

Regional Public Transport Plan
for Taranaki
2012 – 2022

Taranaki Regional Council
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#943202

Foreword

Public transport in Taranaki has taken big strides forward in the last few years. Thanks to the increased funding from the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) and the Taranaki Regional Council (the Regional Council) we have greatly expanded the New Plymouth city service, and have introduced several new rural services. The improvements have been very successful and more people are using public transport than ever before.

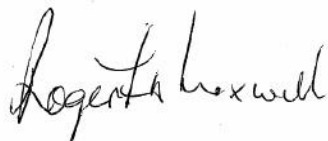
But all this comes at a cost. Under this Plan the Regional Council is budgeting to spend about \$2.5M of ratepayers money over the next three years on supporting public transport services. That is no small sum, and we must ensure it is spent wisely.

While it would be good to continue to keep improving services, the reality is that in order to provide more services we need to find the funding to subsidise them. That will be difficult in this current economic climate. But we can still consolidate, and hopefully build on, the improvements we have made recently.

We can concentrate on the little, but still important, things. We would like to integrate public transport more with cycling and walking. We also want to continue to improve the services we offer to those whose impairments make it difficult for them to use buses. The fleet is being upgraded to make all buses fully accessible, and we will look to improve access to and from bus-stops. In New Plymouth services will continue to be fine-tuned including options of reducing services on poorly patronised routes to improve network efficiency and effectiveness. And we are continuing to increase our support for the Total Mobility service and other services which focus on people with impairments.

Longer term we would like to see further improvements in public transport in Taranaki. Any improvements would be dependent on availability of funding and the ability to integrate with existing bus services will be important factors as will the support of users. The Council has signalled in this Plan that it will look closely at a Hawera to New Plymouth service and how it might be funded and supported so as to provide a valued service to the communities who need it, at reasonable cost to our ratepayers.

I believe we now have a core public transport service which we can be proud of; one that meets the needs of most people in Taranaki. But we can still improve things. This Plan outlines our proposals for the next three years.



Roger Maxwell
Chairman – Regional Transport Committee

The Plan at a glance

This Plan must set out the Regional Council's plans for public transport in Taranaki for the next ten years and describes the public transport services the Council intends to provide in the region with a focus on the next three years and sets out a programme of action.

Substantial improvements have been made by the Regional Council in the past few years to public transport in Taranaki. But because public transport is subsidised by the Regional Council and NZTA, the current economic climate means that funding for any new services is limited. Therefore this Plan proposes to consolidate the recent changes made to services in Taranaki. It proposes that the trial of the new bus services in New Plymouth, which began in May 2010, be made permanent, and that the existing once-a-week inter-town services be continued. A new service between Hawera and New Plymouth will be investigated and introduced if funding is available.

The plans for the future are listed in section 3 of this Plan.

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1. Introduction

It is the role of regional councils to ensure the provision of appropriate public transport in their region.

Public transport refers to bus, rail and ferry services providing for the carriage of passengers for hire or reward. It does not include air services, taxis, shuttles, Ministry of Education funded school buses, tourism or charter services.

In Taranaki public transport is essentially the bus services that operate in New Plymouth city, and the once-a-week bus services that operate between many of the towns in the region. All these services receive financial assistance from the Regional Council and NZTA and are provided under contract to the Regional Council.

In addition the Regional Council and NZTA provides financially assisted services to assist those whose impairments makes it difficult to use conventional buses. These services include the *Total Mobility* service, which provides a discounted taxi service for people with impairments, and the Ironside Vehicle Society service which caters primarily for those in wheelchairs.

Regional councils are responsible for deciding what public transport services are needed in their region. If those services are not being provided on a commercial i.e. unsubsidised basis, then the regional council is able to contract a public transport operator to provide the service. The money to pay for these contracts comes from regional council ratepayers, NZTA, and fares from passengers using the service.

The decision as to which services should be provided is made through the preparation of this regional public transport plan, and the consultation involved in that process. Regional public transport plans are prepared under the Public Transport Management Act 2008 (PTMA). The PTMA specifies the process that must be followed in the preparation of a plan, the matters that must be addressed by the plan, and requires that a plan must be reviewed at least every three years.

This is the Plan for the next 10 years for Taranaki.

1.1 Aim of this Plan

This Plan describes the public transport services the Regional Council proposes to be provided in the region, and sets out a programme of action. This Plan also specifies the policies that are to apply to these services.

This Plan also, as is required by the PTMA, specifies how the Regional Council will implement the public transport policies and actions specified in the Regional Land Transport Strategy for Taranaki 2011 -2041 for the region.

1.2 Timeframe

This Plan covers a 10 year period from 2012–2012 with a focus on the three year period, 2012-2015. However the Plan can be reviewed at any time, and will be reviewed in the event of any major changes to the funding or planning environment.

1.3 When the Plan takes effect

Section 12 of the PTMA provides that a regional public transport plan takes effect on the day that is 25 working days after the date on which the Council resolves to approve the Plan.

The Taranaki Regional Council approved and adopted the Regional Public Transport Plan 2012-2022, on 19 December 2011 and the Plan came into effect on 1 February 2012.

2. Background

2.1 Current services

The current bus and other services supported by the Regional Council are described below.

2.1.1 Bus services

The Regional Council currently contracts various transport providers to provide the following services in Taranaki:

Citylink

- New Plymouth city (including Bell Block, Waitara and Oakura) services (Monday to Saturday, operated by Tranzit Coachlines)

Inter-town

- Opunake-New Plymouth service (Friday only service, operated by Pickering Motors)
- Opunake-Eltham-Hawera service which includes Hawera-Manaia-Opunake leg (Friday only service, operated by Hawera Taxis)
- Inglewood-New Plymouth service (Thursdays only service, operated by Tranzit Coachlines)
- Waverley-Patea-Hawera service (Thursdays only service, operated by Hawera Taxis)
- Manaia-Hawera service (Tuesdays only service, operated by Hawera Taxis). Currently operating on 24 month trial.

2.1.2 Other services

Services for people with impairments

The Regional Council funds a number of services aimed at those who, because of their impairment, are unable to use the bus services all of the time.

The Regional Council funds and manages the *Total Mobility* service in Taranaki. *Total Mobility* is a nationwide scheme which provides discounted taxi rides for people with impairments who are unable to use the buses all of the time. The scheme also funds the provision of taxi-vans capable of carrying people in wheelchairs. The scheme operates in New Plymouth (including Bell Block and Waitara), Hawera and Stratford.

The Regional Council also funds Driving Miss Daisy and the Ironside Vehicle Society based in New Plymouth, who have a number of vans specially designed for the transport of people in wheelchairs.

SuperGold Card free travel scheme

The SuperGold Card free travel scheme is a central government nationwide scheme which provides free off-peak travel (between 9am and 3pm, and after 6.30pm, on weekdays, and anytime on Saturday and Sunday and public holidays) on all local buses for SuperGold Card holders. The scheme is funded by central government and administered by regional councils.

2.2 Public transport in Taranaki - the last three years

Many significant service and infrastructure improvements have been made by the Regional Council and New Plymouth District Council respectively to local bus services over the last three years. These improvements are listed below, and include several new routes and services, simplifying the fare system, the introduction of a “Smartcard” fare payment system on all services to provide lower cost non-cash fares, upgrading existing bus shelters and installing new shelters.

Many marketing improvements have also been made, and several promotional campaigns have been undertaken.

2.2.1 Service improvements

Buses

In the last three years significant changes have been made by the Regional Council to bus services in Taranaki.

The New Plymouth city service (including Bell Block, Waitara and Oakura) was greatly expanded in May 2010, from 4 to 9 peak-time routes, as well as 4 circular routes linking schools. Extra parts of New Plymouth were serviced, routes were shortened to speed up travel time, the frequency of services was improved, and smartcard ticketing was introduced. An additional 14 routes for mostly school children travelling from Oakura, Bell Block and Waitara are also part of the integrated network.

These improvements came at a cost – the annual contract price for the service went from about \$1m to \$2m¹.

Model Community funding has also enabled greater collaboration between the Regional Council and New Plymouth District Council in regard to promoting the expanded Citylink public bus service, which complements the walking and cycling modes, through joint branding initiatives under the Let’s Go brand and travel planning with schools and workplaces to encourage growth across all these alternative transport modes.

New inter-town services were introduced on a trial basis in 2007, and made permanent in 2009.

The annual cost of the inter-town services is approximately \$60,000.

Total Mobility

Changes have also been made to the Total Mobility scheme. Improvements to the administration of the scheme have been made, including the introduction of an identification card for users. The scheme has also been made consistent with other schemes throughout the country (which makes it accessible for Taranaki residents when they travel to other parts of New Zealand).

Additional transport providers, Ironside Vehicle Society Incorporated and Driving Miss Daisy have been contracted to also provide total mobility services. The Regional Council has also adopted all of the Ministry of Transport’s Phase II

¹ This is the gross price excluding passenger revenue

recommendations. This has seen the removal of town trip boundaries and an increase in the maximum subsidy from \$10 to \$13 (GST inclusive).

The number of registered users of the Total Mobility scheme continues to increase. There are now 1,870 registered users of the scheme in Taranaki compared to 1,662 in 2008 (an increase of 12.5%).

Marketing and promotion

In addition to making service changes, several marketing improvements have been made, and promotional campaigns have been undertaken in the last three years. These include the following:

- New bus timetables for all services (large print and single route)
- Information available on websites
- Super Bus Boy giving away free New Plymouth bus tickets
- Free beverage for Southlink and Inglewood bus passengers at Christmas
- Linking with “Let’s Go” business travel planning project and offering discounted fares for new bus users
- Quarterly newsletter issued for Total Mobility clients
- More user friendly Total Mobility user guide and application forms.

2.3 Costs and passenger levels

The passenger numbers, net costs and the farebox recovery ratio of these services in 2010/11 are shown below:

Service	Passengers 2010/11	Net contract cost* (after revenue)	Farebox recovery ratio
New Plymouth	491,089	\$1,306,153	37.8%
Opunake-New Plymouth	1,003	15,117	31.1%
Opunake-Eltham-Hawera	1,773	10,058	34.3%
Inglewood-New Plymouth	807	6,485	30.8%
Waverley-Patea-Hawera	1,790	6,532	50.2%
Manaia-Hawera	815	4,087	26.6%
Total Mobility	58,695	307,837	N/A
Ironside Vehicle Society	5,879	40,000	N/A
Total	561,851	1,696,269	
SuperGoldCard passengers**	41,963	N/A	

* This is the amount of financial assistance provided for the service. The cost is shared in equal proportions between the ratepayers of the region, and the New Zealand Transport Agency

** Included in figures for each service

2.4 Why the Regional Council financially assists public transport

Passengers do not pay the full cost of the public transport services they use. In New Zealand the average contribution of passengers to the cost of providing bus services is about 50%, and in Taranaki it is currently about 38% (although the Regional Council is looking to increase this amount as the New Plymouth service improvements are fine-tuned and continued passenger growth occurs). Thus the

Regional Council (and its funding partner NZTA) currently provides about 62% of the costs of running the buses².

The Regional Council and the New Zealand Transport Agency financially assists public transport because it considers there are several benefits of doing so. These benefits include roading and parking, economic, environmental, health, access and mobility, safety, and social.

Roading and parking

Public transport helps relieve/prevent road congestion, and the need for new roads. It also reduces pressure on car-parking spaces.

Economic

Providing people with access to employment and educational facilities results in economic benefits for the individual and the community. There are also economic benefits from reduced need for roads.

Environmental

Buses save energy compared to car trips, and result in reductions in vehicle exhaust and noise emissions. Modern buses are very fuel efficient and have low emissions.

Health

Public transport can be healthy as most journeys involve a walk or bike ride to and from the bus. It may also prove less stressful as it can avoid the pressures of driving, congestion and searching for a car-park.

Access and Mobility

Public transport provides a means of travel to work for those who do not have alternatives. It is an essential link for many between residential areas, commercial areas, recreational areas, educational facilities, health services and community events.

Safety

Bus passengers are much safer travelling on a bus than using any other mode of transport.

Social

Many people do not have access to a car, with public transport the only viable option for travel. There is a significant social benefit from reducing community isolation.

2.5 Funding

2.5.1 General

The funding for public transport services comes from three sources:

- fare revenue from passengers (currently contribute about 38% of bus costs);

² The Total Mobility scheme recovers 50% of its costs, and thus the Regional Council (together with the New Zealand Transport Agency) contributes the other 50%

- the Regional Council, which raises most of its funds from local ratepayers via a targeted rate³ (currently contributes about 31% of costs, or about \$850,000 per year); and
- NZTA, which matches the funding made available by the Regional Council (currently contributes about 31% of costs, or about \$850,000 per year).

The Regional Council and the NZTA are likely to commit to continue with the existing levels of funding to public transport in Taranaki subject to approval of the improved New Plymouth service. However NZTA have indicated that additional funding is unlikely. Thus the cost (after passenger fares) of any additional services will have to come from the Regional Council, (and it too has its own funding pressures) or from other sources. Thus funding for any new service during the duration of this Plan is likely to be limited. The Regional Council may however re-invest any funding surpluses that may arise from efficiency gains made (such as reducing or deleting poor performing services), and any surpluses that arise from increases in passenger levels.

This Plan has therefore been prepared on the basis that existing funding levels will continue, but that additional funding will be limited. The Plan aims to ensure that improvements made over the last two years are consolidated and patronage enhanced. The Regional Council will continue to seek to make improvements to the public transport services, but these improvements will need to largely depend on other funds or funding sources becoming available.

2.5.2 SuperGold Card scheme

Holders of the SuperGold Card are eligible for free travel on off-peak services⁴. The cost of this travel is met by central government, who reimburse the Regional Council or transport operator 65% of the average adult fare for that journey. SuperGold Card use is very high on the inter-town services, with over half the passengers on these services using their SuperGold Cards.

The SuperGold Card scheme has particular significance to the Regional Council because, due to the nature of most of the Regional Council's contract arrangements, the SuperGold reimbursement payments come direct to the Regional Council. Therefore any changes to the funding of the SuperGold scheme, as occurred in 2010 (when the reimbursement rate was lowered from 75% to 65%), has a direct effect on the Regional Council.

³ Paid by urban ratepayers who have access to bus services.

⁴ Off-peak services are those between 9am and 3pm, and after 6.30pm on weekdays, and all day at weekends and on public holidays

3. What we plan to do in the next three years

3.1 New Plymouth city services

New expanded services began in New Plymouth in May 2010. These services were introduced on a two-year trial basis, with the contract for the services ending in June 2013. Funding beyond the trial period is not guaranteed (NZTA has asked for an evaluation of the trial to be undertaken by March 2012 in order that it can decide whether it should continue to fund its share of the service).

A report on the trial will shortly be prepared by the Regional Council, and given the early indications of increased passenger numbers it appears that the trial has been successful. This Plan has therefore been prepared on the assumption that the trial will be made permanent, although it is likely that some adjustments will need to be made to some parts of the new services that are not performing as well as had been hoped. This may free up some funding for other improvements.

If the report on the trial indicates that part or parts of the trial services have not been successful and should not be made permanent, then as noted above, the Regional Council will need to consider what adjustments to the trial services should be made to achieve the aims of the Plan and ensure good use is made of Regional Council and NZTA financial assistance.

The Regional Council plans to make some low-cost improvements to the services in the next three years. Areas of focus will be improved integration between public transport and walking and cycling, improved availability and access to information about services, and improving bus-stop facilities. This will involve working closely with the New Plymouth District Council.

Improvements that are planned, or will be investigated in the next three years, are:

Planned

- Continuation with existing services, including continuously reviewing services to ensure network optimisation, subject to them meeting Regional Council guidelines and receiving NZTA funding beyond July 2012
- Monitoring of, and potential adjustments to, existing services to ensure good use is being made of Regional Council and NZTA funding
- Ongoing marketing of the services to retain existing users and to attract new users
- Improvements to bus-stops through better stop markings, more shelters and better passenger information
- The provision of park-and-ride services and facilities
- Improved integration with cycling and walking, including the installation of bike racks on buses
- Continuation of support for the SuperGold Card scheme under the current funding arrangement
- Improve advertising opportunities on buses
- Improve bus website usability and information.

To be investigated

- The potential to access other sources of funding for public transport, such as car-parking charges
- Improved utilisation of technology for example, Google maps, hot listing of electronic smart cards, and text-a-bus
- Better provision of information and facilities for those who are sight impaired, such as providing blind markings at key bus-stops
- Provide better access for people in wheelchairs, people with prams or strollers and those experiencing lesser mobility from bus-stops to vehicles⁵
- The feasibility of network modelling for the New Plymouth services
- Opportunities for bus lanes and/or bus priority measures in areas where the New Plymouth urban bus services operate
- More weekend and public holiday services.

3.2 Inter-town services

Improvements that are planned, or will be investigated in the next three years, are:

Planned

- Continuation with existing services, subject to them meeting Regional Council guidelines
- Continuation of support for the SuperGold Card scheme under the current funding arrangement
- Ongoing marketing of the services to retain existing users and to attract new users.

To be investigated

- A service between Hawera and New Plymouth (perhaps in conjunction with the existing bus service operated by Taranaki District Health Board). This investigation will be undertaken in 2012. Subject to key operating criteria being met, such as the need for the service, funding and both public, organisational and/or institutional support a trial will be undertaken.
- Feasibility of coordinating community transport and public transport links especially in South Taranaki
- The potential to use school buses (after they have finished school runs) to cater for rural travel needs
- Improving public transport links with long-distance bus services
- Facilitate discussion with the Ministry of Education for the use (and promotion) of rural school buses by the commuting public.

3.3 Services for people with impairments

Improvements that are planned, or will be investigated in the next three years, are:

Planned

⁵ Access to buses from a bus-stop often involves crossing grass verges, which can be difficult for people in wheelchairs. Improvements can be made by relocating bus-stops to better sites, or by installing concrete pads at bus-stops

- Continuation with existing services
- Develop and manage the training of drivers in working appropriately with people who have impairments
- Develop a new database to improve client management
- Continued introduction of the recommendations of the New Zealand Transport Agency review of the Total Mobility Scheme.

To be investigated

- Whether there is sufficient number of vehicles available capable of carrying people in wheelchairs
- The use of smartcards as a replacement for the paper vouchers for users of the scheme
- Opportunities to better integrate bus services and total mobility services to create a more accessible network
- Feasibility of coordinating community transport and public transport links especially in South Taranaki.

3.4 Rail passenger services

The Regional Land Transport Strategy for Taranaki 2011 – 2041 (RLTS) indicates support for investigations into light rail passenger transport services. However given the investment signals from the Government Policy Statement on Land Transport Funding 2012/13 – 2021/22 and NZTA’s Investment and Revenue Strategy, together with the high cost of providing rail services, it is not considered appropriate to propose any light rail passenger transport services in this Plan.

4. Regional Land Transport Strategy for Taranaki 2011 – 2041 provisions

This Plan is required to show how the Regional Council will give effect to the public transport components of its Regional Land Transport Strategy for Taranaki 2011 - 2041 (RLTS). The current RLTS for the region was adopted in 2011.

Appendix B shows the key action areas in the current RLTS that relate to public transport, and what has been done to implement the key action areas.

5. The transport disadvantaged

The Plan is required to describe how the proposed services will assist people who are “transport disadvantaged”. The term “transport disadvantaged” is defined in the Public Transport Management Act 2008 as those who a regional council believes are least able to get to basic community activities and services (such as work, education, healthcare, welfare and food shopping).

The Regional Council believes the following groups are transport disadvantaged:

- Children
- The elderly
- Tertiary students
- Those on low incomes
- Those who are unable to drive or have no access to a vehicle
- Those with impairments.

The Regional Council will assist the needs of these groups through:

- the comprehensive range of services proposed in this Plan
- the fare policies in this Plan.

The services proposed in this Plan are designed to provide wide coverage of residential areas, linking them with commercial and community facilities.

The fare system proposed provides fare discounts to children, tertiary students, the elderly, Community Service Card⁶ holders and those with impairments (under the ACCESS fare category). The elderly also benefit from the SuperGold Card free travel scheme. The buses used on the services in Taranaki for commuters are mostly wheelchair accessible which assist people with impairments. The Total Mobility scheme also provides services for those who are impaired and unable to use public transport most of the time.

6. Review and monitoring

This Plan may be reviewed by the Regional Council from time to time, but PTMA requires that it must be reviewed every three years.

The Plan must also be reviewed as soon as practical after a Government Policy Statement on Land Transport Funding (GPS), regional land transport strategy, regional land transport programme or Long Term Council Community Plan (now renamed the Long Term Plan) is prepared.

A new GPS was released in August 2011, and the RLTS was revised in May 2011. This Plan takes into account both of those documents.

A new regional land transport programme will be prepared in 2012, as will a new LTP. The Plan is likely to influence the contents of those documents.

⁶ A Community Services Card is available to those on low incomes or those receiving a Government benefit or allowance.

The Regional Council will regularly monitor services provided under this Plan. Monitoring will focus on compliance with the policies in this Plan and ensuring services are provided efficiently and effectively, and continue to meet passenger demand. Services that do not comply with Regional Council policies or which carry few passengers will be the subject of particular Regional Council focus.

7. Involvement of other parties

While the Regional Council plans, funds and contracts the required services, other parties also have a role to play. The territorial authorities of the region (the New Plymouth, Stratford and South Taranaki district councils) play a major role through the provision of supporting infrastructure such as bus-stops. NZTA provides substantial funding for public transport. The service providers such as the bus companies and, in the case of Total Mobility, the taxi companies and other service providers, are also critical partners. Community, tertiary and other interested organisations also have a role to play as advocates for the needs of the users.

This Plan cannot be successfully implemented without the support of all these parties working together towards the vision of this Plan. The Regional Council will work closely with these parties to facilitate the provision of services which meet the needs of the region today and in the future.

There are a number of other transport providers in Taranaki that are not contracted by the Regional Council. They are unsubsidised commercial and community/health providers. The Council has no direct control in these services but the Regional Council considers they make a valuable contribution to the core objectives of the RLTS. A summary of these providers is shown in Appendix F.

8. Vision and targets

8.1 Vision

The Regional Council's vision for public transport is:

“accessible and integrated public passenger transport services that cater for the needs of the people of Taranaki (including the transport disadvantaged) at a reasonable cost and in a manner which contributes to a prosperous, connected, healthy, vibrant and environmentally sustainable community”.

This vision reflects the vision contained in the current RLTS.

8.2 Targets

The RLTS contains a number of public transport targets. These are set out in Appendix B, and have been adopted for this Plan. The major targets are:

- Increase the number of passenger trips on the New Plymouth, Waitara, Bell Block and Oakura service by 10% per year until 2013/14
- 95% of the New Plymouth population resides within 500m of a public transport service (84% in 2008/09)
- The average frequency of public transport services operating in New Plymouth urban area is maintained at 40 minutes in the peak period, and 70 minutes for off-peak services (45 minutes in 2008/09).

9. Policies and actions

The public transport policies of the Regional Council, and the actions associated with the policies, are set out below. The policies and actions are aimed at achieving the vision and meeting the targets set out in section 8 of the Plan.

The lists of policies and actions are not in order of priority. The Regional Council will assess and prioritise actions during the period of the plan, subject to available resources.

9.1 Services

Policy No.	Policy
1.	Provide services that meet the needs of those travelling for work and non-work reasons subject to funding availability
2.	Provide the services listed in Appendix A
3.	Consider the needs of the transport disadvantaged when planning services
4.	Provide separate school services where demand exists or where overloading would deter other users
5.	All services to be consistently branded and acknowledge TRC funding
6.	Promote the provision of inter-town services where need has been established subject to funding availability
7.	Continue to promote and manage the Total Mobility scheme
8.	Support any smaller providers of services (such as Ironside Vehicle Society) to people with impairments
9.	Utilise improvements in technology
10.	Integrate public transport services with cycling and walking
11.	Integrate with long-distance services

Action	Policy No.	Lead and support agency	Completion date
a. Investigate and report on success of trial New Plymouth city services	2	TRC	March 2012
b. Continue to fine-tune the New Plymouth service including options to reduce poorly patronised routes to improve network efficiency and effectiveness	1, 2, 3	TRC	Ongoing
c. If trial is successful, seek confirmation of NZTA funding and tender contract for New Plymouth services	1, 2	TRC	2012
d. A service between Hawera and New Plymouth (perhaps in conjunction with the existing bus service operated by Taranaki District Health Board). This investigation will be undertaken in 2012. Subject to key operating criteria being met, such as the need for the service, funding and both public, organisational and/or institutional support a trial will be undertaken.	1, 3	TRC/TDHB	2012
e. Regularly monitor changes in populations, land-use and other factors that affect demand level	1, 2, 3	TRC	Annually
f. Investigate the current arrangement for the carriage of school children on city buses to see if a more efficient arrangement is possible	4	TRC	2012
g. Continue to improve the administration of the Total Mobility scheme in line with the recommendations of the NZTA review	7	TRC	Ongoing
h. Investigate options for harnessing technology improvements to assist in providing services, such as improved access to information, loading funds onto smartcards via the internet and hot listing cards	9	TRC	Annually
i. Work with district councils to consider improved integration between public transport and walking and cycling	10	TRC, DCs	Annually
j. Investigate ways to improve the integration of cycling and walking, including the installation of bike racks on buses	10	TRC	Annually
k. Investigate options for improving integration with long-distance and tourism bus services and ensuring service arrival/departure times are co-ordinated	11	TRC	Ongoing

9.2 Fares and funding

Policy No.	Policy
1.	Set fares in accordance with the targets and policies contained in the farebox recovery policy (Appendix C)
2.	Farebox recovery target will be 40% in 2011/12, 42% in 2012/13, 44% in 2013/14 etc
3.	Fare levels will be reviewed annually
4.	Concession fares will be provided for children, beneficiaries, tertiary students, people with impairments and the elderly. The availability and level of the concessions will be reviewed annually as part of the annual fare review
5.	Maximise NZTA funding, and investigate funding alternatives

Action	Policy No.	Lead and support agency	Completion date
l. Review fare levels annually, with particular focus on the farebox recovery policy	1, 3	TRC	Annually
m. Review concession fares as part of the annual fare review	4	TRC	Annually
n. Investigate alternative funding options, such as advertising on buses, car-parking charges etc,	5	TRC	Annually

9.3 Vehicles and infrastructure

Policy No.	Policy
1.	All urban vehicles will meet the NZTA Requirements for Urban Buses ⁷ in New Zealand
2.	Low floor wheelchair accessible vehicles will be used where possible
3.	Small vehicles should be used where passenger numbers are appropriate
4.	Bus stops will be provided at approximately every 500m on bus-routes
5.	Provide shelters at busy stops
6.	Provide timetable information at bus-stops
7.	Improve access to bus-stops and boarding areas
8.	Investigate options for speeding up bus services

Action	Policy No.	Lead and support agency	Completion date
o. Ensure all tenders consider vehicle type	1, 2, 3	TRC	Annually
p. Investigate suitability of Ariki St terminus in New Plymouth	7, 8	TRC, NPDC	Ongoing
q. Work with district councils to consider type and style of bus-shelters and options for upgrading older style shelters	4, 5	TRC	Annually
r. Establish a programme, in association with district councils and bus operators, for the installation of bus stop seats and shelters	4, 5, 6,	TRC	Annually
s. Work with disability agencies to improve access to, and boarding areas at, bus stops	7	TRC	Annually
t. Investigate bus priority measures in New Plymouth	8	TRC, NPDC	Ongoing

⁷ These requirements have just been reviewed, and aim to ensure consistency of the national bus fleet. Details of the requirements can be found on the NZTA website.

9.4 Monitoring and promotion

Policy No.	Policy
1.	Undertake ongoing assessments of the transport needs of the public in consultation with users and relevant groups, having particular regard to the transport disadvantaged
2.	Consult with the general public of the region when making significant decisions regarding passenger transport services
3.	Promote the integration of public transport services with cycling and walking
4.	Provide timetable information
5.	Promote services
6.	Promote the development of new residential subdivisions and infrastructure in locations which facilitate an increased use of public transport through appropriate provision in regional policy statements and regional and district plans
7.	Conduct audits of service provider performance
8.	Conduct regular passenger surveys seeking feedback on satisfaction levels and minor improvements

Action	Policy No.	Lead and support agency	Completion date
u. Regularly monitor existing public transport services in Taranaki	1	TRC	Annually
v. Investigate the installation of bike racks on buses	3	TRC	Annually
w. Hold a biannual public transport users forum to discuss issues of concern relating to the public transport services provided in the region	1, 2	TRC	Annually
x. Support the Total Mobility Forum held annually to discuss issues of concern to Total Mobility users and transport providers	1	TRC	Annually
y. Conduct annual passenger surveys	8	TRC	Annually

10. Other legal requirements

The Public Transport Management Act 2008 (PTMA) requires that certain matters be addressed in regional public transport plans. These matters are set out below.

10.1 Section 19 matters

The PTMA requires a council to take into account certain matters when preparing its plan. Section 19 of the PTMA requires regional councils to:

- (a) Be satisfied that the plan contributes to each of the following objectives:
 - i. Assisting economic development
 - ii. Assisting safety and personal security
 - iii. Improving access and mobility
 - iv. Protecting and promoting public health
 - v. Ensuring environmental sustainability; and
- (b) Take into account
 - i. The relevant GPS
 - ii. Any current national land transport strategy and national energy efficiency and conservation strategy
 - iii. Any guidelines issued by NZTA for the purposes of developing regional public transport plans
 - iv. Any relevant regional policy statement, regional plan, district plan
 - v. The PT funding likely to be available in the region
 - vi. The need to obtain best value for money
 - vii. The views of the public transport operators in the region; and
- (c) Consider the needs of persons who are transport disadvantaged.

10.1.1 Contribution to objectives

The Regional Council is satisfied that this Plan contributes to all the matters set out in section 19(a) of the PTMA. The contribution of this Plan is set out below:

Section 19(a) matter	Contribution of this PT Plan
Assisting economic development	Focus on delivering an effective, efficient and integrated public transport network that provides value for money. Provides public transport services to key economic centres including the New Plymouth and Hawera CBDs. Provides services that contribute to reduced congestion.
Assisting safety and personal security	Improves the security of passengers through vehicle standards. Improves passenger safety through vehicle standards. Reduces accidents from less car use.

Section 19(a) matter	Contribution of this PT Plan
Improving access and mobility	Improves access for the community, especially the transport disadvantaged, through the provision of off-peak and social services. Provides better access to employment, education, retail and social opportunities by providing a choice of modes. Provides best practice branding and customer information to assist accessibility and navigation of the public transport system. Provides targeted Total Mobility services. Provides fare concessions for targeted groups. Improves access to public transport and reliability through vehicle quality standards and infrastructure improvements.
Protecting and promoting public health	Reduces pollution through emission controls for public transport vehicles. Encourages greater use of active modes for access to public transport. Supports positive impacts on air and water quality through increasing modal shift choices.
Ensuring environmental sustainability	Assists in reducing dependency on the private car. Supports fuel efficient vehicles through vehicle standards. Integration with other planning documents such as regional policy statements and regional and district plans to ensure integration of land use and infrastructure planning with the planning and provision of public transport.

10.1.2 Matters taken into account in accordance with section 19(b)

The Regional Council is required to take account of a wide range of documents and policies in accordance with section 19(b) of the PTMA. The following is an outline of the matters taken into account.

Government Policy Statement on Land Transport Funding (GPS)

The GPS is issued by the government every three years and is intended to guide the land transport sector on the outcomes and the short to medium term impacts that the government wishes to achieve. It also provides a linkage between land transport revenues and planned levels of expenditure from the National Land Transport Fund. The GPS must be taken into account in the preparation of this Plan. The current GPS covers the period 2009-2019 and highlights the government priority to increase economic growth and productivity in New Zealand.

The 2012 GPS covering the period 2012-2022 has now been released. The strategic direction outlined in the GPS is economic growth and productivity; value for money and road safety. The GPS also outlines the government's continued investment in public transport to help unlock the potential of our cities, particularly in Auckland.

National Land Transport Strategy

There is no National Land Transport Strategy (NLTS) to take into account. It is important to note that the New Zealand Transport Strategy is not a NLTS and has no statutory authority.

National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy

An evaluation of the 2001 National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy (NEECS) was undertaken during preparation of the RLTS.

The government is in the process of developing a new NEECS. The consultation draft of the NEECS envisages transport playing a key role in lowering New Zealand's energy intensity through "a more energy efficient transport system, with a greater diversity of fuels and renewable energy technologies".

This Plan will contribute to this aim by ensuring a more effective and efficient public transport network.

Guidelines issued by NZTA

The guidelines issued by NZTA for the development of regional public transport plans have been taken into account in preparing this Plan.

Resource Management Act policy statements and plans

The Regional Policy Statement for Taranaki 2010, Regional Fresh Water, Soil, Coastal and Air Plans and local authority district plans have been considered in preparing this Plan. The Council will look to these policy statements and plans to consider the public transport network and its sustainability in any future changes and reviews of these documents.

Available funding

The public transport funding likely to be available has been a key consideration in preparing this Plan. This Plan has been prepared in line with the financial forecasts prepared as part of the Regional Council Long Term Plan process. The next Council Long Term Plan will be adopted in June 2012. This Plan has also considered the funding requirements of NZTA and the GPS engagement document.

Value for money and competition

This Plan takes into account the need to obtain the best value for money, having regard to the desirability of encouraging fair competition and a competitive and efficient market for public transport services.

In particular, the development of policies and methods considered the desirability of encouraging public transport operators to compete fairly in an efficient market. In addition, the Plan is designed to ensure the public gets the best return possible for its investment in public transport, i.e. maximise value for money.

Views of transport operators

The views of public transport operators have been considered while preparing this Plan. Operator feedback has also been sought a number of times while preparing the draft Plan and a number of opportunities have been provided for informal discussion.

The transport disadvantaged

Transport disadvantaged issues are discussed in section 5 of the Plan.

10.2 Farebox recovery policy

NZTA have required, as a requirement of its funding to regional councils, that regional councils include a farebox recovery policy in their regional public transport plans. Farebox recovery measures the percentage of the costs of providing public transport that is covered by passenger fares.

The farebox recovery policy for this region is attached as Appendix C.

The policy proposes that farebox recovery, which was 37.7% for the 2010/11 period, be gradually increased by two percentage points per year until 50% is achieved. This increase is expected to be achieved by increases in the number of passengers using the services.

10.3 Significance policy

The PTMA requires councils to include a policy in the regional public transport plan that determines whether any proposed variation to the plan is significant (this affects the level of consultation required for the variation. If the variation is not significant, a lower level of consultation is required).

The significance policy for this Plan is set out in Appendix D.

10.4 Consultation undertaken

Consultation with key stakeholders, interest groups and bus operators has been undertaken in the development of this Plan, including a workshop held to discuss current services and future directions for public transport. The names of the organisations consulted are set out in Appendix E.

10.5 Controls and contracting requirements

The PTMA provides for regional councils to set controls on commercial services, and allows councils to require that all services be delivered under contract (rather than allow some commercial services).

The Regional Council does not intend to invoke the provisions of the PTMA that relate to these.

Appendices

- A. Description of services to be provided
- B. Regional Land Transport Strategy policies, actions and targets relating to public transport
- C. Farebox recovery policy
- D. Significance policy
- E. Consultation undertaken
- F. Transport providers in Taranaki

Appendix A

Description of services the Regional Council intends to be provided in Taranaki

Buses

The Regional Council intends to provide the following bus services covering New Plymouth, Oakura, Bell Block and Waitara:

Service	Area/s covered	Operating hours and service frequency
Route 1	CBD, Moturoa	Monday to Friday From 7am to 6.30pm. 14 week day services (9 peak and 5 off-peak) Frequency - peak 40 minutes, off-peak 70 minutes Does not run on Sundays or public holidays
Route 2	CBD, Lynmouth, Marfell, Whalers Gate	
Route 3	CBD, Lynmouth, Marfell	
Route 4	CBD, Westown, Hurdon	
Route 5	CBD, Frankleigh, Park, Ferndale	
Route 6	CBD, Vogeltown/Brooklands	
Route 7	CBD, Welbourn/Highlands Park	
Route 8	CBD, Merrilands/Highlands Park	
Route 9	CBD, Fitzroy/The Valley/Glen Avon	
Routes 51 – 54	CBD, Strandon, Welbourn, Brooklands, Vogeltown, Frankleigh Park, Westown, Marfell, Whalers Gate, Spotswood, Lynmouth	Monday to Friday – twice a day (school term days only) 7.50 am and 3.15pm
Route 20	CBD, Waitara/Bell Block/New Plymouth	Monday to Friday From 7.10am to last return service at 5.25pm 5 weekday services (2 peak and 3 off-peak)
Route 40	CBD, Oakura/New Plymouth	Monday to Friday From 7.44am to last return service at 5.30pm 4 weekday services (2 peak and 2 off-peak)
Route 10	CBD, Vogeltown, Frankleigh Park, Westown, Marfell, Spotswood, Moturoa,	Saturday – twice a day 9.35am and 12.35pm
Route 11	CBD, Strandon, Fitzroy, Bell Block, Merrilands, Brooklands, Vogeltown	Saturday – twice a day 10.18am and 1.18pm
Route 12	Merrilands, Lynmouth, Spotswood	Monday to Friday – twice a day (school term days only) 8.15am and 3.17pm
Route 21 and 22	Waitara to Spotswood	Monday to Friday – twice a day (school term days only) 8.15am and approximately 3.17pm
Route 23 and 24	Waitara to Westown	Monday to Friday – twice a day (school term days only) 7.40am and 3.17pm
Route 30 and 31	Bell Block to Highlands	Monday to Friday – twice a day (school term days only) 7.55am and 3.27pm
Route 32	Bell Block to Westown	Monday to Friday – twice a day (school term days only) 7.50am and 3.15pm
Route 33 and 34	Bell Block to Westown	Monday to Friday – twice a day (school term days only) 7.55am and 3.17pm
Route 41	Omata to Welbourn	Monday to Friday – twice a day (school term days only) 7.54am and 3.27pm
Route 42	Oakura to Westown	Monday to Friday – twice a day (school term days only) 8.00am and 3.17pm

Route 43	Oakura to Strandon	Monday to Friday – twice a day (school term days only) 7.47am and 3.27pm
Route 44	Oakura to Highlands	Monday to Friday – twice a day (school term days only) 7.50am and 3.15pm

The Regional Council intends to provide the following bus services covering Inglewood to New Plymouth:

Inglewood to New Plymouth	Inglewood, Egmont Village, New Plymouth	Once-a-week return Thursday 10.00am and 2.10pm (return) Does not run on public holidays
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The Regional Council intends to provide the following bus services covering south and coastal Taranaki:

Manaia to Hawera	Manaia, Ohawe Beach (on demand), Hawera	Once-a-week return Tuesday 9.30am and 1.00pm (return) Does not run on public holidays
Waverley/Patea to Hawera	Waverley, Patea, Kakaramea, Manutahi, Mokoia, Hawera	Once-a-week return Thursday 9.00am and 1.30pm (return) Does not run public holidays
Opunake/Eltham to Hawera	Opunake, Kaponga, Eltham, Normanby, Hawera	Once-a-week return Thursday 9.00am and 1.30pm (return) Does not run on public holidays
Opunake to New Plymouth*	Opunake, Rahotu, Pungarehu, Okato, Oakura, New Plymouth	Once-a-week return Friday 9.15am and 1.30pm (return) Does not run on public holidays

*Subject to a review to determine ongoing viability

Total Mobility

The Total Mobility scheme caters to those people with impairments by providing access to appropriate transport. The Regional Council intends to continue providing the Scheme throughout Taranaki where approved transport providers operate.

- New Plymouth (including Bell Block and Waitara)
- Stratford
- Hawera

Other services

The Regional Council intends to continue to support Ironside Vehicle Society Incorporated as a specialist transport provider as part of the Total Mobility Scheme.

Appendix B

Regional Land Transport Strategy policies, actions and targets relating to public transport

	RLTS Policies
1	Operate public transport services in the New Plymouth urban areas and regional Taranaki consistent with the Regional Public Transport Plan, with funding assistance provided by the NZ Transport Agency. Should funding assistance not be available from NZTA then serious consideration of alternative options will need to occur, including the option of services not being provided
2	Provide cost effective integrated public passenger transport services in Taranaki which meet the needs of local communities
3	Promote greater use of public passenger transport services throughout the region through advocacy and promotion campaigns
4	Ensure that public transport service operators are aware of, and take into consideration, the needs of the transport disadvantaged, as well as being innovative in market response
5	Improve linkages between rural communities and larger urban areas through the provision of cost effective inter-town public transport services
6	Investigate opportunities for Park-and-Ride services and facilities, with effective connections with walking and cycling routes
7	Support the continued provision of school buses by the Ministry of Education
8	Improve access to public health services and facilities, employment or social services through the increased provision of public transport options throughout the region
9	Consider, and where appropriate assist in, meeting the transport needs of the transport disadvantaged
10	Continue to operate and manage the Total Mobility scheme for those persons qualifying, subject to funding assistance provided by the New Zealand Transport Agency

	RLTS Actions	Agency Responsible	Completion Date
a.	Continue to advocate for increased national funding of public passenger transport projects/activities in the Taranaki region	TRC and DCs	Ongoing
b.	Review the current Regional Passenger Transport Plan for Taranaki which takes into account the needs of the transport disadvantaged and prepare/implement a regional Public Transport Plan in accordance with revised statutory requirements	TRC	2010-2012
c.	Implement any policies, actions and targets identified in the Regional Public Transport Plan for Taranaki	TRC	Ongoing
d.	Continue to promote the benefits and use of the Total Mobility Scheme and public transport services	TRC	Ongoing
e.	Work with territorial authorities, national agencies and communities to identify future public transport service options and alternatives	TRC(l), DCs (s)	Ongoing
f.	Investigate opportunities for bus lanes and/or bus priority measures in areas where the New Plymouth urban bus services operate	TRC (l), DCs (s)	Ongoing
g.	Investigate opportunities for public transport services between Hawera, Stratford and New Plymouth, in conjunction with other options	TRC (l), DCs (s)	Ongoing

h.	Continue to operate the New Plymouth Public Transport Officers Group	NPDC, TRC, NPDC's infrastructure contractor, TDICT and bus operator	Ongoing
i.	Continue to support the Total Mobility Forum held yearly to discuss issues of concern to Total Mobility users	TM Co-ordinator, TDICT and TRC	Annually
j.	Develop a biannual (twice per year) Public Transport Users Forum to discuss issues of concern relating to the public transport services provided in the region	TRC	Biannually

	Targets	Measure
<i>i</i>	Increase the number of passenger trips carried on the New Plymouth urban services by 10% per annum until 2013/14	Annual number of passenger trips carried on the New Plymouth urban services. 2013/14 is the date for contract renewal. <u>Baseline data:</u> In 2008/09 349,607 passenger trips were made on the New Plymouth urban services.
<i>ii</i>	90% of passengers rate the New Plymouth urban bus services and inter-town rural services as good, very good or excellent.	Annual passenger satisfaction surveys conducted. <u>Baseline data:</u> In 2008/09 98% of passengers rated the public transport services provided in Taranaki as good, very good or excellent.
<i>iii</i>	90% of passengers rate the Total Mobility services as good, very good or excellent.	Annual Total Mobility user satisfaction surveys conducted. <u>Baseline data:</u> In 2008/09 98% of users rated the Total Mobility services provided in Taranaki as good, very good or excellent.
<i>iv</i>	Hold six New Plymouth Public Transport Officer Group meetings a year.	Total number of Passenger Transport Officer Group meetings held per annum. <u>Baseline data:</u> Reporting on this will commence in the 2010/11 financial year.
<i>v</i>	A Total Mobility Forum held each year to discuss issues of concern to Total Mobility users.	A Total Mobility Forum is held annually. <u>Baseline data:</u> A Total Mobility Forum was last held in September 2009.
<i>vii</i>	A Public Transport Users Forum is held twice a year to discuss issues of concern to public transport users.	A Public Transport Users Forum is held twice a year, commencing 2010/11. <u>Baseline data:</u> Reporting on this will commence in the 2010/11 financial year.
<i>viii</i>	The average frequency of public transport services operating in the New Plymouth urban area is maintained at 40 minutes for peak services and 70 minutes for off-peak services.	Information submitted to NZTA as part of TRC's Annual Achievement Reports. <u>Baseline data:</u> In 2008/09 the services operated at an average of 45 minute frequencies.
<i>ix</i>	95% of the New Plymouth population resides within 500m of a public transport service.	Information submitted to NZTA as part of TRC's Annual Achievement Reports. <u>Baseline data:</u> In 2008/09 84% of New Plymouth and surrounding urban areas were within 500m of a public transport service.

Appendix C

Farebox recovery policy

Introduction

In accordance with New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) requirements, the Regional Council has adopted a farebox recovery policy. Farebox recovery measures the percentage of the costs of providing bus services that is covered by passenger fares (the balance of the costs is met in equal proportions by local ratepayers and NZTA).

The farebox recovery ratio for Taranaki bus services, as calculated by NZTA, for the 2009/10 financial year, was 48.8%⁸. However due to the major changes introduced on the New Plymouth services in May 2010 (and the consequential major increase in the cost of providing those services) this rate dropped to 37.7% for the 2010/11 year.

While the long term goal of the Regional Council policy is a farebox recovery of 50% the Regional Council recognises that it may take some years to reach this goal. Therefore the Regional Council has set a target of achieving a farebox recovery rate of 40% in 2011/12, and thereafter increasing by two percentage points per year until the 50% target has been achieved.

Given that the costs of providing services are increasing by about 3% a year, the Regional Council will have to increase passenger revenues and/or reduce costs by at least 5% per year to meet the targets.

Background

NZTA requirements

The NZTA requires that all regional councils prepare a “farebox recovery policy”, and include that policy in the Regional Public Transport Plan.

NZTA require the farebox recovery policy to:

- Set a target farebox recovery rate for the public transport system
- Set out how the target was chosen
- Set out a strategy as to how the target will be achieved
- Set out how the policy complies with various relevant national and regional planning documents, and with legislation
- Provide for an annual review of fare levels and a review of fare structures at a minimum approximately once every six years or to coincide with RLTS and/or LTP reviews.

NZTA prescribe the formula for establishing the farebox recovery rate.

⁸ NZTA prescribe the formula to be used for calculating farebox recovery. The NZTA formula differs slightly from that used previously by Taranaki Regional Council.

Bus services in Taranaki

The Regional Council contracts the following bus services in Taranaki:

- The CityLink New Plymouth network (six-day-a-week service over eleven routes including Bell Block, Waitara and Oakura)

Inter-town

- Inglewood to New Plymouth and return (Thursdays only)
- Opunake to New Plymouth and return (Friday only)
- Opunake/Eltham to Hawera and return (Friday only)
- Waverley/Patea to Hawera and return (Thursdays only)
- Manaia to Hawera and return (Tuesdays only)

A single contract is in place for each service, and all contracts are gross contracts.

While bus services have operated in New Plymouth for many years, major changes were introduced on 31 May 2010. New routes were introduced, and service levels greatly expanded. Funding (from the Council and NZTA) for the expanded service has been provided on a “trial” basis for two years and is subject to the services performing satisfactorily. A decision needs to be made by Council and NZTA early in 2012 as to whether the expanded services will continue (or be changed in some way).

The rural services were also introduced in 2010.

Fares were also changed in May 2010, with an average increase of 22%.

Services included

The public transport services to be included in the calculation of the fare recovery are all the Regional Council contracted services operating in the region.

Long-distance (e.g. inter-city services) services, privately funded school services, Ministry of Education funded school services, tourist and charter services are not included.

The farebox recovery target

In applying its farebox recovery policy, the Regional Council has decided to measure farebox recovery of region as a whole rather than measuring individual services, routes or trips. Individual services, routes or trips, particularly those that might be regarded as “social” services, are not necessarily expected to achieve the target set out in this policy.

However while the Council has agreed to adopt a region-wide target for the purposes of this policy, the Regional Council has a target recovery rate of 25% for rural services (rural service make up a very small proportion of the total (about 3%), and thus have little impact on the overall recovery rate.

The table below shows the actual farebox recovery level for the whole region for the last two financial years, and the target rate set by the Regional Council for the three years to 2014. All figures have been calculated using the NZTA farebox recovery formula.

Actual farebox recovery (2009/10)	Actual farebox recovery (2010/11)	Target (2011/12)	Target (2012/13)	Target (2013/14)
48.8%	37.7%	40%	42%	44%

As indicated above, the current funding for the New Plymouth service is provided on a trial basis. The trial will be evaluated early in 2012 and the target recovery rate for the 2011/12 year will form a major component of that evaluation i.e. if the recovery is looking like it will reach the 40% target for the year, this will indicate that the recovery level is increasing (presumably as a result of increased patronage) and the new services should continue.

How the targets were chosen

Major service changes were introduced in May 2010, together with a change in the contract delivery mechanism. As a consequence comparable farebox recovery figures have only recently been available and it is too early to be able to identify meaningful trends. It is expected that the changes introduced in 2010 will have a positive impact on patronage and thus the revenue recovery rate should improve. This has proved to be the case to date. Therefore the Regional Council has chosen targets that build on the 2010/11 rate, while at the same time recognising the ability-to-pay of passengers.

The targets are in line with other similar centres in NZ, and close to the national target of 50%.

The targets are also in line with those in the Regional Land Transport Strategy for Taranaki which aim to increase patronage by 10% per year until 2013/14.

Given that the current recovery rate is below the targets, and given likely cost increases of about 3% a year, these targets will mean that the Regional Council will face the challenge of improving revenue and/or reducing costs by at least 5% per year to ensure it achieves the targets. However the Regional Council believes that the improvements it has made to the services means that the targets can be achieved. The Regional Council also recognises that, given the unlikelihood of NZTA increasing its funding levels, if the Regional Council wishes to continue to improve services in Taranaki, it will only be able to do this if passengers contribute more towards the costs of providing services.

A higher target was not considered appropriate given that the targets chosen are higher than currently achieved, are close to those set by other cities in New Zealand, and are close to the national target of 50%.

A lower target was also not considered appropriate – the Regional Council believes that it is appropriate that passengers pay a reasonable share of the costs, particularly given the extra investment the Regional Council is now making in public transport. The Regional Council considers that a slightly higher passenger contribution will provide a suitable balance between the contributions of ratepayers/taxpayers and passengers.

Method of calculation

The formula used to calculate farebox recovery is prescribed by NZTA and is set out in detail on its website. In essence the formula is total fare revenue divided by total costs.

Strategies to meet the targets

As indicated above, unless future revenues increase and/or costs reduce, the target recovery levels will not be met in the future. Thus some form of intervention will be needed to achieve the targets.

Four intervention strategies are set out below. These strategies will require the Regional Council to work with transport providers and local councils to achieve the targets. The needs of the transport disadvantaged will need to be considered in any intervention.

Strategy 1: Improve operating efficiencies

Improvements to operating efficiencies will reduce costs and therefore improve farebox recovery.

The Regional Council in association with transport provider is constantly monitoring the costs and revenues of services, and investigating how to improve efficiency. Services with poor farebox recovery will be identified, and efforts made to improve the performance of those services. Changes may include better coordination and integration of services, which may for example be achieved through small timetable changes and/or route optimisation.

Strategy 2: Increase patronage

Increasing patronage will increase revenues, and thus improve farebox recovery.

The Regional Council will look to increase patronage by undertaking general and targeted publicity as well as improving service quality through improving infrastructure, maintaining high vehicle quality standards, and optimising routes and service levels to increase accessibility.

Strategy 3: Reduce poor performing services

Reducing poorly performing services will have the effect of reducing costs and thus increasing farebox recovery.

Poor performing services (i.e. those services with high costs and/or low patronage) can be improved assessing operating times, frequencies and routes and making adjustments, (including reductions) to frequencies and routes where appropriate. The Regional Council will also consider alternative ways of providing services, such as on-demand and dial-a-ride options.

Strategy 4: Review of fare products and fare levels

Increasing fares will lead to increases in revenue and thus improve farebox recovery.

Small increases in fares are likely to be required on a regular basis to cover the increases in costs of providing bus services.

Other options may include reviewing the availability and eligibility criteria for concession fares, reviewing the levels of discount available and seeking supplementary sources of funding.

How the policy will be applied

The current gross contract enables revenue recovery to be easily monitored on a monthly basis, and thus any reduction in farebox recovery will be quickly identified. If the recovery

rate is dropping, the Regional Council will then decide which of the intervention strategies will be applied.

Implementation date

This policy will apply once the Regional Public Transport Plan is approved.

Fare level review

An annual fare level review will be undertaken at the conclusion of each financial year. This review will take into consideration the farebox recovery levels but may also include any other factors he considers relevant. The review will also address the level of discounts and concessions within the existing fare structure.

Fare structure review

The Regional Council will review fare structures at least every six years. The fare structure review will address all aspects of the fare system, including the appropriateness of zones as the base for the system, and the availability of (and discount to be applied to) concession fares.

A review of the fare structure was undertaken in 2010. The next review of the fare structure is therefore not planned before 2015.

Policy review

This policy (including the targets) will be reviewed at least every three years or when the Regional Public Transport Plan is reviewed (which is likely to be at least every three years). It may also be reviewed immediately if NZTA policy or practices affecting farebox recovery change.

Policy contribution

Policy	Comment
Government Policy Statement on Land Transport Funding (GPS)	This policy contributes to the GPS by maintaining the relatively high level of user contribution towards the funding of public transport. It recognises the need for efficiencies and “value for money” and the restrictions on the availability of national funding
Regional land Transport Strategy (RLTS)	This policy contributes to the RLTS by at least maintaining the level of local contribution towards the funding of public transport, and thus helping to achieve the patronage targets set in the RLTS
Regional Public Transport Plan (RPTP)	This policy contributes to the RPTP by looking to improve efficiencies and value for money
Land Transport Management Act 2003 (LTMA)	This policy contributes to the LTMA by aiming to improve efficiencies and effectiveness, and by maintaining the level of local contribution towards the funding of public transport

Appendix D

Significance policy

This policy sets out how to determine the significance of variations to this Plan, in accordance with the requirements of section 10(1)(i) of the Public Transport Management Act.

Application

This Plan can be varied at any time. However, consultation will be required in accordance with the special consultative procedure (i.e. section 83 of the Local Government Act in accordance with s20(1) and (2) of the PTMA) if the variation is found under this policy to be significant.

The approach to consultation will reflect the level of significance of any proposed variation. Consideration will be given to the costs and benefits of any consultative process or procedure and the extent to which consultation has already taken place.

The implication of not meeting the significance threshold is that the special consultative procedure required by the Local Government Act 2002 will not need to be followed. However, the Regional Council will undertake targeted consultation on matters affecting specific communities and stakeholders, even if the significance threshold outlined in this policy is not invoked.

General determination of significance

The significance of variations to this Plan will be determined on a case by case basis. When determining the significance of a variation, consideration must be given to the extent to which the variation:

- Signals a material change to the planned level of investment in the public transport network
- Impacts on the purpose of the PTMA
- Affects residents (variations with a moderate impact on a large number of residents, or variations with a major impact on a small number of residents will have greater significance than those with a minor impact)
- Affects the integrity of this Plan, including its overall affordability.

Significant and non-significant matters

Matters that will always be considered 'significant' are:

- Any variation that amends this policy on significance
- Any variation that introduces or amends a control or a contracting requirement.

Matters that will always be considered 'not significant' are:

- Minor editorial and typographical amendments to this Plan
- Minor changes to fare levels in accordance with current policy and funding levels

Matters that will usually be considered 'not significant' are:

- A matter that has already been consulted on, i.e. the addition, removal or amendment of any matter that has already been consulted on in accordance with the special consultative procedure
- Minor changes to the description of services following a service review, e.g. changes to the route, frequency and hours of a service that may include a reduction in service levels on a route or routes, but which result in the same, or better, overall level of service across the network

- Changes to the description of services or grouping of services as a result of an area wide service review, provided that there is no significant increase in cost.

Targeted consultation on non-significant variations

Where the Regional Council determines that a proposed variation is not significant, the Regional Council will still undertake targeted consultation as follows:

a. Consultation for minor changes in the delivery of public transport services

Minor changes in service delivery that are required to improve efficiency, such as the addition or deletion of trips and minor route changes, have only a local impact. In these cases, consultation will generally be undertaken at a low level with the operator/s involved, the relevant territorial authority and passengers who use the services.

b. Other non-significant variations

Any proposals for changes that affect only a sector of the community or the industry (e.g. a change in Total Mobility provision, or a change to specific vehicle quality standards) will be worked through with those most likely to be affected, as well as other relevant stakeholders.

Appendix E

Consultation undertaken

The following organisations were consulted during the preparation of this Plan:

ABC Tours Ltd
Dalroy Tours & Coachlines
Pickering Motors Ltd
Runcimans Transport
Tranzit Coachlines
Weir Brothers
Withers Coachlines
Jamieson Motors Taranaki Ltd
Kiwi Tours Ltd
Atlas Transport
New Plymouth Taxis
Energy City Cabs
Stratford Taxis
Go Bus Transport Limited
Ritchies Transport Holdings Limited
New Zealand Transport Agency
Regional Transport Committee
Stratford District Council
New Plymouth District Council
South Taranaki District Council
New Zealand Automobile Association
Multiserve
CCS Disability Action
Disabled Persons Assembly
Taranaki Disability Information Centre
Total Mobility Coordinator
Western Institute Technology Taranaki
Practical Education Institute
Pacific International Hotel Management School
Taranaki FEATS
Taranaki Educare Training Trust
New Plymouth Boys' High School
New Plymouth Girls' High School
Sacred Heart Girls College
Francis Douglas Memorial College
Spotswood College
Highlands Intermediate,
Devon Intermediate

Appendix F

Transport providers in Taranaki

The following tables provide a list of commercial bus operators (excluding charter operators) in the region who provide scheduled services and also community and/or health transport providers.

Commercial transport providers				
Transport Provider	Route	Frequency	Transport services	Contact Information
Dalroy Express	Hawera via New Plymouth to Auckland return Hawera to New Plymouth return	Daily Monday to Friday	Inter-regional	06 759 0197
Intercity	NP to Auckland or Wellington return	Daily	Inter-regional	06 759 9039
Naked Bus	NP to Auckland, Wellington or Tauranga return	Daily	Inter-regional	0900 62533

Note: Does not include Charter operators.

Community/Health transport providers				
Transport Provider	Route	Frequency	Transport service for:	Contact Information
Taumarunui Kokiri Trust	Mokau to NP	3 x week depending on demand.	those with health or disability issues on hospital &/or shopping trips.	Neville Fox 06 752 9025
Red Cross Society Waitara	Waitara to NP	Depending on demand.	Waitara clients with medical appointments outside of Waitara.	Patsy Turner 06 754 7028
The Opunake/Coastal Emergency Transport Group & the Opunake Friendship Group	Opunake to Hawera & NP	Depending on demand.	those who are not confident enough or physically able to use the bus or drive themselves.	Nevis Brewer 06 761 7150
Ngaruahine Iwi Authority Charitable Trust	Manaia to Hawera	Depending on demand.	seniors to hospital or specialist appointments.	06 274 8047
Hospital Shuttle Bus	Hawera to NP Waverley to Hawera	Mon-Fri 8am-5pm Call for timetable.	health related appointments at TBH & Hawera Hospital.	06 753 6139
Patea Standby Charitable Trust	Patea to Hawera	Mon-Fri 9am-12pm Call for details.	medical appointments.	Kay 06 273 8661
Standby Association of Waverley	Waverley to Hawera	Mon-Fri 9am-11.30am Call for details.	medical appointments.	06 346 5021 or 06 346 5198

Note: All services except for the Hospital Shuttle Bus are provided by volunteer drivers so schedules will depend on driver availability and demand. Please contact the provider in your area for specific details.