 cents per litre in excise duty and road user charges for light vehicles introduced on 1 April 2004.

The R Funding allocation for Taranaki was initially estimated in 2004/2005 to be \$48.4 million over the 10 year period it was to be available. This figure was altered to \$51.7 million in 2005/2006. However, due to the increase in petrol prices and increasing trend towards people buying smaller cars, the Council has been informally advised that the level of Regional Funding is anticipated to be lower than this \$51.7 million figure.

The only project completed under this Regional Funding category during 2007/2008 was the Awakino North Realignment project. Despite this project being located in Waikato's section of the National Land Transport Programme, Taranaki agreed to a 50/50 funding arrangement with Environment Waikato in recognition of the strategic importance of this project to the Taranaki region. Construction of the Bell Block Bypass also continued in the 2007/2008 year. This project is part funded through a combination of Regional (50%) and National (50%) Funds.

Each year regional councils are requested by Land Transport New Zealand to submit recommendations on the distribution of Regional Funds, in addition to the yearly submissions on the *National Land Transport Programme*. The deadline for submitting these Regional Funding recommendations for 2007/2008 was 28 March 2008.

In order to develop a draft Regional Funding priority list by this deadline, the following process occurred:

- A Regional Technical Officers Group (with members drawn from the New Plymouth, Stratford and South Taranaki District Councils, the Taranaki Regional Council and

Transit New Zealand) met on 22 February 2008 to consider proposals for Regional Funding.

- A draft Regional Funding Priority List was then taken to the 13 March 2008 Regional Land Transport Committee meeting for comments and approval.
- Following agreement at this Regional Land Transport Committee meeting, a finalised Regional Funding priority list was sent to Land Transport New Zealand by the due date of 28 March.

Taranaki's Regional Funding Priority List is a continuation of the previous years list with the following amendments added:

- The Rugby Road Underpass and Normanby Overbridge projects were renumbered as Priority 1 and 2 respectively on the list due to the removal of the Bell Block Bypass project.
- A Regional Passing Lane Study was requested for several sections of the state highway network (Priority Number 5).
- Two potential passing lanes to be located between Pio Pio and New Plymouth were bumped up the list to Priority Number 6.
- An additional list of bridge widening and realignment projects were included at the end of the Priority List which identifies projects which may not receive National Funds and could subsequently be promoted for Regional Funds.
- No other changes were proposed to the list other than each project moving up the list further to other projects being removed.

The following projects were removed from the Regional Funding list as they have either been completed or work had commenced during 2007/08: Bell Block Bypass, Awakino North Realignment, Awakino Northbound Passing Lane, Hanna's Curve Easing, Awakino Tunnel Realignment and Waitotara North Curve Improvement.

Draft Transit New Zealand's 10-year State Highway Forecast for 2008/09

In tandem with the *National Land Transport Programme* and Regional Funding processes, a draft *2008/09 Land Transport Programme and 10-Year Financial Forecast* was released by Transit New Zealand for comment in early February 2008. Comments on this document were requested by 7 March 2008.

A Regional Technical Officers Group meeting was therefore convened in late February 2008 to discuss the preparation of a submission on Transit NZ's draft *Programme and 10-Year Forecast*, as well as other land transport matters. A submission was subsequently sent by the due date and endorsed by the Regional Land Transport Committee at a meeting on 13 March 2008.

The key points raised in the Council's submission were as follows:

- Transit New Zealand was requested to include references in next years draft Forecast to each projects anticipated funding type i.e. National, Regional or Crown Funds.
- Support was provided for the full hypothecation of all fuel excise duties to the National Land Transport Fund.
- Concerns were raised regarding the level of cost escalation that is anticipated and the potential impact this may have on maintaining at least current Levels of Service.

- Support was provided for the Normanby Overbridge Realignment project proceeding in the 2008/09 financial year.
- Continued support was noted for the following large projects: Bell Block Bypass, Rugby Road Underpass and Normanby Overbridge Realignment.
- Support was provided for the Tangahoe Bridge Widening project in the list of small and medium sized projects. Several other small and medium sized projects were also requested to be added to the list.
- Support was provided for the list of passing lane projects included in the draft Forecast but a request was made for the investigation of passing lane opportunities on certain additional sections of the state highway network. Several additional passing lanes were also requested.
- Support was provided for the Devon Intermediate Pedestrian Facility and a request was made to reinstate the Bell Block to Waiwhakaiho River Cycleway in the list of walking and cycling projects for Taranaki.
- A request was made for two strategic studies to be included in the final 2008/09 Forecast – a passing lane assessment for certain sections of the network and an investigation into the state and width of all state highway bridges.
- Support was provided for the cost sharing arrangement between both Taranaki and Waikato (through the use of R Funds) for the construction of several projects in the Awakino Gorge area, including the Awakino North Realignment and Wharekauri Road Southbound Passing Lane.
- Support was provided for the inclusion of the Awakino Gorge Strategy Study.
- A request was made for the Awakino Tunnel Widening project to be added to the list of projects in Waikato's draft Forecast

In response to the submissions received, opportunities were provided by Transit NZ for submitters to speak to their submission at a series of Hearings around the country. The Council therefore spoke to the key points of our submission at the New Plymouth Hearing on 1 April 2008.

2008/2009 National Land Transport Programme

In July 2008, the Council received final notification from Land Transport New Zealand of the *2008/2009 National Land Transport Programme* and regionally distributed funds. A number of projects in the final *2008/2009 National Land Transport Programme* were identified for Regional Funding, including the:

- Ngatoto Rd North Bridge Replacement - part N and part R Funding
- Waikaramarama Road Bridge Replacement - part N and part R Funding
- Bridge 143 Replacement (Parikaka Road) - part N and part R Funding
- Bridge 123 Replacement (Wiremu Road) - part N and part R Funding
- Link Road Improvements - part N and part R Funding
- Rugby Road Underpass- 100% R Funding
- Tangahoe Bridge Widening - 100% R Funding

The Council has expressed its concern during the year that the region has fully committed its Regional Funds for the next several years on a number of the larger projects (e.g. Bell Block Bypass and Rugby Road Underpass). Should Regional Funds need to be used for those smaller projects (e.g. bridge replacement projects) previously eligible for National Funds, it is likely that other local projects will slip down the priority list for each Territorial Authority.

Updated New Zealand Transport Strategy

In February 2008 a submission was sent to the Ministry of Transport on their *Sustainable Transport: Update of the New Zealand Transport Strategy* Discussion Paper. As central government has indicated that they intend to publish an *Update of the New Zealand Transport Strategy (UNZTS)* by the end of the year this Discussion Document is “an important first step towards updating the New Zealand Transport Strategy (NZTS)”. Its purpose is to set out the issues and propose a series of transport specific targets already decided by the government in the areas of sustainability, energy and climate change.

The Ministry has also signalled that this may be the only significant opportunity that stakeholders will have to submit on this important Update. The key points raised in the submission were therefore as follows:

- More funding is required for the maintenance and upgrade of our rural rail networks.
- Support is provided for the inclusion of targets in the UNZTS as it provides a series of goals to work towards.
- Greater clarity is required as to how the high-level, intermediate and supporting targets relate to each other – is there a hierarchy of importance and hence priority amongst these different levels?
- Consultation with affected parties on any action plan to be included in an Updated NZTS is good practise and should be considered.
- Clarification is requested for what is meant by the terms ‘major urban areas’, ‘key economic nodes’ and ‘substantial reduction’.
- Domestic sea freight should be encouraged more, including financial incentives to do so.
- Several targets are worded in such a way that they are ‘moving targets’ and therefore difficult to measure and report against throughout the period of the document. These targets need to be more specific.
- Rural areas have differing transport demands and needs compared to more urban or metropolitan areas therefore more guidance on the appropriate level of public transport provision in rural areas is requested.
- Support is provided for any initiatives to ensure greater turnover of our vehicle fleet to allow for improved exhaust emissions and the utilisation of more electric vehicles.
- A new transport choice needs to be noted in the Updated NZTS which recognises that people make ‘choices about where we move’.

The submission was sent by the due date of 15 February 2008.

Submissions to the Transport and Industrial Relations Select Committee

In late 2007 two statutes were introduced to Parliament and submissions consequently called for. These were the Public Transport Management and Land Transport Management Amendment Bill's.

In response to these bills being introduced submissions were sent to the Transport and Industrial Relations Select Committee by the due dates of 14 December and 18 October 2007 respectively. The Select Committee also held a Hearing of Submissions for each bill, with representatives from the Council speaking at both of these Hearings.

Key points raised by each submission were as follows:

Public Transport Management Bill

Support was provided for the overall purpose of the PTM Bill. However, there were several sections that the Council provided specific comments on, namely:

- That the enhanced ability of regional councils to decline to register commercial services on certain grounds is fully supported.
- That registration rules should not only apply to scheduled bus and ferry commuter services, but also school services not contracted to the Ministry of Education.
- That the ability of regional councils to specify controls on commercial public transport services is supported.
- That the Bill provides definitions for the words 'approved public organisation', 'minor' and 'substantial'.
- That the Bill is amended so that the timeframes associated with declining to register a proposed commercial public transport services are extended from 7 days each to at least 21 days.
- That both the Bill and the Land Transport Rule (Operator Licensing 2007) are amended so that regional councils retain the responsibility for registering taxi services in the same manner as commercial bus services.

Land Transport Management Amendment Bill

Support was provided for the general intent and direction of the Bill. However, there were several sections of the Bill that the Council provided specific comments on, namely:

- The Council supports full hypothecation of funds to specific land transport use.
- The Council supports the ability of regional councils to utilise a regional fuels tax of up to 10cents/litre, but strongly opposes the 50/50 split for roading projects and public transport infrastructure. The Council noted that for provincial New Zealand there is limited need for additional infrastructure for public passenger transport but urgent need for more roading, walking and cycling projects to deliver sustainable transport solutions in the region that have been identified through a proper public process.
- The Council does not support proposals in the Bill to limit voting rights on Regional Land Transport Committees. The Council strongly believes that all members should have voting rights.

New Plymouth Strategic Transport Study

Transit New Zealand and the New Plymouth District Council have been involved in a Study of New Plymouth's major transport routes, with the aim of:

- developing a long-term strategy for upgrading the road network to cater for future traffic volumes; and
- developing a traffic plan for managing the existing road network.

Following an initial round of consultation with key stakeholders and interested parties in February and March 2007, a consultation report on issues and options was compiled in April 2007. An extensive assessment of the issues identified was then undertaken, with the technical details and findings to emerge from the analysis presented in a comprehensive 'technical report'. The main findings and conclusions of this technical report were compiled in a *Summary Report of Transport Issues and Options for the New Plymouth Strategic Transport Study*, with comments requested by 4 June 2008.

In response to this request a submission was prepared and sent to the New Plymouth District Council by the due date. As there will be further opportunity to comment in

more detail at several additional stages, the comments made in the submission were more informal and predominantly focused on concerns relating to passenger transport matters.

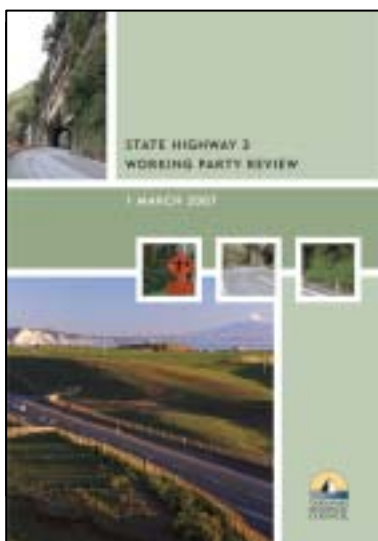
2.2.3 State Highway 3 Working Party

The State Highway 3 Working Party was formed in August 2002 to promote improvements to State Highway 3 between Taranaki and Waikato and in recognition of the strategic importance of this section of the state highway network. It is made up of representatives from the Taranaki Regional Council, New Plymouth District Council, Environment Waikato, Waitomo District Council, Transit New Zealand, Transfield Services, the Western Central Road Transport Association and the Automobile Association.

Due to local body elections being held at the end of 2007, the Working Party met only once during the year (April 2008) to discuss highway improvements, traffic safety issues, highway promotion and publicity. This meeting focused on matters relating to Land Transport New Zealand's 2007/2008 *State Highway Forecast* information, opportunities for projects to be covered by Regional Funds, matters relating to a number of special projects, stock truck effluent disposal sites and promotional initiatives for the highway.

In addition to the matters identified above, several of the key issues that are consequently being pursued by the Working Party include:

- Correspondence with Transit New Zealand on the Terms of Reference for an *Awakino Strategic Study* and the projects to be assessed.
- Onaero Motor Camp – concerns have been noted with regard to unsafe turning movements into this site by campervans and discussions were subsequently held around better signage.
- An assessment of more passing opportunities for this section of the state highway network has been requested of Transit New Zealand.
- Awakino North Realignment work – ongoing consultation and endorsement of this project occurred.
- Princess Street intersection at Waitara – significant safety concerns have been noted and further investigations are to occur on this matter.
- Regional Funds – discussions were held as to what projects would benefit from these funds and what projects were appropriate to consider.



The Working Party also continued to endorse the cost sharing arrangement that the Waikato and Taranaki regions have through part use of their Regional funds for the Awakino North Realignment, Awakino Tunnel Widening, North of Awakino Tunnel Realignment, Bexley Station Realignment, Awakino Hairpin Realignment and Awakino Tunnel Southbound Realignment projects. The Working Party requested the development of an *Awakino Strategic Study* which could assess the need and demand for a package of projects for the Awakino Gorge area in a more strategic and systematic manner.

In response to a request from the Working Party a *State Highway 3 Working Party Review Document* was prepared and widely distributed. This document outlines the:

background to the group, its goals and objectives, the strategic importance of this section of the state highway network and why, and the key issues being addressed by the group.

2.2.4 Stratford to Okahukura Working Party

In late 2006/early 2007 ONTRACK undertook a review of the Stratford to Okahukura Railway Line (SOL). This review resulted in ONTRACK advising the Federation of Rail Organisations of New Zealand (FRONZ) that they would not be sanctioning the use of the SOL by passenger excursion services as of late January 2007, unless such excursions had been previously approved.

ONTRACK advised that the main issues resulting in this prohibition were as follows:

- The impact of deferred maintenance (track, bridges and tunnels) and the need for capital improvements on the track, particularly between Te Wera and Okahukura.
- Most problems are associated with the tunnels where access in the case of a derailment is difficult.
- Several tunnels are currently subject to a 10 km/h speed restriction as a result of this deferred maintenance.

Despite remedial work on the track formation in tunnels programmed for late 2007, this will not be sufficient to improve the line to a point that ONTRACK would be comfortable to continue allowing passenger services to operate. Reasons for this include its remoteness, difficult access, poor communications, significant capital required to get the track in tunnels back to reasonable standard and declined line quality.

Despite the above issues restricting the use of the SOL Line by passenger services, ONTRACK has considered it to be robust enough for freight services to continue operating. The reason noted for this is that passenger services require higher safety standards and, as there is limited or no road access, nor any cell phone coverage, ONTRACK deemed it to be too difficult to remove passengers in the event of a train being immobilized.

A Stratford to Okahukura Working Party was therefore established in June 2007 to identify a way forward for reinstating passenger excursion trains on the SOL line. The purpose of the newly formed Working party is:

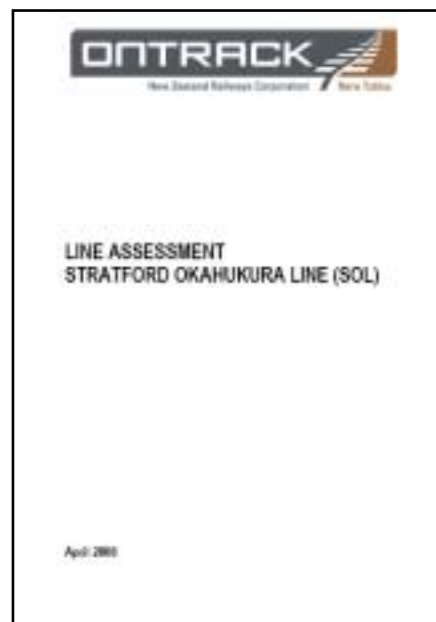
“To advocate for the continued use of the Stratford to Okahukura Railway line for both passenger excursion and freight trains.”

Key stakeholder organisations included in this Working Party are:

- Toll Consolidated NZ Ltd
- Port Taranaki
- ONTRACK
- PPCS
- New Plymouth District Council
- Fonterra
- South Taranaki District Council
- Riverlands Eltham Plant
- Horizons Regional Council
- Stratford District Council
- Mainline Steam
- Ruapehu District Council
- Venture Taranaki Trust
- Kiwitours
- Taranaki Regional Council

Three meetings were held throughout 2007/08 to discuss this issue and make progress with regard to the group’s purpose. Several reports have been prepared as follows:

- Maunsell Ltd were commissioned to source and analyse existing information regarding the current status, use and operation of the SOL Line. The outcome of the project was to provide an investigation report (including existing information gaps and potential sources) to allow the newly formed SOL Working Party to make an informed decision on the subsequent stages of this project. As a result of this study it was evident that more information was required on the current status, use and operation of the Line.
- A more detailed report was subsequently prepared by ONTRACK which investigated the condition and future usage of the SOL Line.



Following the development of these two reports, the Working Party is currently working with ONTRACK and the newly formed KiwiRail organisation to reinstate passenger excursion trains for Whangamomona Republic Day initially. Further work will also be undertaken to ensure that the future viability and security of this route is maintained in the future for both passenger excursion trains and freight movements.

2.2.5 Waikato Inter-regional Transport Study

During 2007/08 it was agreed that the development of a Waikato Inter-regional Transport Study would be beneficial in assessing the appropriate land transport provision and network requirements in the future for Waikato and neighbouring regions. For the Taranaki region this is important for the State Highway 3 connection between New Plymouth and Hamilton.

The purpose of this Study is to:

- Identify the inter-regional transport issues relevant to the Waikato and adjoining regions, now and into the future.
- Develop an evidence based long-term strategy to deliver a multi-modal transportation network into and through the Waikato region that meets national, regional and local economic and social objectives, and contributes to achievement of Government objectives and targets.
- Evaluate and recommend complementary policy and regulatory responses including in particular demand management initiatives.
- Establish an evaluation framework to assist the development of a co-ordinated work programme.

The Council is therefore involved in the project team for this Study and are working closely with Environment Waikato to identify those matters relating to State Highway 3 north of New Plymouth that need to be considered in such a study.

2.2.6 Walking and cycling initiatives

The *Regional Walkways and Cycleways Strategy for Taranaki* was adopted by the Council on 27 June 2007. This was a joint project involving the Council, each of the three district councils, Department of Conservation, Taranaki/Whanganui Conservation Board, Transit New Zealand, Federated Farmers and Venture Taranaki.

The purpose of this Strategy is to:

- Promote the economic, social, environmental, recreational, health, tourism and transport benefits of walking and cycling.
- Identify current and possible future walkways/cycleways as part of an integrated, region-wide network connecting Taranaki's natural environment and linking with other walking and cycling infrastructure and population centres.

Following on from the development of this Strategy the project team decided to develop a brochure of walkways located throughout the region to distribute to both domestic and international travellers visiting the region. It is anticipated that this brochure will be produced before the end of 2008.

2.2.7 Stock Truck Effluent Disposal Working Party

Four stock truck effluent disposal facilities are now located within Taranaki: two on the state highway network (Ahititi and Waverley), one at the Stratford saleyards and another at the Inglewood saleyards. Apart from some illegal dumping and driver safety issues, these four sites have worked very well to-date. The operation of these facilities continued to be monitored during the year.

Despite there being anecdotal evidence of illegal dumping activities, the Taranaki Regional Council has not received any official complaints relating to stock truck effluent discharges during the year. It is therefore considered that the *Regional Stock Truck Effluent Disposal Strategy* and the management systems that have been put in place to avoid or minimise stock truck effluent discharges onto roads are working reasonably satisfactorily. However, there is still a need for vigilance to ensure that the in-transit facilities are appropriately maintained and continue to be used by carriers, and that farmers continue to stand stock.

Throughout the 2007/08 year the only issues that arose were concerns relating to a lack of disposal sites being installed in neighbouring regions. As the Ahititi and Waverley sites were installed on the understanding that additional sites would be developed in neighbouring regions to reduce the pressure on these sites from transport operators travelling between regions, there are concerns that this is not actually happening. Correspondence was subsequently sent to Transit New Zealand noting these concerns.

The Working Party continues to keep a watching brief on the situation. The members of this group include: each of the three district councils in the region, the Taranaki Regional Council, Transit NZ, Road Transport Association (Western Central Districts), Opus International Ltd. and Federated Farmers.

2.2.8 Implementation of the Next Steps Review

In March 2006 a Ministerial Advisory Group on roading costs was appointed by the Minister of Transport to assist the Government in ascertaining whether recent cost increases in the roading sector were justified or avoidable. The *Ministerial Advisory Group on Road Costs* report (MAG) was completed in August 2006 and released by Hon Annette King (Minister of Transport) on 9 February 2007.

In the MAG report a number of suggestions were noted, including:

- that changes in project scope have been the most significant driver of cost increases and remain the greatest risk in the future;
- that improvements can be made in the cost estimation process and the design standards used; and
- that strong governance, clear leadership and sound processes are necessary across the Government's transport organisations.

Following the release of the MAG report, the Government asked the State Services Commission to undertake a 'Next Steps' review of the Government's land transport sector. This review considered the performance, roles and responsibilities of the Ministry of Transport, Land Transport NZ and Transit NZ, and the interface of certain activities with local authorities. The review also:

- Considered ways to enhance the responsiveness, performance, capability of, and value for money achieved by, the government land transport sector.
- Reviewed the range of funding mechanisms for land transport currently in place and ways to better link demand and expenditure, together with consideration of the appropriate accountability requirements.
- Considered the best placement of policy, planning and procurement functions to fit with the New Zealand Transport Strategy and the new funding and planning regime.
- Ensured that any proposed changes to the sector do not result in a structural imbalance or bias between transport modes or communities of interest.
- Ensured that any proposed changes would result in a system that is financially sustainable.

In October 2007, the Land Transport Management Amendment Bill was then introduced to address the issues raised above. The implications of this Bill are as follows:

New Zealand Transport Agency

The Bill introduced an accountability framework for a new transport Crown entity formed by combining the functions of Land Transport New Zealand and Transit New Zealand. The New Zealand Transport Agency came into effect on 1 August 2008.

Government Policy Statement

The Bill sets out the requirement for a Government Policy Statement to be introduced which sets out the Government's outcomes, objectives and high level priorities for land transport. The GPS was published in August 2008 and sets out how land transport funding is intended to improve the land transport sector in the context of land transport policy. It contains maximum and minimum levels of funding by activity class over the 10 year period, with more details and therefore certainty around the first years.

National Land Transport Programme

The National Land Transport Programme is now three-yearly. It must include activities from all regional land transport programmes and is prepared by the NZ Transport Agency.

Regional Land Transport Programmes

Three-yearly regional land transport programmes have now been introduced that will identify all land transport activities in a region. These are to be prepared by regional transport committees and approved by regional councils. The RLTP's are to include:

- Local road maintenance, local road renewals, local road minor capital works and existing public transport services identified by approved organisations in a region.
- Any other activities proposed by approved organisations in a region not included above (this may include large local road capital works), activities relating to the state highway network and any other activities that the Agency may propose for the region. These are to be placed in order of priority by the regional land transport committee.

Each regional council must ensure that their first regional land transport programme is in place for the three financial years commencing on 1 July 2009.

Regional Fuel Tax

There is now a new ability for regional transport committees (on behalf of a regional council) to prepare a regional fuel tax scheme.

A regional fuel tax is to be collected over a 'region' and no more than 5 cents per litre of fuel may be used for carriageways for general traffic (i.e. road related purposes). Regional transport committees must be satisfied that full funding for capital projects from any other source is not likely to be available within the desired timeframe before regional fuel tax can be utilised.

Regional Land Transport Strategies

Regional land transport strategies must now take into account the relevant regional council functions under the Resource Management Act, including the requirement to consider the strategic integration of transport infrastructure with land use through objectives, policies and methods. Current regional land transport strategies continue to have effect until they cease to be current under the provisions of the Land Transport Act 1998. The Minister may approve an extension of an RLTS by a period of up to 18 months.

Regional Transport Committees

The first regional transport committee for each region must be established before 1 October 2008, unless another date before 31 December 2008 is agreed upon by the Minister. These new committees are now known as Regional Transport Committees to remove the implied exclusive focus on land transport (i.e. they will no longer be called regional land transport committees).

Membership on this committee is now restricted to: two persons to represent the Regional Council, one person from each territorial authority in the region to represent that territorial authority, one person to represent the New Zealand Transport Agency, one person to represent each of the five objectives of the New Zealand Transport Strategy and one person to represent cultural interests. The new membership will result in a reduction in numbers on this Committee from the current 19 members to 12.

The role of the new Regional Transport Committee for Taranaki will be to prepare for approval by the regional council a:

- Regional land transport strategy for its region, or any variations to the strategy, or any reports on the strategy.
- Regional land transport programme for its region or any variations to the programme.
- Regional fuel tax scheme for its region, if the committee decides to recommend such a scheme.

The Land Transport Management Amendment Act was finally enacted on 1 August 2008.

2.3 Passenger transport

The Council's progress in achieving its programmes in relation to passenger transport is set out below.

2.3.1 Overview of passenger transport requirements

The Council maintained a general overview of passenger transport services in the region and continued, through the annual plan process, to assist disabled persons using the Total Mobility Scheme and New Plymouth bus services. The Council also implemented three additional once-a-week passenger transport services in South Taranaki and one in Inglewood.

2.3.2 Registration of services

Due to the implementation of a new Operator Licensing Rule in October 2007 the Council no longer deals with the registration of taxis services. This responsibility now lies with the New Zealand Transport Agency (named Land Transport New Zealand in 2007/08).

The Council therefore received no new registrations for taxi services during 2007/2008.

However, the Council still retains the responsibility for registering bus services operating in the region. Five registrations for new bus services were received during 2007/2008 (one from Weir Bros, two from Pickering Motors Ltd and two from Tranzit Coachlines Taranaki Ltd). Two variations to existing registered bus services were received during 2007/2008 (both from InterCity Coachlines).

2.3.3 Total Mobility Scheme

Total Mobility taxi services were provided to people with disabilities in the targeted areas of the New Plymouth, Bell Block, Waitara, Stratford and Hawera. The budget for Total Mobility services in these areas was set at \$504,000 for the year, funded in part from Land Transport New Zealand (40%) and in part from general rates (60%).

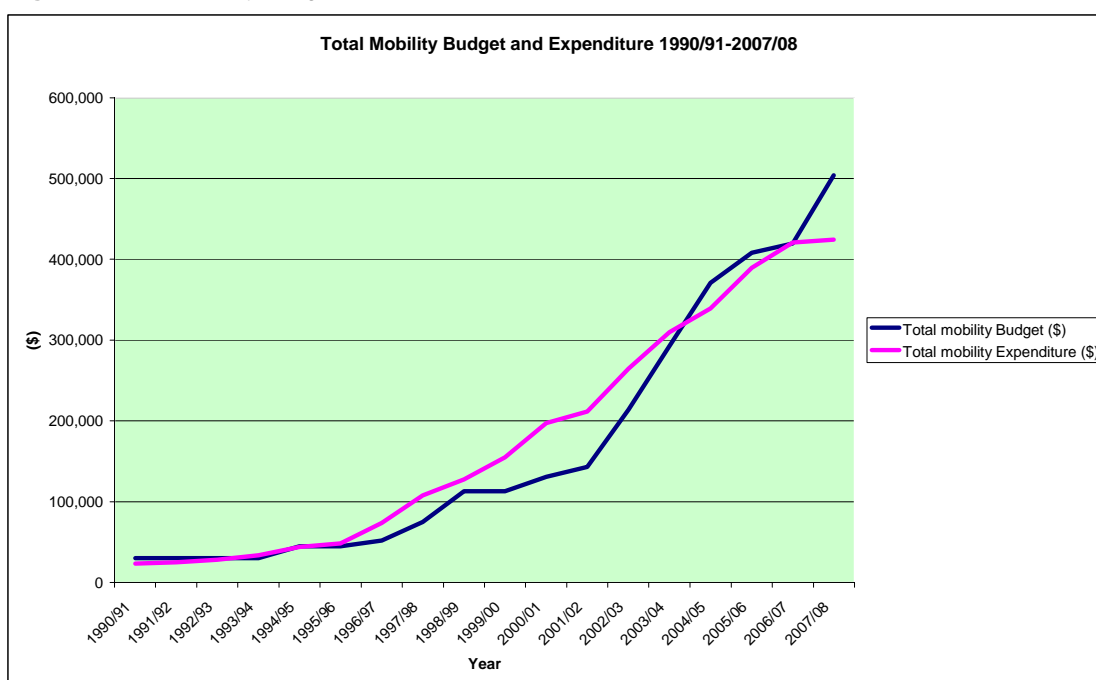
Demand for Total Mobility services decreased during the year. This can be attributed to the introduction of the photo ID cards and the establishment of an electronic database to manage clients on the Scheme. Net expenditure for the year for Total Mobility trips in each of the urban areas came in at \$392,274, a 7% decrease over last year's expenditure of \$420,873. An additional \$31,887 was spent on Council operating costs. Table 1 shows the budget for each area and the net expenditure per area for the 2007/2008 financial year.

Table 1: Total mobility budget and net expenditure per area for 2007/2008

Area	Budget (\$)	Expenditure (\$)
New Plymouth	351,500	300,310
Waitara	21,500	22,611
Stratford	15,400	13,330
Hawera	79,600	56,023
Other Operating costs	36,000	31,887
Total	504,000	424,161

Figure 1 shows the Total Mobility budget and expenditure trends over the last 18 years.

Figure 1: Total mobility budget and net expenditure trends between 1990/91 and 2007/08



In 2007/2008 there was a total of 87,692 Total Mobility passenger trips undertaken, a decrease of 8% over the previous year. The majority of these trips (78%) were in the New Plymouth urban area. Hawera continues to show growth in demand with 12% of trips taken.

At the conclusion of the 2007/2008 year the Total Mobility Scheme had a client base of approximately 1,660. Of this total, approximately 1,039 individuals were affiliated to the Disabled Persons Assembly (DPA) and 623 to other disability agencies .

A total of five taxi organisations participated in the Total Mobility Scheme during 2007/2008. These were: New Plymouth Taxis Ltd, Energy City Cabs, Egmont City Cabs, Stratford Taxis and Hawera Taxis Ltd.

Total Mobility services are provided to 25 agencies affiliated to the Disabled Persons Assembly (DPA). These agencies are:

- Access Ability
- Arthritis - Central
- Blind and Partially Blind
- Cancer Society
- Parafed
- Parkinsonism
- Post Polio Organisation
- RNZ Foundation/Blind – Hawera

- CCS North Taranaki
- CCS South & Central Taranaki
- DPA Individual
- Epilepsy Group
- IDEA Services – South Taranaki
- IDEA Services – North Taranaki
- Molly Ryan Trust
- MS Society
- Pathways Trust
- RNZ Foundation/Blind – Nth Taranaki
- RNZ Foundation/Blind – Stratford
- SF Organisation
- Stroke Foundation
- Tainui Village
- Taranaki Arthritis
- Taranaki Asthma Society
- Taranaki Enterprise

The Total Mobility Scheme is a nationwide scheme with funding assistance provided in part by central government and in part by regional councils. During the year Land Transport NZ continued its overall review of how the Scheme is being operated, with the intention of enabling community organisations to participate in the Scheme.

In August 2005 the Minister of Transport announced improvements to the Scheme to be introduced in two phases over a period of two to three years.

- Phase One improvements would see an increase in the financial assistance rate to regional councils from 40% to 50%, provided Councils agree to 11 conditions to improve the Scheme.
- Phase Two improvements would see an increase in the financial assistance rate to 60%, subject to Council agreeing to a further 19 conditions. The Ministry has subsequently separated out four of these conditions, therefore reducing the number of Phase Two conditions to 15.

The Council recognises the valuable service that the Total Mobility Scheme provides to people with disabilities. However, the Council has raised several concerns regarding the implications of the review of the Total Mobility Scheme and agreeing to each of the conditions specified in Phases One and Two of the review. The Council's primary concerns relate to costs and overall funding of the Scheme, which it considers should be met by central government from general taxation rather than from regional rates. The Council has also expressed its concerns about potential increases in use and administration costs associated with the review. Ongoing correspondence is therefore occurring between the Council and Land Transport NZ on these issues.

Implementation of a Total Mobility I.D. Card system

In October 2007, the Council implemented a project to introduce photo identification cards for all Total Mobility clients. As part of the implementation project an electronic database was set up. All existing clients were contacted by either a letter issued by the Council or through the clients' respective disability agency. Clients were requested to submit an I.D. Card application form, a recent photograph of themselves and a card processing fee of \$2.00. Currently there are approximately 1,660 active members recorded on this new database.



Total Mobility I.D. Card example

The purpose of the photo I.D. Card was to provide confirmation to the taxi driver that the person presenting the TM voucher was in fact eligible and participating in the Scheme. There had been anecdotal evidence, both from within Taranaki and other regions, that TM vouchers may have been used by family members or associates of participants for non-legitimate trips.

The I.D. Card system went live on the 7 April 2008. As from this date all taxi drivers were to request the person presenting a TM voucher to also present their I.D. Card. If the person does not have an I.D. Card then they are ineligible for the 50% discount and the full fare is to be charged.

There have still been reasonably high numbers of applications processed since the cards came into effect. For the months of May, June and July the number of applications processed has been 138, 98 and 57 respectively. These have not been all new clients, but clients who had not previously either supplied all the necessary information or included payment for their card.

2.3.4 Concessionary fare schemes

New Plymouth, Bell Block, Waitara and Oakura bus services

On 1 July 2006, the Council introduced an improved urban bus service for New Plymouth on an eighteen-month trial period. With the agreement of Okato Bus Lines (the operator of these services), this 18 month period was extended to two years in August 2007 for the following reasons:

- With the anticipated changes to procurement rules and legislation in the next six months such an extension would provide the Council with enough time to analyse the implications of these changes and make the necessary decisions on which path to follow at the end of the trial in an informed manner.
- A six month extension would enable a revised Concession Fare Scheme Agreement to fall within an entire financial year and not finish half way through 2007/08.
- This extension would also enable the Council to obtain more in-depth passenger data on the existing services.

This two year trial period continued operating under a Concession Fare Scheme arrangement. Funds for this service were received in part from Land Transport NZ (50%) and in part from a targeted rate on New Plymouth District ratepayers (50%). The Council contributed \$1.50 on the standard fare of \$3.00 for all Concession Fare categories, which included children, tertiary students, beneficiaries, elderly and the disabled.

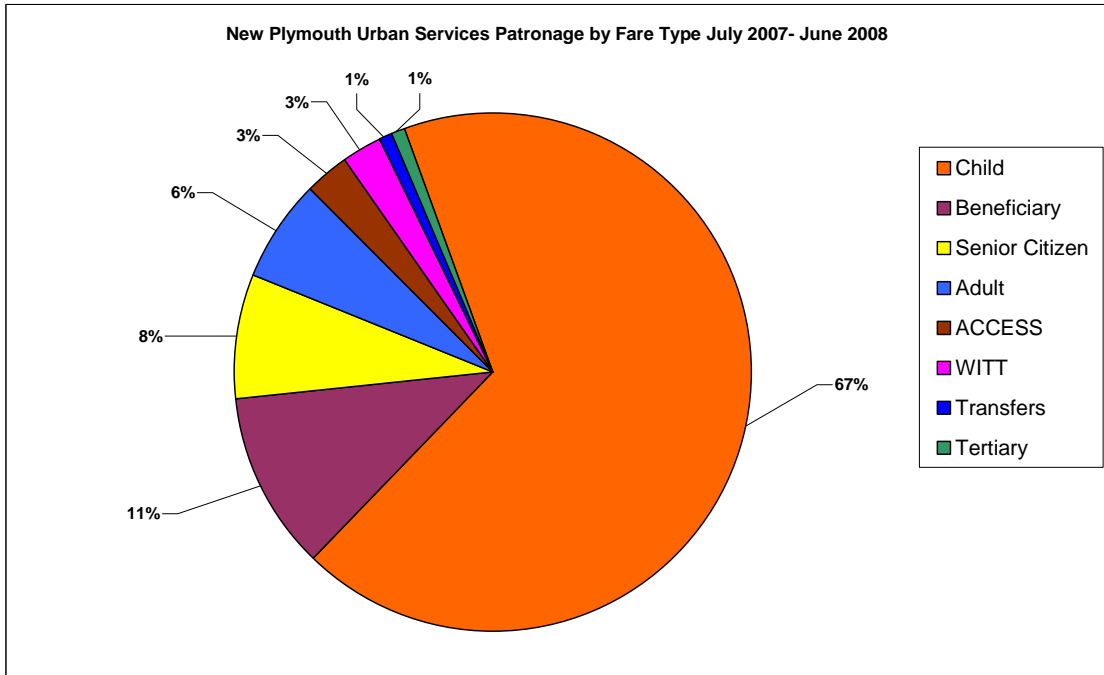
WITT students and staff travelled for free on these services due to an arrangement with WITT and its Student Association whereby they have agreed to fund the student's part of the total \$3.00 total fare (i.e. \$1.50).

A total of 318,545 passenger trips were taken in 2007/2008 by Concessionary Fare users. This compares with a total of 298,942 in 2006/2007. Of these:

233,189 trips were made by children	(73%)
38,404 by beneficiaries	(12%)
26,715 by senior citizens	(8%)
8,871 by ACCESS card holders	(3%)
8,994 by WITT students/staff	(3%)
2,642 by tertiary students	(1%)

Total patronage for the 2007/2008 year was 343,686. Figure 2 shows the percentage by fare type for each category of user.

Figure 2: New Plymouth Urban Service Patronage by Fare Type July 2007 – June 2008



Patronage numbers for each of the routes provided by these services in 2007/2008 were as follows:

Table 2: New Plymouth urban bus services patronage for 2006/2007 and 2007/2008

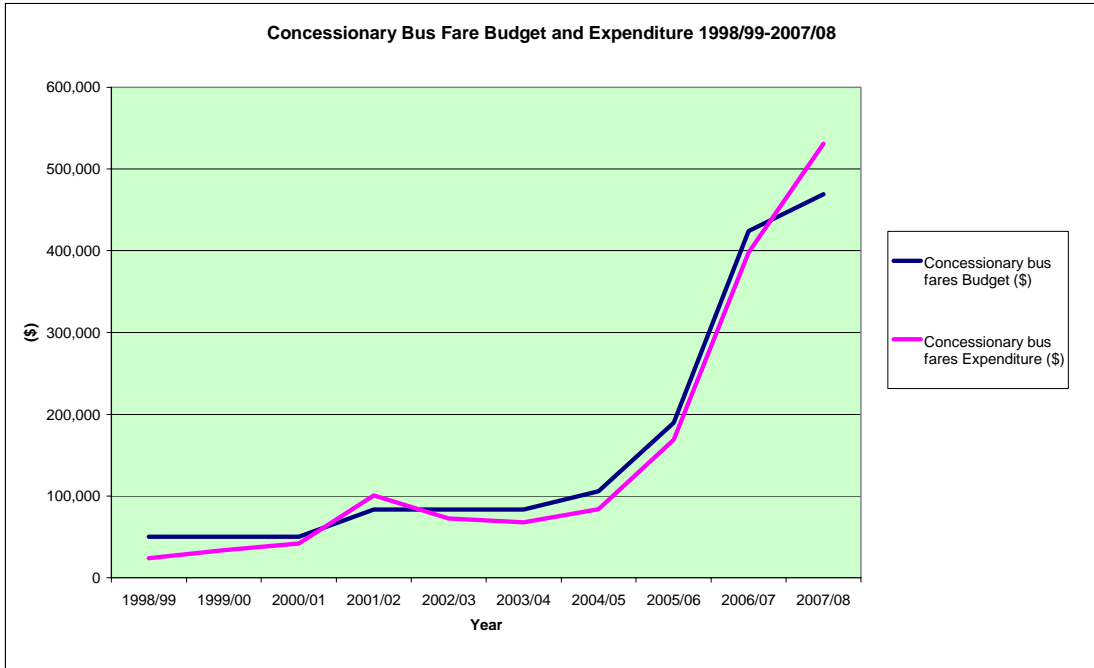
Route	Patronage 2006/07	Patronage 2007/08	Percentage change
333 Marfell-Spotswood	51,060	57,469	+ 13%
444 Westown-Hospital	38,382	37,654	- 2%
555 Vogeltown-Frankleigh	29,730	31,035	+ 4%
777 Merrilands-Fitzroy	23,069	23,895	+ 4%
14 New Plymouth-Oakura	17,448	16,264	- 9%
888 New Plymouth-Bell Block-Waitara	15,808	18,271	+ 16%
Saturday services	1,994	2,093	+ 5%
School overrun services	146,530	157,005	+ 7%
Total	324,021	343,686	+ 6%

The initial budget for concessionary fares in 2007/08 was \$469,000. However with the agreement of Okato Bus Lines to extend the trial period by another six months a programme adjustment claim was made to Land Transport New Zealand which increased this budget to a total of \$553,300

Total expenditure for the year came to \$530,947. This was made up of concessionary fare payments (including WITT students), an inflation escalation payment for the period 1 July 2007 to 31 March 2008, promotional free bus days and ticket printing costs. A further escalation claim for increased costs (for the period 1 April to 31 July 2008) is payable on the release of Land Transport NZ inflation index for that period.

Figure 3 shows the Concession Fare budget and expenditure trends over the last 10 years.

Figure 3: Concessionary Bus Fare budget and net expenditure trends between 1998/99 and 2007/08



Ironside Vehicle Society

On 1 July 2007, the Council entered into a Concession Fare Scheme Agreement with the Ironside Vehicle Society to provide funding assistance for the provision of a passenger transport service for the transport disadvantaged. This followed significant discussions with Land Transport NZ to ascertain the ability under Land Transport New Zealand's Programme and Funding Manual to provide funding assistance to community transport providers that are not classified as approved taxi organisations. Approval was given by Land Transport New Zealand to provide funding assistance to Ironside once they met the necessary licensing requirements.

Ironside is now eligible to claim funding assistance from the Council and Land Transport New Zealand for two specific categories of journey:

- Transporting individuals from home to medical or therapeutic facilities
- Contracted trips where the hireage is a regular scheduled trip, pre-booked and the fare confirmed at the time of booking.

These trips are to occur within the urban limits of New Plymouth, Bell Block and the airport. They can also be made between Waitara, Inglewood and New Plymouth.

The budget for 2007/2008 was capped at \$40,000. Expenditure for the year came to \$8,746 for approximately 964 boardings.

2.3.5 Contracted passenger transport services

Passenger transport services for New Plymouth, Bell Block, Waitara and Oakura

As noted above, during the 2007/2008 year a two year trial period for services in New Plymouth, Bell Block, Waitara and Oakura continued, with the end date for this trial being 30 June 2008.

In response to these trials the Council decided in December 2007 to progress to a contracted service at the beginning of July 2008, rather than continue on with a Concession Fare Arrangement. This was a significant change for the Council, with a

considerable amount of work undertaken during the year in preparation for the 1 July 2008 take over date (for example preparing Contracting and Tendering Manuals, seeking advice from experts on the most efficient contact methods to use, legal peer reviews of contracting documents etc.).

To be prepared for the 1 July date, expressions of interest were sought for these contracted services in November 2007. Tenders were then called for in January 2008, a total of three tenders were received and each were evaluated in accordance with the Council's *Passenger Transport Contracted and Tendering Manual*. A contract was subsequently awarded in March 2008 to Tranzit Coachlines. From the start of July 2008, the New Plymouth, Bell Block, Waitara and Oakura bus services have commenced operating on a contract basis.

As part of this contract process the Council has negotiated with Tranzit Coachlines to implement several changes to the services previously provided under the Concession Fare Scheme. These proposed changes include the introduction of new fare paying technology and new commuter services for the urban, Waitara and Oakura routes. It is anticipated that these changes will be implemented in October 2008.

Passenger transport services for South Taranaki

Three new passenger transport services commenced operating once-a-week between Waverley-Patea-Hawera, Opunake-Hawera and Opunake-New Plymouth on 1 July 2007. The Waverley-Patea-Hawera and Opunake-Hawera services operate on Thursdays, while the Opunake-New Plymouth service operates on Fridays. These services were to operate initially for a trial period of eighteen months. However this has now been extended to twenty four months to allow further evaluation of these trials.

Waverley – Patea – Hawera

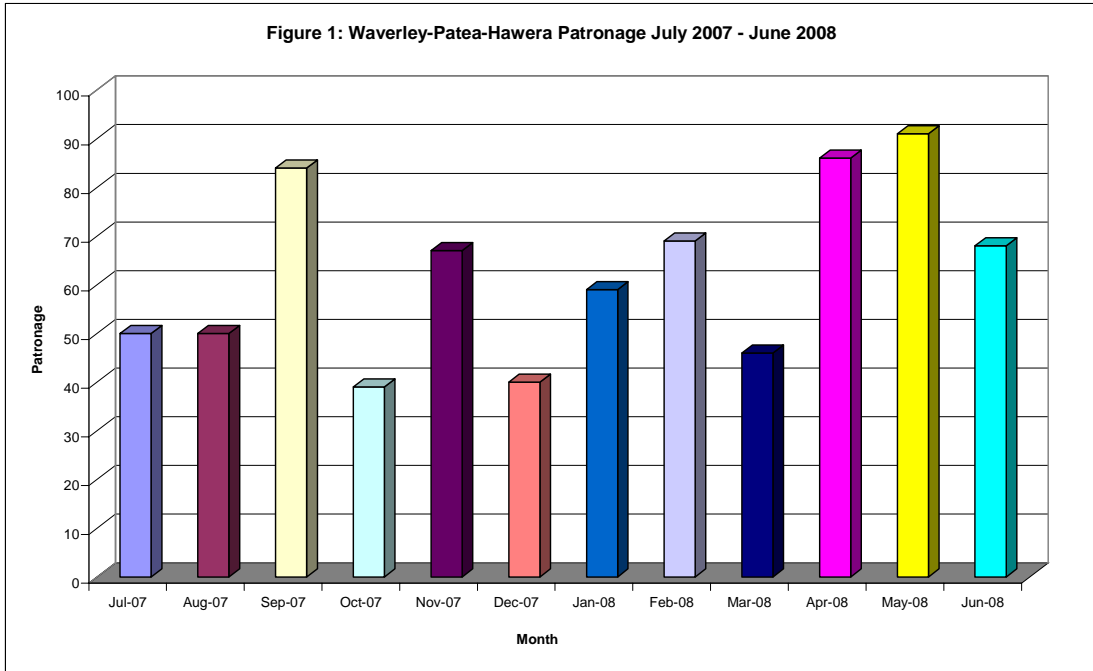
Total boardings for the year were 749. The average number of boardings per trip is 7, with the trial criteria set at 6 boardings per trip. Table 3 shows the total number of boardings for the year and the percentage of adult and child passengers.

Table 3: Total Patronage July 2007 to June 2008

Patronage type	Patronage number	Percentage of patronage
Adult	594	79
Children	155	21
Total	749	100

Figure 4 shows the total monthly patronage recorded.

Figure 4: Waverley-Patea-Hawera Patronage July 2007 to June 2008



Opunake – Eltham – Hawera

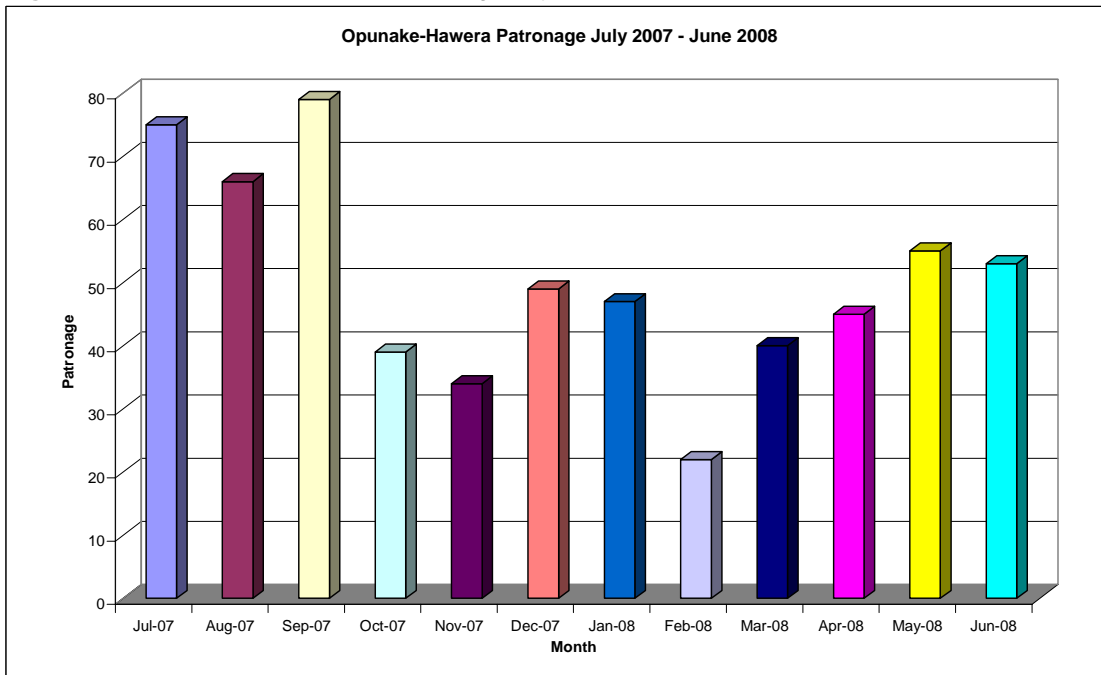
Total boardings for the year were 604. The average number of boardings per trip is 6, with the trial criteria set at 6 boardings per trip. Table 4 shows the total number of boardings for the year and the percentage of adult and child passengers.

Table 4: Total Patronage July 2007 to June 2008

Patronage type	Patronage number	Percentage of patronage
Adult	528	87
Children	76	13
Total	604	100

Figure 5 shows the total monthly patronage recorded.

Figure 5: Opunake-Eltham-Hawera Patronage July 2007 to June 2008



Opunake – New Plymouth

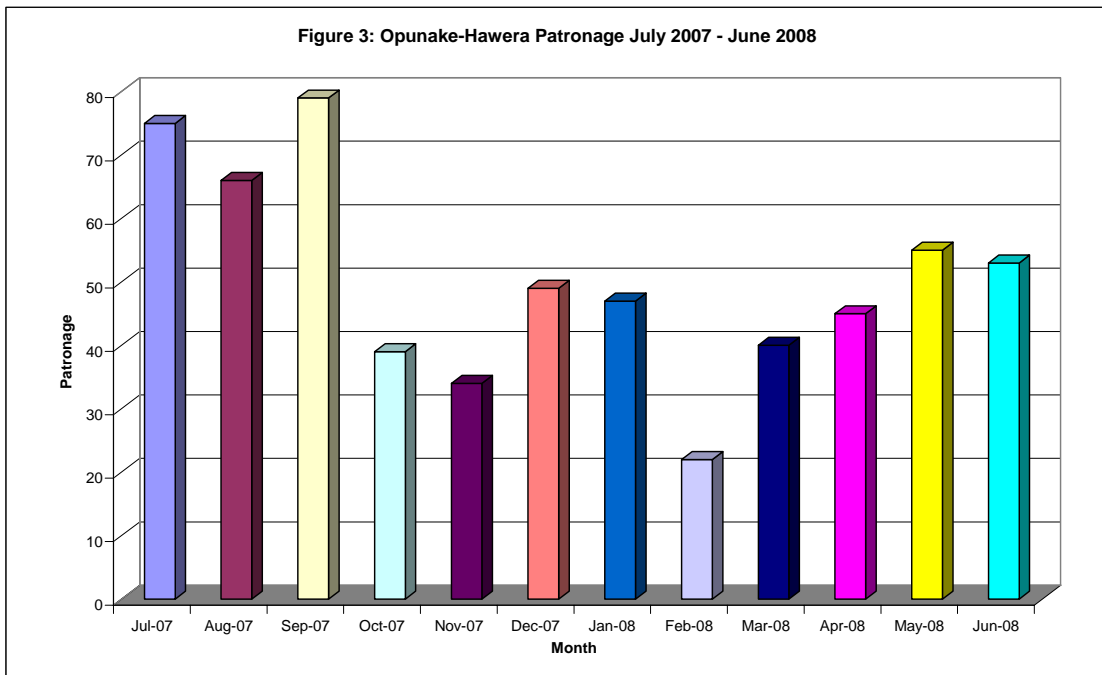
Total boardings for the year were 544. Average number of boardings per trip is 5.5, with the trial criteria set at 6 boardings per trip. Table 5 shows the total number of boardings for the year and the percentage of adult and child passengers.

Table 5: Total Patronage July 2007 to June 2008

Patronage type	Patronage number	Percentage of patronage
Adult	396	73
Children	148	27
Total	544	100

Figure 6 shows the total monthly patronage recorded.

Figure 6: Opunake-New Plymouth Patronage July 2007 to June 2008



Passenger transport services for Inglewood

A once-a-week passenger transport service from Inglewood to New commenced operating 1 November 2007. This service operates on a Thursday and was to operate initially for a trial period of twelve-months. This has now been extended to eighteen months to allow further evaluation of the trial.

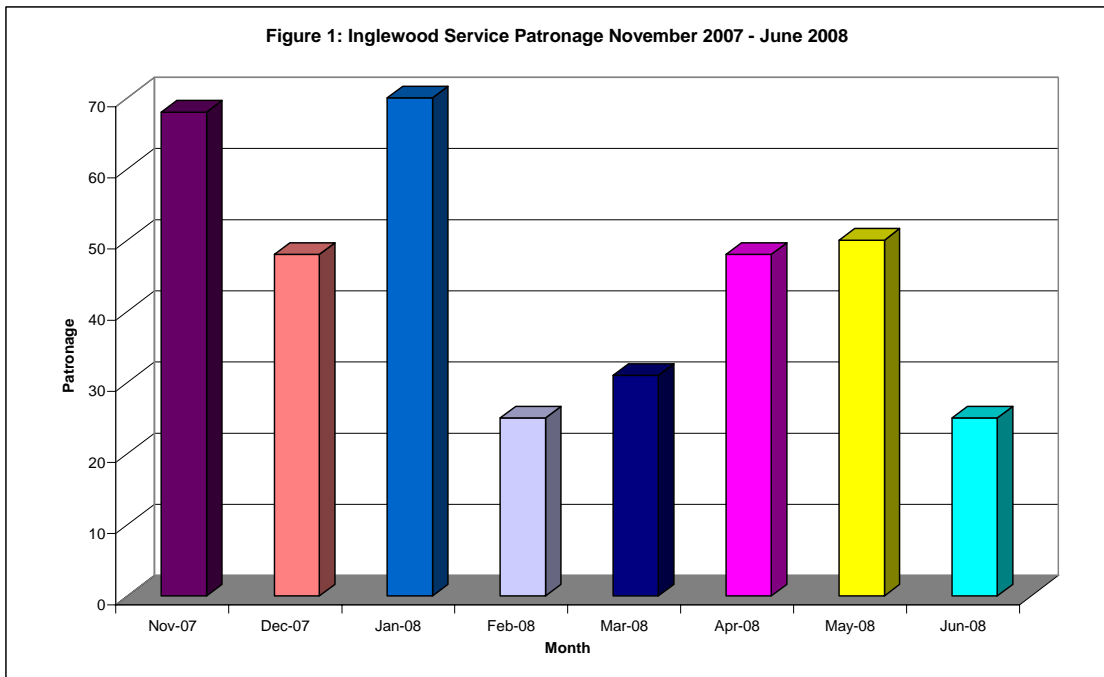
Total boardings for the 8 months of service were 365. Average number of boardings per trip is 5.5, with the trial criteria set at 6 boardings per trip. Table 6 shows the total number of boardings for the year and the percentage of adult and child passengers.

Table 6: Total Patronage July 2007 to June 2008

Patronage type	Patronage number	Percentage of patronage
Adult	346	89
Children	39	11
Total	365	100

Figure 7 shows the total monthly patronage recorded.

Figure 7: Inglewood – New Plymouth Patronage November 2007 to June 2008



3. Conclusion

Performance measures detailed in the Council's *2007/2008 Annual Plan* have been achieved for the Council's passenger transport functions.

Programmes and performance measures

1. The Taranaki Regional Council continued to implement of the requirements of the *Regional Land Transport Strategy* and *Regional Passenger Transport Plan* for Taranaki throughout 2007/2008.
2. The Council completed an annual report on the implementation of the *Regional Land Transport Strategy for Taranaki* in 2007/2008.
3. Total Mobility taxi services were provided to people with disabilities in the targeted areas of New Plymouth urban area, Bell Block, Waitara, Stratford and Hawera.
4. The Council provided funding through a Concessionary Fare Agreement to Ironside Vehicle Society Incorporated to provide funding assistance for the provision of a passenger transport service for the transport disadvantaged.
5. The Council continued passenger transport trials in the New Plymouth urban areas for a trial period of two years.
6. In response to these trials the Council decided in December 2007 to progress to a contracted service at the beginning of July 2008 rather than continue on with a Concession Fare Arrangement for the provision of passenger transport services in New Plymouth, Bell Block, Waitara and Oakura.
7. The Council provided funding for the delivery of an enhanced Concessionary Fare Scheme for children, tertiary students, people with disabilities, the elderly, beneficiaries and WITT students and staff using bus services of New Plymouth, Waitara and Oakura.
8. The Council completed its review and awarded contracts for passenger transport services for the South Taranaki District. Three trial services commenced operating in July 2007.
9. The Council also awarded a contract for passenger transport services from Inglewood to New Plymouth. This trial service commenced operating in November 2007.
10. Received and registered within 14 days, appropriate applications to operate passenger transport services.
11. Carried out general advocacy activities in relation to Government transport policy proposals and funding programmes, including identifying appropriate Regional (R) Funding priorities for the region.

Community outcomes

This activity contributed to Sustainable, Prosperous, Connected, Together and Vibrant Taranaki outcomes through the Council continuing to promote the provision of passenger transport services throughout the region and staff undertaking a regional advocacy role on roading and funding issues.