

REVIEW OF THE REGIONAL LAND TRANSPORT STRATEGY FOR TARANAKI

Stage One: Discussion Paper on the Key Transport Issues and Outcomes for the Taranaki Region

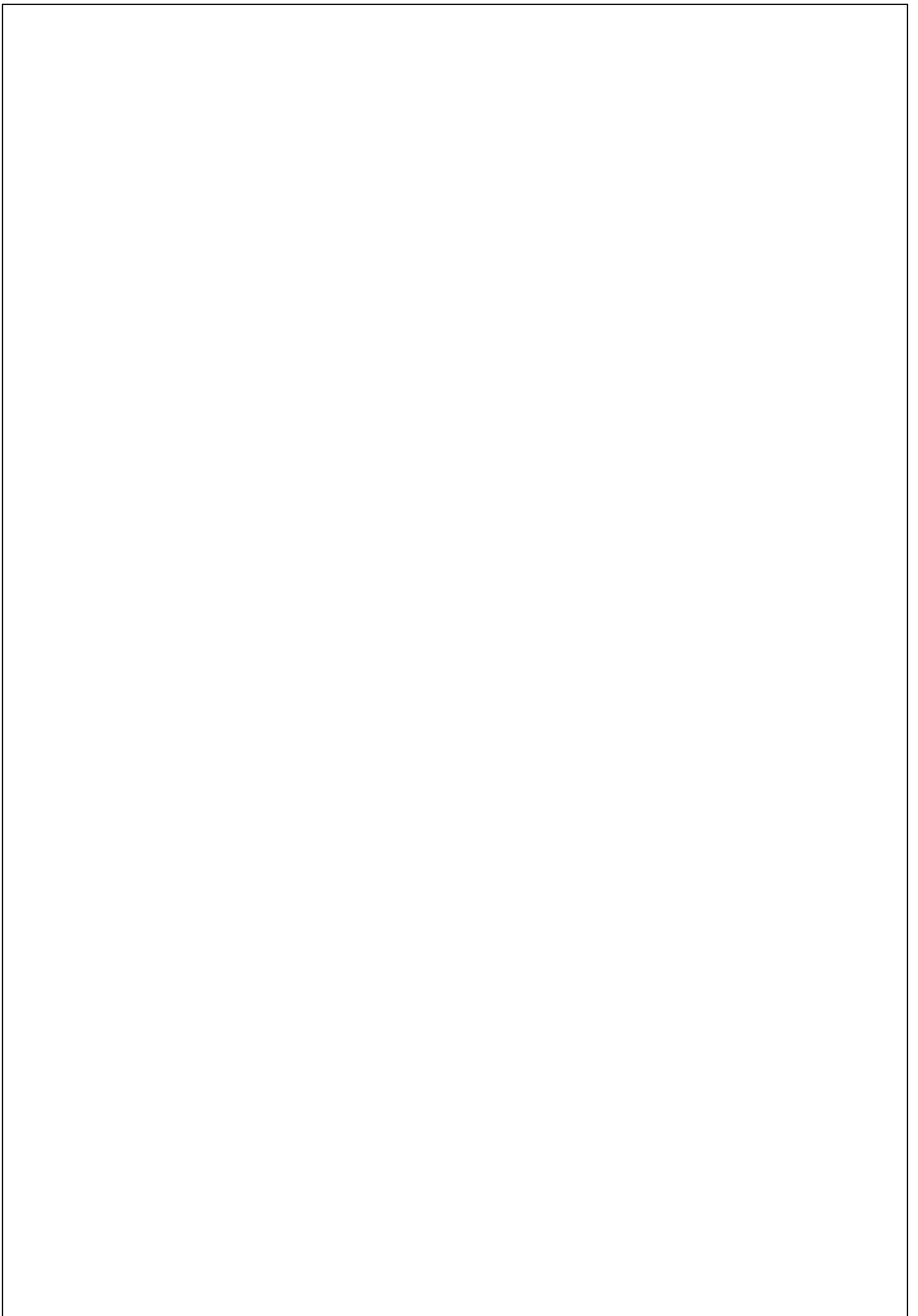


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1. Introduction

The Regional Land Transport Strategy for Taranaki is an important document for our region. It is a statutory document required by the Land Transport Management Act 2003 for the purpose of providing guidance on the land transport outcomes sought by the region. The Regional Land Transport Programme, which recommends funding for land transport activities within the region, must be consistent with the Regional Land Transport Strategy and the New Zealand Transport Agency must take the strategy into account when making funding decisions as part of preparing the National Land Transport Programme.

The strategy therefore needs to present a clear view of what we want to achieve for our land transport system and why this is important for our economic development, safety and personal security, for improving access and mobility, promoting public health and ensuring environmental sustainability. In this way the strategy will guide investment decisions and ensure that Taranaki receives the resources it needs to maintain and further development our land transport system which is so vital to our economic prosperity and social wellbeing.

To do this effectively the strategy will need to draw on studies and knowledge of our economy, development prospects, population growth and change, urban growth, land use changes and so on.

This Discussion Paper begins the process of reviewing the current Regional Land Transport Strategy for Taranaki 2006 by providing an opportunity for early public input into the review process.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Discussion Paper is to:

- Provide an opportunity for early engagement with the public on the review of the Regional Land Transport Strategy for Taranaki (2006);
- Examine the vision, transport outcomes and strategic land transport options included in the current the Regional Land Transport Strategy for Taranaki and determine whether these still fit with the region's aims for its transport system;
- Seek early public feedback on the transport issues identified in the 2006 Strategy and their on-going relevance;
- Examine progress towards resolving the issues since then; and
- Revise the key issues to be addressed in the new strategy.

1.2 Scope and timeline of review

The Regional Transport Committee for Taranaki (RTC) is commencing its review of the Regional Land Transport Strategy for Taranaki (RLTS) with the release of this Discussion Paper to discuss and seek early public feedback on transport issues in the Taranaki region.

This paper incorporates a number of key questions that the RTC would like feedback on (however general comments relating to the Regional Land Transport Strategy are also welcome). These specific questions asked are identified in sections 2, 4, 5 and 6.

Written submissions close at **4pm on 25 September 2009** and should be emailed to info@trc.govt.nz or mailed to:

RLTS Submissions
Taranaki Regional Council
Private Bag 713
Stratford 4352

Submissions on this Discussion Paper will be analysed and incorporated into a draft RLTS, which will be released for public consultation in April 2010. It is anticipated that the revised RLTS will be considered and adopted by the RTC in July 2010.

2. Statutory context

2.1 The Regional Transport Committee for Taranaki

The Regional Transport Committee for Taranaki (RTC) is a committee of the Taranaki Regional Council and is made up of representatives from the Taranaki Regional Council, the New Plymouth, Stratford and South Taranaki district councils, the New Zealand Transport Agency, one cultural representative and one representative for each of the five objectives listed in the New Zealand Transport Strategy 2008 (i.e. economic development, safety and personal security, access and mobility, public health and environmental sustainability). The functions of the RTC include:

- Preparing, reviewing or varying a regional land transport programme
- Preparing, monitoring and reviewing a regional land transport strategy
- Providing advice on transport matters requested by the Taranaki Regional Council, and
- Liaising with the Ministry of Transport, New Zealand Transport Agency, Commissioner of Police, district councils, and other interested parties on transport matters and providing advice to the Council on any appropriate new initiatives.

2.2 Legislative context

The Land Transport Management Act 2003 (the LTMA or the Act) requires regional transport committees to prepare a regional land transport strategy for their region. The overall intent of the Strategy is to enable the Regional Council to provide guidance on the land transport outcomes sought by the region. Such strategies must now cover a period of at least 30 financial years. They are also important planning documents as they are required to be taken into account when making land transport decisions.

When preparing the regional land transport strategy, the RTC must ensure that the strategy (section 75 of the Act):

- Contributes to the aim of achieving an affordable, integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable land transport system; and
- Contributes to each of the following:
 - assisting economic development
 - assisting safety and personal security
 - improving access and mobility
 - protecting and promoting public health
 - ensuring environmental sustainability and
- Is consistent with any:
 - national land transport strategy; and
 - relevant national policy statement or any relevant regional policy statement or regional plan that is for the time being in force under the Resource Management Act 1991; and
- Avoids, to the extent reasonable in the circumstances, adverse effects on the environment.

The RTC must also take into account the relevant Government Policy Statement on Land Transport Funding, any national energy efficiency and conservation strategy, and any relevant district plans. Other matters that must be taken into account when preparing the Strategy are listed in section 76 of the Act. These include any guidelines issued by the Minister; the land transport funding likely to be available within the region for implementing the strategy; the views of affected communities and of land transport network providers in the region; the need to give full consideration to land transport options and alternatives and the Council's functions under the Resource Management Act 1991 to consider the strategic integration of infrastructure with land use.

Under section 77 of the Act, the RLTS must contain the following matters:

- (a) Inter-regional and intra-regional transport outcomes relevant to the region
- (b) The strategic options for achieving those outcomes
- (c) An assessment as to how the regional land transport strategy complies with sections 75 and 76
- (d) A statement of any relevant regional economic or land-use considerations, and the likely funding of any land transport infrastructure associated with those considerations

- (e) A demand management strategy
- (f) An assessment of the appropriate role for each land transport mode in the region
- (g) An assessment of the role of education and enforcement in contributing to the land transport outcomes
- (h) A statement that identifies any strategic option for which co-operation is required with other regions
- (j) A statement that identifies persons or organisations who should be involved in the further development of strategic options
- (k) Measurable targets to be achieved to meet the outcomes of the regional land transport strategy
- (l) A statement provided by an independent auditor of how the process followed by the regional transport committee complied with the requirements of this Act, and
- (m) A summary of the policy relating to significance adopted by the regional transport committee under section 106.

Key provisions relating to the development and review of regional land transport strategies are set out in Appendix I of this document.

2.3 The Regional Land Transport Strategy for Taranaki (2006)

The current RLTS for Taranaki was adopted in February 2006, with a long-term strategic planning period of 10-20 years specified. The Act requires the RLTS to be reviewed within three years. Consequently the renewal process was required to commence by February 2009. However, an extension of time has been granted by the Minister of Transport until August 2010.

The RLTS has now been in place for three years. Many of the actions identified for implementation by the various parties to the RLTS are at various stages of implementation. Each year the Council has reported on the implementation of its Regional Land Transport Strategy (amendments to the Land Transport Management Act in 2008 now require these reports every three years). The Council's *Taranaki Regional Land Transport Strategy Annual Report 2007/2008* reports on actions taken by various agencies to address the issues and implement strategy policies during 2007/2008. Many of the actions show ongoing progress being made for example on construction and maintenance projects which recognise issues such as route security and reliability and maintaining the efficiency of our land transport network. Major projects such as the Bell Block bypass, Rugby Road underpass, Tangahoe Bridge widening, construction of passing lanes and other works commenced or completed over the last three to five years give effect to objectives and policies in the strategy. Other initiatives such as the New Plymouth Transportation study, the introduction of new passenger transport services in rural Taranaki and various community road safety programmes have also met strategy objectives. Further information can be found in the annual reports on the Regional Land Transport Strategy.

The review of the RLTS seeks to determine whether the transport issues and trends identified in 2006 are still timely and relevant and whether the means to address these should change. These issues are (in no particular order): route security and reliability, safety and personal security, network efficiency, economic development, access and mobility, public health, and environmental sustainability.

Changes in legislation have altered the content requirements of regional land transport strategies with the following factors now to be considered or included in any revised RLTS:

- the need to take account of the relevant regional council's function ... to consider the strategic integration of transport infrastructure with land use through objectives, policies, and methods (Section 76(g) of the LTMA)
- a statement of any relevant regional economic or land-use considerations, and the likely funding of any land transport infrastructure associated with those considerations (section 77(d))
- an assessment of the role of education and enforcement in contributing to the land transport outcomes (section 77(g))
- measurable targets to be achieved to meet the outcomes of the regional land transport strategy (section 77(j)); and
- a summary of the policy relating to significance adopted by the regional transport committee under section 106 (section 77(m)).

The Regional Land Transport Strategy 2006 may be downloaded from www.trc.govt.nz, or a copy obtained by phoning the Taranaki Regional Council on (06) 765 7127.

Note: The Regional Passenger Transport Plan is currently included as Part II of the current RLTS however this will be reviewed separately and developed as a separate document later in 2009/10.

2.4 Changes in the way regional transport planning is managed

In addition to the key issues identified by the last review, there are a number of 'change' factors or matters, which have emerged since the adoption of the RLTS and which may need a greater emphasis in the new strategy. These include:

- The establishment of the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) to, amongst other things, manage funding of the land transport system, manage the state highway system, manage regulatory requirements for land transport and generally promote an affordable, integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable land transport system.
- The Government's introduction of new legislation concerning land transport planning and operations (i.e. the Land Transport Management Amendment Act 2008) and consequential introduction of new statutory planning instruments (e.g. the 'New Zealand Transport Strategy' and 'Government Policy Statement on Land Transport Funding' and 'regional land transport programmes'), which all must be taken into account or reflected in a regional land transport strategy.
- A new Government Policy Statement on Land Transport Funding (GPS) has specified the focus areas that the Government would like to see transport funding spent on. This document has been prepared in two separate versions – one in August 2008 and the other in May 2009. The second of these versions has refocused investment in land transport infrastructure and services on ensuring economic growth and productivity.
- A revised structure and membership for regional transport committees.
- The preparation of the Regional Land Transport Programme for Taranaki (RLTP). The RLTP, which was adopted by the Council in June 2009, identifies key transport issues and priorities in the Taranaki region, lists land transport activities proposed for national funding over the next three years, and provides a ten year forecast of anticipated revenue and expenditure on land transport activities.

2.5 The Government Policy Statement on Land Transport Funding 2009

The Government Policy Statement on Land Transport Funding is the main guiding document by which the government can ensure that the land transport funding system focuses on the priority of generating economic growth and productivity. The GPS therefore aligns investment in the land transport sector more closely with this priority.

The Government has also been quite clear in the GPS that the funding ranges specified closely reflect the modal choices that are realistically available to New Zealanders. Approximately 70% of all freight in the country is moved by road and 84% of people going to work by car, truck or motorbike. They therefore state that there is a need for good roads to move freight and people. The government does support some mode shift over time, especially in the major cities of Wellington, Auckland and Christchurch. However they consider that this should not be accelerated to the point where the outcomes are economically inefficient.

As the GPS must be 'taken into account' when developing a revised RLTS, it is important that the Strategy's vision, land transport outcomes sought, issues, policies and actions all recognise the national priorities identified by the GPS.

The Government has also indicated a strong focus on the seven 'Roads of National Significance' in terms of funding priorities. This will have a significant impact on transport funding allocations for regions with no Road of National Significance located within their jurisdiction. Your views on how best to achieve the required investment in Taranaki's transport network is therefore a critical part of this consultation exercise.

Question 1 – GPS funding allocations

- a) What are your thoughts on ways to obtain greater funding certainty and allocations for transport projects in the Taranaki region?

3. Setting the scene

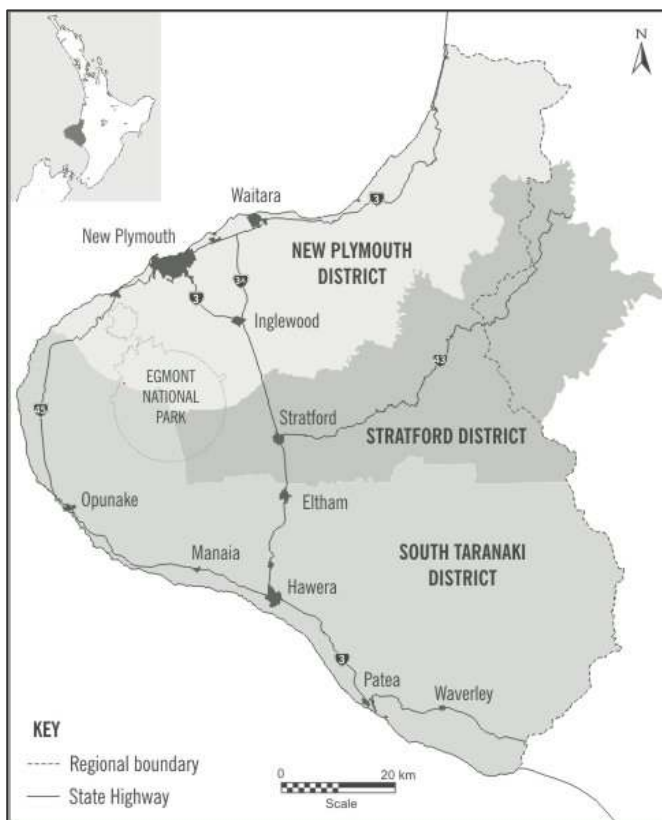
3.1 Introduction

In order to consider and understand the trends and issues for the transport system in the region, it is important to consider the demographic and economic trends which will influence our demands on the transport network. The following section of this Discussion Paper therefore provides a brief outline of the demographic characteristics of the Taranaki region which have an influence on the planning, provision and management of the region's transport network.

3.2 Geography

At 723,610 hectares, the Taranaki region makes up approximately 3% of New Zealand's total land area. Approximately 2.6% of the country's population live within this area, with the region collectively contributing around 2.8% of national gross domestic product.

3.2.1 Governance boundaries



Local government administration within the Taranaki region is carried out by the Taranaki Regional Council and three territorial authorities: the New Plymouth District Council; the Stratford District Council; and the South Taranaki District Council.

Adjoining the Taranaki region are two other regional authorities: Environment Waikato to the north and Manawatu-Wanganui to the east and south.

While the New Plymouth and South Taranaki Districts are contained entirely within the Taranaki Region's boundaries, a portion of the Stratford District (that which is part of the Whanganui catchment) is included in the Manawatu-Wanganui Region (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: The Taranaki region – location, local government boundaries, urban centres and state highways

3.2.2 Physical geography

Geographically defined by one of New Zealand's most recognisable landmarks, the region consists of four distinct landforms, which naturally impact on their prime uses and therefore transport needs.

Volcanic ring plain: The Taranaki ring plain, centred on Mount Taranaki/Egmont, consists of fertile and free-draining volcanic soils. The ring plain supports intensive pastoral farming (particularly dairying) that is most intensive on the flatter land in southern Taranaki. Over 300 rivers and streams radiate from Mount Taranaki/Egmont, and are extensively used by the agricultural sector, primarily for community water supplies and for a wide range of recreational purposes.

Eastern hill country: The hill country that lies to the east of the ring plain is steeply dissected and prone to soil erosion and slipping. However it can support both pastoral farming and commercial forestry when managed in accordance with the physical limitations of the land.

Marine terraces: The soils of the coastal and inland marine terraces along the north and south Taranaki coast are among the most versatile and productive in the region. However the combination of light, sandy soils and strong winds in some areas can lead to localized wind erosion.

Coastal environment: The region is exposed to the west and as a consequence, high-energy wave and wind conditions dominate the coastal environment. There are few areas of sheltered water beyond the major estuaries and the confines of Port Taranaki.

3.2.3 Weather and climate

The Taranaki region has a temperate climate with generally abundant rainfall. The region lies in the path of weather systems moving east over the Tasman Sea and the climate is usually sunny and windy, with moderate temperatures and regular rain throughout the year. Annual rainfall varies markedly, ranging from less than 1,400 mm in coastal areas to more than 8,000 mm at the summit of Mount Taranaki.

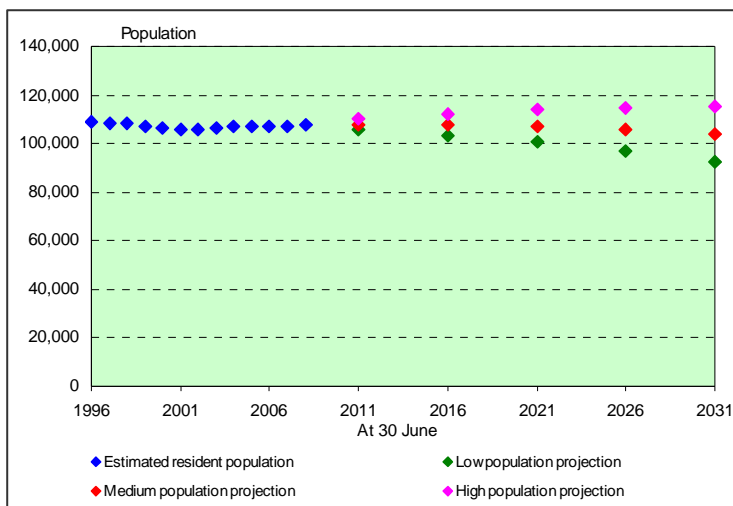
The climate and subsoils are suited to high-producing pastures, with about 60% of the region used for high-intensity pastoral farming. Approximately 40% of the region is in indigenous forest and shrubland, mostly within Egmont National Park and areas of the inland hill country. The region also has significant natural resources beneath the ground in the form of oil and gas reserves, being known as the energy centre of the country.

3.3 Population structure

Taranaki's usually resident population was 104,127 at the 2006 census. This represents a 1.2% increase since 2001, reversing a 3.5% decline between 1996 and 2001. The population distribution throughout the three districts in the Taranaki region are show in Table 1.

Table 1: Population changes in Taranaki 1996-2006 (Statistics New Zealand 2006 Census)

Local authority	Total population				
	1996	2001	% change 1996 - 2001	2006	% change 2001 - 2006
New Plymouth District	68,112	66,603	-2.2	68,901	3.5%
Stratford District	9,543	8,883	-6.9	8,889	0.0%
South Taranaki District	29,133	27,537	-5.5	26,484	-3.8%
Taranaki region	106,590	102,858	-3.5	104,127	1.2%

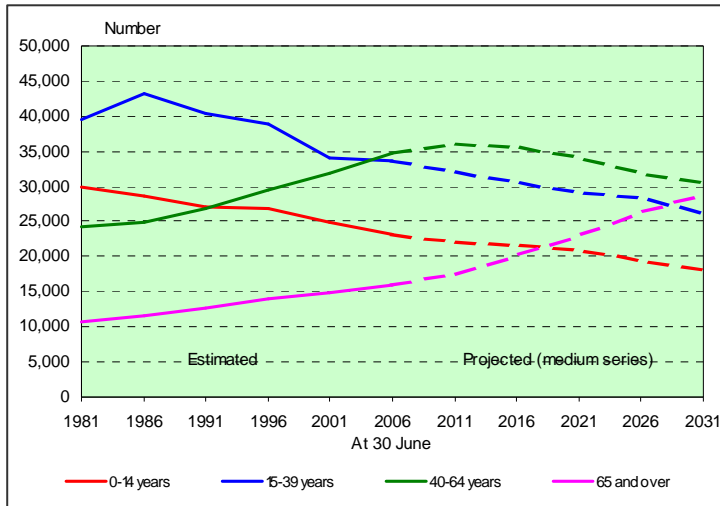


Overall, the region accounts for 2.6% of New Zealand's population. The two main population centres are New Plymouth and Hawera. The general trend has been a decrease in the population of smaller rural towns and a further concentration of the population in north Taranaki. Population projections for the region are given in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Estimated and projected population for the Taranaki Region (Statistics New Zealand)

Taranaki's population is less ethnically diverse than the population of New Zealand as a whole. At the 2006 census 77% of Taranaki residents indicated that they belonged to the European ethnic group compared with 67.6% for New Zealand as a whole. The percentage of Maori within the Taranaki population continues to increase - from 11.9% in 1991, 14.7% in 2001 and 15.8% in 2006. Nationally, Maori make up 14.6% of the population. Those belonging to Pacific (1.4%) and Asian (2.2%) ethnic groups are much lower than for New Zealand as a whole (6.9% and 9.2%, respectively). Those in Taranaki who indicated their ethnicity as New Zealander totalled 13.6% compared to 11.1% nationally.

The Taranaki population is both older and younger than the national average, with a higher proportion of children aged under 15 years (21.8%) and adults aged 65+ (14.8%). These two factors (persons aged under 15 and over 65) are used to measure levels of transport disadvantaged in a region as they represent those people who are most likely to need public transport. Figure 3 indicates projected age group changes in the region which indicate that the



proportion of these groups is set to increase.

Other transport disadvantage indicators include people on low incomes, the unemployed and proportion of households with no car. In Taranaki it is anticipated that, with the ageing of the population (along with economic uncertainty given the current global situation), the levels of transport disadvantaged are set to increase.

Figure 3: Population by Broad Age Group – Taranaki Region

3.4 Regional economy

A notable feature of the Taranaki region is its reliance on the region's natural and physical resources for its social and economic wellbeing. Farming and other land-based activities continue to play a prominent role in employment. Over 16% of Taranaki's full-time equivalent labour force is employed in agriculture, compared with 7.5% nationally.

Since 2004, economic growth in Taranaki has been consistently above the national growth rate, with the rate of growth slowing from early 2007. From 2004 to 2006 Taranaki recorded among the highest rates of economic growth in the country. Overall, Taranaki makes up 2.5% of national employment and contributes 2.8% of national gross domestic product. Significant contributors to the Region's economy are outlined below.

3.4.1 Agriculture

Dairying dominates farming in Taranaki, particularly on the ring plain. There are over 1,900 dairy farms and more than 480,000 dairy cows, producing approximately 12% of New Zealand's total milksolids. Milk processing in Taranaki is now concentrated at one site – Fonterra's Whareroa site near Hawera. At peak production this facility processes over 14 million litres of milk per day. Other major agricultural processing industries are based at Kapuni (Fonterra Kapuni), and Eltham (Mainland Products and Pastoral Foods). In addition to direct farm income from milk production, the added value resulting from the processing of milk, whey and cheese manufacturing is a significant contributor to employment.

Sheep and beef farming are concentrated in the hill country and also play an important part in the regional economy. Approximately 880 sheep and beef farms in Taranaki stock approximately 679,000 sheep and 131,000 beef cattle. Meat processing works are located at Eltham (Riverlands Eltham Ltd), Hawera and Waitotara (Silver Fern Farms Ltd, formerly PPCS), and Stratford (Taranaki Abattoir Co Ltd).

Taranaki has a significant and expanding poultry industry with around 46 poultry farms and is the major poultry meat producing region in New Zealand, involving all aspects of the industry from breeding and

growing to production and distribution. Operations are concentrated in North Taranaki, with the major processing facility at Bell Block. Most pig farming is also concentrated in the New Plymouth district, although the number of pig farms has been declining.

Horticulture and cropping are not significant land uses in Taranaki, however the region is self-sufficient in most crops. A small number of local growers produce a range of fruit for both the local and export markets.

Overall, agriculture and associated food processing industries contribute almost 20% to regional GDP - generating around \$850 million regionally in GDP in 2006. There is generally an intensification of land use which is likely to have implications for transport networks, with increasing numbers of heavy vehicles servicing these industries. Within both the dairying industry and sheep/beef industry, amalgamation trends have resulted in a concentration of the processing facilities – which has significantly altered the pattern of heavy traffic road use involved in these industries.

3.4.2 Forestry

Exotic forest plantations continue to expand, with the region offering a suitable climate, good forestry sites and a well-established roading system and port facility. This is demonstrated by the marked increase in exotic forest plantations in the region from 9,700 hectares in 1990 to an estimated 19,350 hectares in 2002. However this figure has dropped slightly to 26,044 hectares in 2007.

As a consequence of the increased establishment of exotic forests throughout the region, a significant tonnage of logs has, and will require, transportation to user plants or ports for export. The most significant effects of forestry will be on the region's land transport networks.

3.4.3 Oil and gas

The oil and gas industry is a major contributor to the regional economy. The Taranaki Basin is currently New Zealand's only hydrocarbon producing area, with the onshore Kapuni and the offshore Maui fields making up the major part of New Zealand's natural gas resources. Development of the offshore Kupe field commenced during 2006/2007, with gas expected to flow from the field by the end of 2009.

Extensive drilling programmes over recent years have resulted in a number of significant new finds. In the past 10 years new oil or gas fields such as the Mangahewa, Maari, Rimu, Kauri, Tui and Pohokura fields have been discovered. By world standards, however, Taranaki is under-explored and exploration interest in the region remains high. There is also considered to be potential for very large oil and gas reserves in deep water further off the Taranaki coast.

The presence of oil and gas in the region has given rise to industries involved in the processing, distribution, use and export of hydrocarbons. The oil and gas industry makes a significant contribution to the Taranaki economy. In the year ended March 2006, the oil and gas industry employed 817 fulltime workers (1.8% of the region's fulltime employment) and generated \$741 million - almost 17% of the region's GDP. The proportion of GDP accounted for by the mining sector (oil and gas) is unique in New Zealand. When spin offs to other industries such as engineering and construction are added, the contribution to regional GDP exceeds \$1 billion and 3,000 jobs.

The greatest demands on the transport system tend to take place during the exploration, development and initial production phases of petroleum exploration, as in the longer term most products are piped to and from processing plants. Aggregate and other materials are transported during the site preparation phase, often resulting in significant short term loadings, particularly on local roads.

3.4.4 Manufacturing

Taranaki has a relatively small but distinctive manufacturing base. The region has also developed a national and international reputation for its expertise in food processing, particularly of dairy products and speciality dough production. Further, the special servicing needs of the dairy and petrochemical sectors (and to a lesser extent the meat, energy, industrial, chemical and timber processing sectors) have contributed to the development of both heavy and light engineering industries. In total, manufacturing (including food processing), engineering and other manufacturing (chemical, wood and paper products, textiles, printing and publishing etc.) provide over 18% of all employment in Taranaki.

Due to the relatively small nature of this employment base and its centralised location, the demands on the region's land transport system remain relatively constant.

3.4.5 Retail and service industries

Wholesale and retail industries are the second largest employer in Taranaki, after agriculture, employing 15% of full-time employees in Taranaki. Other significant employers are business, finance and property services - the third largest employer group (11.6%), and health and community services (8.1%). Business, finance and property services and wholesale and retail trade are the largest contributors to regional GDP (16.4% and 10.5%, respectively) after mining (oil and gas). Smaller service industries such as hospitality and cultural and recreational services, which are important in the tourism industry, have shown strong growth in employment over the past five years.

3.4.6 Tourism and events

Tourism is playing an increasingly important role in the Taranaki economy. Since 2000 arrivals and guest nights (in commercial accommodation) in Taranaki have continued to increase, with these now being over 50% higher than in 2000. The region's mountain, coast, surf, forests, gardens and parks, festivals and events are attracting growing numbers of visitors, with 274,738 visitor arrivals to the region in 2007 (an increase of 5.6% over 2006). Domestic visitors account for approximately 85% of total guest nights spent in the region. These visitors spent a total of 556,660 guest nights in the region, an increase of 3.9% over 2006. Taranaki performed better than the national average in 2007 in both guest nights and visitor numbers.

The Taranaki region is also becoming increasingly popular and recognised for organised cultural, sporting and other events. These include the Festival of Lights, Arts Festival, Rhododendron and Fringe garden festivals, the World of Music, Arts and Dance (WOMAD) festival, Whangamomona Republic Day, to name just a few. The various events bring large numbers of visitors to the region with significant benefits for the local economy. For example, the 2008 WOMAD festival alone attracted more than 43,700 festival-goers over three days with 66% coming from out of town, and had a direct economic impact of \$2.89 million and an estimated flow-on economic impact of \$6.43 million for the region.

This increase in tourists (largely of a domestic nature) will place additional demand on the region's land transport system as well as potentially increasing: road user conflict (especially with cycling tourists), demand for specialised serving and waste disposal (particularly campervans), demand for high quality roads into and out of the region, the number of foreign drivers unfamiliar with New Zealand driving rules and conditions.

3.4.7 Port

Port Taranaki is the only major deep sea water port on the west coast of New Zealand, and one of the country's key import and export ports. It is a key transport network hub for the Taranaki region and a major contributor to the economy. Investigations are currently occurring into the viability of a Western Blue Highway, with the potential impacts of this proposal on the region's transport network being significant.

3.5 Industry projections

The Taranaki Industry Projections 2006 – 2026 report prepared by BERL (Business and Economic Research Limited) on behalf of Venture Taranaki Trust in November 2007 to provide an overview of the Taranaki region economy over the next 20 years.

The report found that:

- Taranaki's economy is expected to grow faster than the national economy over the next 20 years. The projections indicate the growing importance (and potential) of the oil and gas sector. The share of employment and GDP accounted for by oil and gas could well double over the next years.
- Associated industries such as engineering, as well as the other manufacturing, hospitality, and transport/storage industries are also likely to see rapid expansion. Along with business, finance and property services growth, these industries are expected to add around 16,500 FTE's (or 77%) of the region's employment growth by 2026.
- Particularly strong gains in GDP are expected in oil and gas; business, finance and property services; engineering; other manufacturing; and wholesale and retail trade. These five industries will contribute 83% of the increase in GDP in the region over the next 20 years.
- Employment is expected to grow by 2% per annum to 2026, while labour productivity gains could see GDP grow by 4.7% per annum.

These projections can significantly influence land transport network provision requirements.

3.6 Existing transport infrastructure

A vital part of the Taranaki region is its physical infrastructure, including the region's:

- road and rail network
- Port Taranaki
- New Plymouth Airport
- electricity generation facilities and transmission lines
- sewerage, water treatment and reticulation systems.

These provide essential services to the regional community and economy. Effective and reliable land transport links to other transport modes such as Port Taranaki and New Plymouth Airport are therefore essential in servicing the region's general infrastructure network.

Table 2 identifies the key statistics relating to Taranaki's land transport network, in particular the fact that the Taranaki region has 7% of the country's local rural sealed roads and 5% of the country's total (sealed and unsealed) local roading network. This is relatively high considering the region's population and land area is only 3% of New Zealand's total. The primary reasons for these high statistics is the fact that Taranaki has intensive agricultural land use patterns, with a consequential need to provide efficient local roading networks to service the region's widely dispersed rural communities. The State highway system is also a critical part of the network connecting main population centres with processing and manufacturing facilities, export outlets and markets.

Table 2: Approximate key statistics of transport in the Taranaki region as given in the National Land Transport Programme 2008/09. Note that data is based on 2006/07 figures.

	Taranaki Region	New Zealand	Region as % of NZ
Population	107,000	4,228,000	3%
Land area (km ²)	7,273	275,446	3%
Imports (gross tonne)	3,800,000	76,000,000	5%
Exports (gross tonne)	5,400,000	67,000,000	8%
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (\$)	5,648,000,000	163,387,000,000	3%
Passenger Transport - Bus - boardings	324,020	89,683,159	0%
Passenger Transport - Rail - boardings	-	16,913,205	
Passenger Transport - Ferry - boardings	-	4,224,398	
Motor vehicles	75,000	2,850,000	3%
VKT (km)	990,600,000	39,845,600,000	2%
Fatalities on the roads	11	423	3%
Fatal and injury crashes on the roads	337	12,047	3%
Local roads - urban all (km)	485	17,251	3%
Local roads - urban sealed (km)	483	16,869	3%
Local roads - rural all (km)	2,994	65,432	5%
Local roads - rural sealed (km)	2,308	33,432	7%
State Highway - all (km)	391	10,893	4%
State Highway - sealed (km)	374	10,837	3%
State Highway - motorway (km)	-	172	

The region's transport infrastructure is vital for moving large volumes of freight into and out of the region. General freight is moved to and from the north by road through Hamilton and Auckland and south via Palmerston North and Wellington. Specific types of freight include fuel (petrol, diesel) and LPG, fertiliser from Tauranga, urea to the Waikato and Wairarapa, animal feed via the port to various parts of Taranaki, Wanganui and Wairarapa, logs from within and outside the region destined for the port or locally based sawmills, aggregate from the Manawatu and livestock from Hawkes Bay and the King Country.

The Main freight being moved via rail in Taranaki is meat and dairy products, fertiliser, wood chips and bulk milk.

4. Vision and outcomes of the Regional Land Transport Strategy 2006

4.1 Vision statement

The vision statement developed for the 2006 RLTS was:

Taranaki's transport system contributes to a prosperous, connected, healthy, vibrant and environmentally friendly community, which meets the needs of residents, businesses and visitors, now and in the future.

This vision statement reflects what the Region's desires at a high or broad level.

Question 2 – RLTS Vision Statement

- b) Does this vision statement still fit with where you would like to see our transport system in the long-term?
- c) What else should be included in this vision statement, for example reference to the needs of tangata whenua?
- d) How do the changes in our region and in national priorities since 2006 affect this vision?

4.2 Land transport outcomes

Land transport outcomes can be described as 'what we want to achieve' or the 'desired end state' for land transport. The 2006 RLTS therefore identifies the following land transport outcomes (both intra and inter-regional) for the Taranaki region:

A Land Transport system that:

- Is secure and reliable
- Is safe, efficient and responsive to changing needs
- Encourages economic development and a thriving economy
- Is convenient and attractive to use
- Is affordable, timely and cost-effective
- Encourages access and mobility
- Protects and promotes public health
- Promotes environmental sustainability
- Promotes and ensures integration in planning and delivery

Question 3 – RLTS Land Transport Outcomes

- a) Are these land transport outcomes still relevant?
- b) Are these outcome statements clearly and appropriately worded?
- c) Are there any other land transport outcomes that should be included?

4.3 Strategic land transport options

The 2006 RLTS identifies five strategic land transport options for the region which are best described as high level 'directions' for the land transport system in Taranaki. The land transport options or elements that make up the strategic land transport options are as follows:

- a) *Business as usual* – use of existing networks/services, together with committed improvements. Carry on with committed roading schemes and existing rail services, passenger transport, walking and cycling improvements.
- b) *Roading development* – increased emphasis on planning for and development of the roading network.
- c) *Passenger transport* service provision and further development (i.e. buses and taxis).
- d) *Rail infrastructure (freight)* provision and further development.
- e) *Rail infrastructure (passengers)* provision and further development.
- f) *Walking and cycling* infrastructure planning and development.
- g) *Integration* of land use planning with transportation networks and modes.
- h) *Travel demand management* – influencing the demand for travel rather than focusing on the supply of transport infrastructure (ranges from pricing controls (e.g. tolls, parking charges etc) to education and advocacy).

These five strategic land transport options are summarised below, with each reflecting a different combination and emphasis on the options and elements outlined above. The five options are:

- Business as usual
- Full roading development
- Minimal change to roading, with increased provision for alternative modes
- Improved roading, with increased provision for alternative modes
- Modal transfer

Business as usual:

Retains a 'status quo' scenario whereby the use of existing networks/services, together with committed improvements, occurs i.e. carry on with existing committed roading/rail schemes and existing passenger transport, walking and cycling service improvements.

Full roading development:

Significant additional developments made to the roading network, with no changes made to the current commitments to rail services, public passenger transport and walking/cycling facilities (i.e. those already committed through the National Land Transport Programme).

Minimal change to roading, with increased provision for alternative modes:

- Optimising existing road network commitments.
- Medium (increased) growth in passenger transport services – for both urban NP and other areas.
- Medium (increased) growth in rail services (freight only).
- Medium (increased) emphasis on alternative modes (i.e. walking/cycling) infrastructure provision and education/advocacy/promotion.
- Small/medium (increased) demand management practices implemented – education and advocacy practices, along with limited parking restraints where necessary.

Improved roading, with increased provision for alternative modes:

- Strategic improvements to road and rail capacity (freight only), service provision and integration (i.e. from current roading/rail commitments and capacity).
- Medium (increased) growth in passenger transport services – for both urban NP and other areas.
- Medium (increased) emphasis on alternative modes (i.e. walking/cycling) infrastructure provision and education/advocacy/promotion.
- Medium (increased) demand management practices implemented – education and advocacy practices, along with limited parking restraints where necessary.

Modal transfer:

- Optimising existing road network commitments.
- Strong growth in rail services (both freight and passenger transport).
- Strong emphasis on alternative modes (i.e. passenger transport, walking/cycling) infrastructure provision, education, advocacy and promotion.
- Strong demand management practices implemented – roading charges and heavy parking restraints implemented throughout the region.

Question 4 – RLTS Strategic Land Transport Options

- a) Are these still the main strategic land transport options for the region?
- b) Are there any more significant strategic land transport options that should be considered?

4.3 Preferred strategic land transport option

The 2006 RLTS identifies "Improved roading, with an increased provision for alternative modes" as the high level strategic option or 'direct' chosen for Taranaki's land transport system. This preferred strategic option forms the basis for the suite of policies and actions included in the current RLTS (Chapters 7-11). It also helps drive the development of initiatives and/or land transport projects and packages, as well as the Strategy's monitoring and reporting processes.

The general direction therefore signaled by this strategic option includes:

Roading developments:

Focusing on improving the movements of people and freight as well as enhancing road safety through:

- continued roading improvements on key arterial routes
- provision of additional passing lanes or opportunities where necessary/appropriate
- ensuring that the entire network (state highways, strategic rural roads, other rural roads and local roads) operates safely and efficiently
- increased safety works (road widths, realignments, provision of lay-bys, signage etc), bridge widenings and seal extensions
- increased provision for recreational, commuter and tourist pedestrians/cyclists
- ensuring route protection and reliability of the three state highways entering/exiting the region
- ensuring corridor protection of State Highway 44.

Rail developments:

- promoting the increased use of rail to move freight to, from and within the region, hence reducing the growth in road based freight activity
- promoting the reduction of current topographical and load capacity restrictions limiting the use of Taranaki's rail network
- ensuring route protection and reliability of the region's rail corridors.

Public passenger transport:

- promotion of the better use of existing services
- increased options available and therefore use of public passenger transport in the region
- further improvements to urban public passenger transport services in the New Plymouth urban area
- improvements to the provision of public passenger transport services in smaller urban centres (Waitara, Inglewood, Stratford, Hawera, Opunake, Waverley and Patea etc.).

Walking and cycling:

- strong emphasis on encouraging walking and cycling in the region
- increased expenditure on walking and cycling infrastructure to assist in spreading the demand for efficient and effective land transport networks across all modes of travel.

Travel demand management:

Demand management techniques to encourage more efficient travel patterns include:

- increased use of alternative modes of travel to the private motor vehicle (PT, walking and cycling)
- promoting the better use of existing public passenger transport services in the region
- implementation of parking controls where necessary to manage car use in the longer term
- encouragement of more consolidated land use patterns in the region to reduce reliance on the private motor vehicle.

The preferred option chosen is intended to describe a high level direction for Taranaki's land transport system and is not intended to imply a level of activity based on resource allocation.

Question 5 – RLTS Strategic Land Transport Options

- a) Do you think the preferred strategic land transport option is still the most appropriate for Taranaki?

5. Transport system issues for the Taranaki region

The following section outlines each of the key transport system issues identified in the 2006 RLTS which affect the region.

We would like your opinion on these transport issues to identify how current they still are. We would also like to know if there are other transport issues which you feel should be addressed by the revised RLTS.

5.1 Issues identified in the 2006 Strategy – are these still correct?

5.1.1 Route security and reliability

Issues

- Route security means the ability of the transport network to ensure that essential supplies can be transported safely and efficiently at all times.
- Network reliability means a network that is free from unnecessary restrictions (e.g. environmental constraints and natural hazard impacts) to ensure efficiency of the land transport system and consequently lower transport costs.

Due to the topographical nature of the Taranaki region and the fact that there are only three major state highway routes entering the region (i.e. State Highway 3 (north and south) and 43), the issue of route security and reliability is of major interest and concern to those using, planning for and managing the land transport network in the region. Improvements to the state highway network to the north of the region have recently enhanced highway resilience. However, future route security and reliability of these state highway linkages is imperative in ensuring that both goods and people can be transported to, from and within the region efficiently and safely. It is also important for the following services: specialised medical care, emergency response, trade movements, arts, culture and entertainment, and interaction with neighbouring communities.

The rural areas of Taranaki are heavily reliant on the rural roading network, with route security and reliability of these networks vital in ensuring future economic development, access and mobility and safety for those living and working in these areas.

Reliability of the rail network to accommodate an anticipated growth in freight movements is an issue which is discussed in further detail in section 8.2.

Movements of goods to and from Port Taranaki (ie by both road and rail) is also of strategic importance, with the majority of heavy vehicles transporting goods through the New Plymouth urban area. If the potential economic, environmental, health and social impacts of such movements become a significant constraint on the security and reliability of this route then actions must be taken to mitigate these impacts (or alternative routes must be investigated to maintain the security and reliability of access to Port Taranaki).

To ensure route security and reliability in the Taranaki region it is important that all aspects of the transport system (road, rail, air and water) are considered as a network and managed accordingly. The specific route security and reliability issues for the Taranaki region include:

ISSUES - Route security and reliability issues for the Taranaki region

- SH3 north of New Plymouth – inter-regional reliability and route security (including road surfacing/alignment, signage, tunnel issues and instability): mainly the Awakino and Mt Messenger areas.
- SH3 south of Hawera – inter-regional reliability and route security (only route south to Palmerston North).
- SH 43 (Forgotten Highway) – reliability and accessibility. The alternative route for SH3.
- Corridor protection of SH44 to the Port – taking into consideration the possible expansion of Port Taranaki's operations and therefore Port traffic or the identification of an alternative route to the Port.
- Reliable land transport linkages to international transportation (ie shipping and air).
- Reliability and security of key rural roads serving agriculture, forestry, oil and gas production and processing facilities, and tourism.

- The potential for natural hazards to sever the SH3 arterial corridor between Taranaki and both the Waikato and Manawatu-Wanganui regions.
- Safety and accident constraints to northern and southern routes affecting route reliability (i.e. SH3). Risk of road closures as a result.
- Investigation into alternative options for those routes where security and reliability cannot be ensured e.g. Route 40 – maintain an alternative route to SH3 that is up to state highway standard.
- Ensuring that the rail corridor and its associated designations are recognised in the appropriate planning documents to ensure that existing rail services or future expansion is not comprised as a result of inappropriate zoning or adjacent land-use activities.
- Current and future reliability of the rail network.
- Reliability of roading structures carrying key lifeline utilities and associated strengthening of existing facilities e.g. in the event of a bridge failure or civil defence emergency (such as a volcanic eruption).
- Reliability of state highway bridges where there are no nearby alternative routes – large number of bridges with no alternative access in the event of a bridge failure or closure.
- Environmental restraints causing road closures – i.e. slips in the Awakino Gorge area resulting from heavy periods of rain.

Question 6(a) –Route security and reliability issues

- Are these route security and reliability issues still current?
- Are there any other route security and reliability issues to be addressed in the revised RLTS?

Actions

Current actions included in the 2006 RLTS to address the issues specified include the following:

- Road controlling authorities (RCA's) to develop a strategic roading hierarchy that identifies the function of key roads in the region, appropriate levels of service and strategic linkages with agriculture, industry, forestry, tourism, the port and airport.
- Advocate for increased national funding of land transport projects/activities on State Highway 3 where route security issues compromise further regional economic development.
- Support and be part of the State Highway 3 Working Party to discuss and progress issues between New Plymouth and Pio Pio.
- Land transport programmes and LTCCP's to implement construction and maintenance projects which recognise the importance of route security and reliability.
- District councils (DC's) to recognise rail designations in their district plans and ensure that appropriate land use controls and other provisions are in place to ensure that adverse safety or reverse sensitivity effects from adjoining activities do not unreasonably impede current or future rail operations.
- DC's to recognise in district plans the issue of route security and reliability of the transport network in the design and land use planning of all future developments.
- 10-year state highway forecasts to implement construction and maintenance projects which recognise the importance of route security and reliability.
- ONTRACK's 10 year development plan to identify projects which recognise the importance of route security and reliability for the Taranaki region.
- RCAs to identify and discuss issues associated with ensuring adequate and acceptable access to Port Taranaki.

Question 6(b) – Route security and reliability actions

- What else do we need to do to address current and future route security and reliability issues?

5.1.2 Safety and personal security

Issues

Safety across the transport network has been identified as an important issue to be addressed by the RLTS. Fatalities and casualties from road and rail crashes impose high social and economic costs on the region. Creating a safer and more reliable transport system is therefore critical to the economic and social well-being of the Taranaki community and will become more so as our regional community grows.

As noted in the *New Zealand Transport Strategy*, safety with regard to transportation is also about ensuring that transport policy is underpinned by high standards of health, safety and personal security for all people, including users, workers and operators. Safety and personal security therefore covers:

- safety performance with regard to the transport network i.e. to reduce crashes and associated fatalities and casualties
- personal security e.g. fear of crime and the effects of the transport network on vulnerable users
- safety and security for all mode users – safety is currently perceived as a barrier to greater use of walking and cycling.

The *Road Safety Strategy to 2010* provides the overall direction for road safety in New Zealand and sets a national target of 'no more than 300 deaths per year resulting from road crashes by 2010. The Taranaki region has a varying record of road fatality and injury related crashes over the last 10 years, with the main contributing factors in 2004 identified as young road users, intersections, speed and alcohol. Taranaki's regional road crash projections in response to this national target has therefore been set at '11 deaths for 2010 if the national goal of 300 is achieved'.

The National Rail Strategy recognises that, while rail is the safest form of land transport, there is still room for improvement with respect to safety and personal security. This will become even more important as the use of rail increases. Particular rail safety issues can be classified into one of three categories: level crossings, trespass and route crime, and operational accidents.

Responses to safety and personal security concerns can be categorised into one or other of the 5 E's – engineering, enforcement, education, environmental modification and evaluation. The specific safety and personal security issues for the Taranaki region include:

ISSUES - Safety and personal security issues for the Taranaki region

The network – including engineering

- intersection and crossing safety
- increased provision of passing lanes and/or passing opportunities on the state highway network
- access and use of rail tracks/crossing (both public and private) – the awareness and identification of risk areas very important
- poor road alignment, narrow seal widths and bridges etc.
- high safety costs – both socially and economically
- open road statistics e.g. speed, alcohol, driver fatigue, winter conditions, tourist use
- urban characteristics e.g. social and safety effects of heavy vehicles in residential areas
- importance of appropriate standards and consistency in signage, road widths, road markings, shoulders, safety barriers and surfaces
- unprotected drains, gullies, trees and poles identified as potential problems
- poor geometry alignment resulting in increased crash rates and/or decreased efficiency of SH3
- minimising conflicts between different traffic types
- pedestrian and cyclist safety a concern when trying to increase the uptake of these alternative modes
- appropriate urban design to encourage more walking and cycling
- perception of safety for users of the passenger transport system e.g. security at bus stops
- promotion of road safety programmes (e.g. Safe Routes to Schools and Walking School Bus) to change the safety perception of walking/cycling to and from school
- engineering: black spots throughout the district continue to be a concern.

Driver behaviour – including enforcement and education

- driver training: inexperience has featured as a key factor in road crashes in all three districts
- road user education very important
- driver licensing: there are still unlicensed drivers on our roads, and others with learners or restricted licenses that do not follow up and apply for their full drivers' license
- drink driving: despite an increase in promotion, enforcement and education there is still a major concern about the number of drink drivers, and in particular repeat offenders
- promotion: there is a lack of awareness of the role of Roadsafes Taranaki in some areas
- unsafe practices at level crossings

- child restraints: road crashes are a leading cause of deaths for children aged one to four years in New Zealand. Child restraints can be difficult to install and this may be why people do not use a restraint correctly, or at all.

Pedestrian and cyclist behaviour – including enforcement and education

- unsafe practices at level crossings and trespass within the rail corridor.

Question 7(a) – Safety and personal security issues

- Are these safety and personal security issues still current?
- Are there any other safety and personal security issues to be addressed in the revised RLTS?

Actions

Current actions included in the 2006 RLTS to address the issues specified include the following:

- RCAs to develop and adopt a strategic roading hierarchy that identifies the function of key roads in the region, appropriate levels of safety and strategic linkages with agriculture, industry, forestry, tourism, the port and airport.
- Relevant agencies to work collaboratively with road safety partners to target road safety issues on key strategic corridors.
- Implement road safety campaigns and community development programmes as identified in the annual Community Road Safety Programme.
- Undertake road safety infrastructure improvements in accordance with the provisions of a Safety Management System.
- Land transport programmes and LTCCP's to implement construction and maintenance projects which recognise the importance of safety and personal security.
- District plans to recognise the importance of safety and personal security in the land transport network.
- 10-year state highway forecasts to implement construction and maintenance projects which recognise the importance of safety and personal security.
- ONTRACK's 10 year development plan to identify projects which recognise the importance of safety and personal security for the Taranaki region.
- Regional Passenger Transport Plan for Taranaki to recognise the importance of safety and personal security.

Question 7(b) – Safety and personal security actions

- What else do we need to do to address current and future safety and personal security issues?

5.1.3 Network efficiency

Issues

The transport network needs to be managed in a way that is efficient and accessible to everyone; promotes energy conservation and reduced energy demands that arise from an efficient network; and minimises adverse effects on the environment. It is also important that the network as a whole operates effectively and efficiently – from state highways to strategic local roads, other local rural and urban roads. Network efficiency is also about designing, engineering, operating and maintaining the roading network in a way that recognises the purpose and function of each level in the hierarchy.

A key focus of the RLTS is therefore to ensure that Taranaki's existing transportation networks can operate at an optimal level, both now and into the future. This includes ensuring that all transport infrastructure is maintained and managed in a way that ensures its efficiency and effectiveness into the future, as well as taking steps to improve the efficiency of the existing network for all modes (including air and sea). The specific network efficiency issues for the Taranaki region include:

ISSUES - Network efficiency issues for the Taranaki region

- maximizing network efficiency and therefore sustainability
- recognising a hierarchy of different roads/infrastructure
- effective traffic management techniques adopted to enhance network efficiency

- subdivision development occurring in peri-urban, coastal and rural areas (e.g. subdivisions increasing along SH3 north and south of NP etc) placing greater demands on the roading network and reducing network efficiency
- lack of information on forestry and harvesting
- potential tourism growth impacts
- increased heavy vehicle movements
- capacity issues in and around New Plymouth
- rural/urban linkages
- variations in levels of service
- identification of congested areas on the network
- effects of increased conflicts between through traffic and traffic turning at intersections and driveways as subdivision of land continues
- identification of future growth pressures on the network and forward planning to address those pressures.

Question 8(a) – Network efficiency issues

- Are these network efficiency issues still current?
- Are there any other network efficiency issues to be addressed in the revised RLTS?

Actions

Current actions included in the 2006 RLTS to address the issues specified include the following:

- The RCAs to develop and adopt a strategic roading hierarchy which identifies the function of key roads in the region, as well as strategic linkages with the port and airport.
- Land transport programmes and LTCCP's to implement construction and maintenance projects which recognise the importance of network efficiency.
- District plans to recognise the importance of network efficiency in the land transport network and to include provisions to protect strategic road and rail corridors from the adverse effects of future use and development.
- 10-year state highway forecasts to implement construction and maintenance projects which recognise the importance of network efficiency.
- New Plymouth District Council and NZ Transport Agency to develop a Traffic Management Strategy for New Plymouth which identifies the strategic roading network needs over the next 40 year period.

Question 8(b) – Network efficiency actions

- What else do we need to do to address current and future network efficiency issues?

5.1.4 Economic development

Issues

The land transport network in Taranaki contributes to economic activity within the region by providing for the efficient distribution of goods and people. The development and maintenance of this network within Taranaki has therefore been recognised as a vital factor in supporting future economic growth, as well as endorsing the importance and reliability of key rail, state highway and arterial roading routes leading into and out of the region. To address this issue it is necessary to understand the key economic growth areas in the Taranaki region, including:

- Agriculture (dairying and horticulture etc) – which is dominated by both dairying and sheep/beef farms. The heavy reliance on the roading (and increasingly rail) networks to move stock and dairy products both within and to/from the region is therefore an important aspect to consider in assessing future land transport needs.
- Forestry – is increasingly reliant on the transport network to move product to processing and export locations.
- Oil and gas – the greatest demands placed on the transport network by this industry tend to take place during the exploration, development and initial production phases.

- Engineering – in conjunction with the oil and gas industry there has been a responding increase in the number of engineering firms establishing themselves in the region. These firms rely heavily on road, rail, sea and air transportation modes to manoeuvre products to/from where they are located.
- Tourism – this industry relies heavily on the availability and ease of access to the roading network and passenger transport services. Effective planning for anticipated tourism growth (both domestic and international) is an important aspect in catering for future levels of demand.

The promotion of continued growth and economic development must be linked to planning for a sustainable land transport system that assists with sound business choices and helps remove barriers to business growth. By improving the transportation network (including air and sea linkages) positive benefits can occur as follows: reduction in travel delays between economic nodes, greater travel time reliability, reduction in congestion on heavily trafficked corridors and at network pinch points, effective land use policies and hence increased travel efficiency, and increased energy efficiency.

The specific economic development issues for the Taranaki region include:

ISSUES - Economic development issues for the Taranaki region

- relatively static population growth, with evidence of migration to urban areas
- changing economic and social patterns – where people live, and more people working from home
- current and projected increase in tourism numbers into the region – changes occurring in the way tourists travel
- possible development of future regional scenic and/or tourist routes
- retail and commercial growth – corresponding growth in employment levels
- recognition of the role of an efficient, integrated land transport infrastructure to lead or promote continued economic development and investment in agriculture, forestry, oil and gas, tourism etc.
- industry developments - growth in dairy, forestry, oil and gas, tourism and other industries have led to deterioration in road surfaces, conflicts between heavy vehicles and other road users etc.
- maintenance of inter-regional corridors to ensure continued economic development opportunities
- need to ensure a standard of transport infrastructure that will not only maintain but also enhance economic development in the region i.e. that is fit for the purpose
- expansion possibilities relating to the port and airport
- competitiveness of industries and organisations in the region
- accurate forecasting of growth – issues with the availability of limited data
- differences between internal and external costs/linkages e.g. oil and gas industry versus the tourism industry
- insufficient funding of strategic transport infrastructure a major hindrance to future economic development
- current disconnection between economic development and funding for land transport infrastructure.

Question 9(a) – Economic development issues

- Are these economic development issues still current?
- Are there any other economic development issues to be addressed in the revised RLTS?

Actions

Current actions included in the 2006 RLTS to address the issues specified include the following:

- RCAs to develop and adopt a strategic roading hierarchy that identifies the function of key roads in the region, appropriate levels of service and strategic linkages with agriculture, industry, forestry, tourism, the port and airport.
- Work with ONTRACK and rail operators to promote the economic development benefits of a more efficient rail network within Taranaki, as well as better rail connections with other regions.
- Land transport programmes and LTCCP's to implement construction and maintenance projects which recognise the importance of economic development.
- District plans to recognise the importance of economic development in the land transport network.
- 10-year state highway forecasts to implement construction and maintenance projects which recognise the importance of economic development.

- ONTRACK's 10 year development plan to identify projects which recognise the importance of economic development for the Taranaki region.
- Regional Passenger Transport Plan for Taranaki to recognise the importance of economic development.

Question 9(b) – Economic development actions

a) What else do we need to do to address current and future economic development issues?

5.1.5 Access and mobility

Issues

Key issues regarding access and mobility for the Taranaki region include:

- recognising the needs of the transport disadvantaged
- ensuring that opportunities for access to health, education, employment and leisure activities are catered for
- responding to these needs through the provision of efficient, reliable, cost effective and viable public transport services in the region
- providing safer walking/cycling infrastructure and services
- recognising the regions paper roads and how they influence access opportunities
- recognising the uneconomic nature of some roading facilities.

Demographic aspects of the Taranaki region (including low population numbers, geographically dispersed populations, an increased ageing population and certain areas experiencing high levels of unemployment) outline the diverse nature of the regional population and the impact this may have on the need for public transport services and therefore increased mobility. These unique aspects make it impossible to provide cost effective and viable public transport options to the entire region. Consequently, the need to provide more flexible, convenient and reliable public transport options to those of the greatest need has been identified as a priority for the Taranaki region. In addition to enhancing the current public passenger transport services available in the New Plymouth urban area, it is possible to provide better access and mobility throughout the rest of the region by linking smaller communities with major centres through the provision of community passenger transport services.

The specific access and mobility issues for the Taranaki region include:

ISSUES - Access and mobility issues for the Taranaki region

- the ability of an efficient land transport system to provide the community with access to work, education, shopping, social networks and recreation
- Taranaki's ageing population and the trend in people living independently for longer is increasing demands for transport services
- areas of high unemployment, low income and young people – accessibility to a motor vehicle
- availability of public transport for isolated communities or the transport disadvantaged
- economic impacts of not being able to access employment or social services
- people travelling longer distances to work, study, health services etc.
- accessibility to alternative modes (e.g. public passenger transport) – especially with a high proportion of the population located in smaller rural areas or townships
- provision of adequate public passenger transport services that meet the needs of the users infrastructure and the design of streets and kerbsides etc. – increases mobility and accessibility
- accessibility of heavy vehicles to certain roads and/or routes
- providing for (or denying) legal access to roads/properties
- recognising the community's wish for access to the coast
- impact of rising fuel costs on travel mode selection
- a large number of paper roads that often do not have a purpose
- a number of formed rural roads that could be considered uneconomic.

Question 10(a) – Access and mobility issues

- a) Are these access and mobility issues still current?
- b) Are there any other access and mobility issues to be addressed in the revised RLTS?

Actions

Current actions included in the 2006 RLTS to address the issues specified include the following:

- RCAs to develop and adopt a strategic roading hierarchy that identifies the function of key roads in the region, appropriate levels of service and strategic linkages with agriculture, industry, forestry, tourism, the port and airport.
- Continue to promote the benefits and use of the Total Mobility Scheme.
- Identify future public transport service options and alternatives as the need arises.
- Land transport programmes and LTCCP's to implement construction and maintenance projects which recognise the importance of access and mobility.
- Walking and cycling strategic plans to recognise the importance of access and mobility.
- District plans to recognise the importance of access and mobility in the land transport network.
- 10-year state highway forecasts to implement construction and maintenance projects which recognise the importance of access and mobility.
- ONTRACK's 10 year development plan to identify projects which recognise the importance of access and mobility.
- Regional Passenger Transport Plan for Taranaki to recognise the importance of access and mobility.
- Review territorial authorities continued ownership of unformed, paper roads.
- Review the need for territorial authorities to continue to own/maintain low volume uneconomic roading facilities on a case by case basis.

Question 10(b) – Access and mobility actions

- a) What else do we need to do to address current and future access and mobility issues?

5.1.6 Public health**Issues**

The transport system in New Zealand contributes to positive health outcomes, when the negative health impacts of transport are minimised and the use of active transport modes is supported. The RLTS can therefore play a significant role in increasing public health in the region through:

- securing more reliable and efficient transport infrastructure to improve access to employment, public health services, social services and facilities
- promoting and improving active forms of transport such as walking and cycling as healthy alternatives to using the private motor vehicle
- reducing the negative health effects of transport related emissions and reducing the negative impact of transport related noise and vibrations
- removing freight vehicles away from developed or residential areas
- reducing congestion on the highway network
- encouraging freight to be moved by rail rather than road
- improving overall road safety.

The specific public health issues for the Taranaki region include:

ISSUES - Public health issues for the Taranaki region

- promotion of active modes of transport e.g. walking and cycling
- increased opportunities for physical activity
- increased road safety initiatives support an increase in public health
- air quality – can adversely affect physical and mental health
- indirect health effects through community severance – disruption of social networks

- access to centralized public health services in the region*
- adverse effects of noise and vibration on the health of people and communities.

*This issue may be better placed in the Access and mobility section than the Public Health section.

Question 11(a) – Public health issues

- Are these public health issues still current?
- Are there any other public health issues to be addressed in the revised RLTS?

Actions

Current actions included in the 2006 RLTS to address the issues specified include the following:

- Taranaki District Health Board, territorial authorities and Sport Taranaki to promote the use of alternative more active modes of transport in the region.
- Land transport programmes and LTCCP's to implement construction and maintenance projects which recognise the importance of public health.
- Walking and cycling strategic plans to recognise the importance of public health.
- District plans to recognise the importance of public health in the land transport network.
- 10-year state highway forecasts to implement construction and maintenance projects which recognise the importance of public health.
- ONTRACK's 10 year development plan to identify projects which recognise the importance of public health.
- Regional Passenger Transport Plan for Taranaki to recognise the importance of public health.

Question 11(b) – Public health actions

- What else do we need to do to address current and future public health issues?

5.1.7 Environmental sustainability

Issues

Land transport can have significant adverse effects on the surrounding environment. As the dependence on, and desire for, motorised land transport have grown so too have the corresponding resource requirements and adverse environmental effects. Issues such as transport modes, vehicle and road design, fuel types and driver behaviour contribute to an environmentally sustainable land transport system. An integrated and proactive approach is therefore required to address the environmental effects of land transport.

- **Water:** The construction, maintenance and improvement of the land transport system can affect the hydrology and water quality of streams, rivers, lakes and their catchments, estuaries and coastal areas. The alignments of road and rail links across streams and rivers may also affect flows, drainage, flood channels, fish passage and other natural processes and habitats. Along the coast, roads may also need protection works which may affect coastal processes, tidal estuaries, mudflats and their aquatic habitats. The amount of paving on roads may reduce the opportunity for water to enter natural groundwater systems, or cause the channelling of runoff, resulting in till and gully erosion. However road surface runoff and increased localised flooding, which includes contaminants deposited from vehicular traffic, can affect surface waterways and groundwater by causing silting and damage to vegetation, fish breeding grounds and aquatic ecosystems. The disposal of road sump debris also needs controlling due to the high levels of contaminants that can be found in these localities.
- **Air:** Land transport can contribute to air pollution through the burning of fossil fuel, therefore contributing to greenhouse gases emissions. Poorly tuned and diesel powered vehicles (particularly older vehicles) can emit substantial amounts of contaminants if they are not well maintained, leading to a degradation of local air quality, amenity and overall public health (including increased respiratory and cardiovascular diseases). Noise, smoke or other vehicle exhaust emissions may also have adverse effects on other road users, especially in areas of high congestion and where there is a 'canyon' effect created by high rise buildings. However, because of its topography, prevailing atmospheric conditions and relatively low traffic densities, Taranaki does not experience the same air quality problems associated with motor vehicles that exist elsewhere in New Zealand.

- **Noise and vibration:** In some situations there is the potential for unreasonable noise, generated from road construction and traffic use, to adversely affect adjacent communities and other users of the road corridor (such as cyclists and pedestrians). Noise from land transport sources has been recognised as a contributor to existing stress related health disorders, with increasing evidence that these effects are most likely to affect residential communities and noise sensitive land use activities such as aged and health care facilities located alongside major roads in the region. This issue is of increasing concern in Taranaki (especially in the more urban environments) as traffic volumes continue to grow, speeds increase, better (i.e. more rigid) roading foundations are installed and heavier vehicles and cars with nonstandard muffler systems using the roads.
During construction, maintenance or improvement activities, vibration may also be generated e.g. where earthmoving equipment is used, blasting is undertaken, or where piles for bridges are being driven into the ground. However generally vibration effects in Taranaki are reasonably insignificant and are largely undetected by people living or working adjacent to roads or railways. Heavy vehicles may cause vibration disturbance in some circumstances, with the degree of disturbance depending on a number of factors including building and ground conditions, proximity of buildings (mainly commercial and residential) to main thoroughfares, as well as vehicle weights and speed, and pavement surface defects.
- **Natural features and landscapes:** Road construction, maintenance or improvements can have both positive and/or negative effects on natural features and landscapes (e.g. rivers and streams, lakes, wetlands, estuaries, the coast, native forests, geological features and landforms). Such works may detract from natural features and landscapes in the area or interfere with its visual amenity or aesthetics. Improved access to natural features may result in an increased use of the area, but may also increase litter and fire risk.
- **Wildlife habitats and ecosystems:** Wildlife habitats and ecosystems may also be adversely affected by the land transport system through the loss or damage to flora and fauna species, wildlife habitats, ecosystems and processes. The natural biodiversity of the region may also be affected by the introduction of noxious plant and animal pests to a new habitat, as well as the creation of a physical barrier to the movement of some wildlife.
- **Historic, heritage and cultural sites:** The construction, maintenance and improvement of the land transport system in Taranaki may damage and disturb historic or archaeological sites, heritage buildings and other special areas, including places of significance to tangata whenua (such as Waahi Tapu).
- **Alternative modes:** The encouragement of alternatives to vehicular traffic (e.g. public transport, cycling, walking and rail transport) can assist in meeting the Council's environmental as they result in fewer emissions, increased energy conservation and efficiency across the land transport system, less congestion and reduced noise.
- **The land transport system as a resource:** The land transport system itself is a physical resource which should be managed sustainably. It can be degraded by inappropriate access/demands placed upon it. It is therefore important that land uses are effectively managed to ensure the long term sustainability of the land transport system. The option selected by an individual, group or organisation when catering for future growth patterns requires careful and calculated analysis based on all the benefits and costs associated with particular transport options.

The specific environmental sustainability issues for the Taranaki region include:

ISSUES - Environmental sustainability issues for the Taranaki region

- air – emissions, smoky vehicles and trucks without covers (indirect linkage to health impacts)
- noise and vibrations are of increasing concern due to the increase in heavy vehicles
- stock truck effluent discharges and the effects these have on the surrounding environments
- water pollutants – road runoff (indirect linkage to health impacts)
- the promotion of alternative fuels
- energy efficiency – promotion of alternative modes
- assessment of alternative transport modes to reduce the impact of the land transport network on the surrounding environment
- adverse visual effects e.g. signage
- potential for hazardous substance spills due to type of industries in Taranaki
- impact of transport on areas of high conservation value (for example, the Egmont National Park)
- anticipated climate change impacts

- impact of natural hazards on transport infrastructure
- adverse effects of other activities on the safe and efficient operation of the land transport system.

Question 12(a) – Environmental sustainability issues

- a) Are these environmental sustainability issues still current?
- b) Are there any other environmental sustainability issues to be addressed in the revised RLTS?

Actions

Current actions included in the 2006 RLTS to address the issues specified include the following:

- Monitoring of existing stock truck effluent sites and analysing of future demands for additional sites throughout the region.
- Enforcement of the '10 second rule' for smoky vehicles.
- Land transport programmes and LTCCP's to implement construction and maintenance projects which recognise the importance of environmental sustainability.
- District plans to recognise the importance of environmental sustainability in the land transport network.
- 10-year state highway forecasts to implement construction and maintenance projects which recognise the importance of environmental sustainability.
- ONTRACK's 10 year development plan to identify projects which recognise the importance of environmental sustainability in the land transport network.
- Regional Policy Statement and regional plans to recognise the importance of environmental sustainability in the land transport network.
- Regional Passenger Transport Plan for Taranaki to recognise the importance of environmental sustainability.

Question 12(b) – Environmental sustainability actions

- a) What else do we need to do to address current and future environmental sustainability issues?

6. Other matters to consider

6.1 Integration of land use and transport planning

Coupled with high vehicle ownership, the way that cities and towns have developed over the past 50 years is a significant factor contributing to traffic growth on certain sections of the road network. The mobility offered by motor vehicles supports the growth in low density housing around the periphery of urban areas. Similarly there is a dispersal of jobs and services from city and town centres to other locations. Such changes are associated with increased use of motor vehicles and make it increasingly difficult to provide other viable transport options. There has also been an increase in the number of rural residential developments and lifestyle properties throughout the region which encourages more vehicle trips. This particularly relates to the level of residential properties being developed along the regions coastline.

The ability to choose from a variety of transport modes is being diminished by this trend of dispersed land development. As residential areas move further from urban focal areas, the distances become too great to provide viable public transport or for residents to walk and cycle. It is therefore vital that land use development is integrated with transport planning to ensure that the land transport system is protected, affordable and able to provide appropriate access to facilities by a variety of modes. Careful planning over the long term will help to reduce the need to travel and maximise the efficiency of the transport network.

This issue will be considered and addressed in the revised version of the RLTS.

Question 13 – Integrated land use planning

- a) Are there any aspects of integrated land use planning which you think should be addressed by the RLTS review?

6.2 Climate change issues

Over recent years the issue of global warming and the contribution to greenhouse gas emissions made by New Zealand's transport system has been made a much higher national priority. This therefore requires greater recognition in regional land transport strategies.

The current RLTS does address this issue through policies and actions aimed at promoting greater use of public transport and walking/cycling initiatives. However more could be done to address the real linkages between vehicle use and climate change. Although the Taranaki region does not face the congestion and network capacity issues confronting larger New Zealand cities, these policies and actions will need to be reviewed in light of the climate change policies made in recent years by central government agencies.

Question 14 – Climate change issues

- a) Are there any comments you would like to make with regard to climate change issues?

6.3 Additional statutory requirements

The Land Transport Management Act 2003 also requires regional land transport strategies to include the following:

- a demand management strategy
- an assessment of the appropriate role for each land transport mode in the region
- an assessment of the role of education and enforcement in contributing to the land transport outcomes
- a statement that identifies any strategic option for which co-operation is required with other regions
- measurable targets to be achieved to meet the outcomes of the regional land transport strategy.

These sections of the RLTS will be developed and comments requested as part of the formal consultation process on a draft Regional Land Transport Strategy for Taranaki.

Question 15 – Additional statutory requirements

- a) Given the statutory requirements of the Land Transport Management Act 2003, are there any other comments that you would like to make with regard to the development of a revised RLTS?

7. Summary

It has been a relatively short time since the current *Regional Land Transport Strategy for Taranaki* was adopted in February 2006. However statutory requirements mean that the RLTS must now be reviewed and changed from a 20 to 30 year planning timeframe. There have also been a number of legislative and policy changes made since 2006 which have impacted on the validity of the current RLTS.

The Regional Transport Committee for Taranaki is therefore wishing to take a fresh look at the Region's transport issues and outcomes to see what may have changed since 2006, and to identify what is important for maintaining a sustainable transport network in the future.

Your feedback on what is important for transport in this region is therefore vital. Please use the Submission Form at the back of this Discussion Paper or write to us separately. You do not need to limit your submission points to these questions only.

8. How to make a submission

8.1 Obtaining a copy of the draft Discussion Paper

Anyone can make a submission on the Discussion Paper during the public consultation period. You can obtain a copy of the Discussion Paper by telephoning the Council on (06) 765 7127 or by emailing publications@trc.govt.nz. A copy will be sent to you free of charge.

Copies of the Discussion Paper are also available from the Taranaki Regional Council offices: 47 Cloten Road, Stratford.

8.2 Making a submission

Please write a letter or complete the attached submission form and send it to:

RLTS Discussion Paper
Taranaki Regional Council
Private Bag 713
Stratford
Taranaki 4352

Alternatively your submission can be sent to info@trc.govt.nz. Please include your telephone number. Additional information in support of your submission may be included in your letter or on your submission form.

The Regional Transport Committee for Taranaki is seeking your input on the strategic aspects of transport activities proposed for inclusion in the draft Regional Land Transport Programme for Taranaki. Without precluding anything you might wish to comment on, we are particularly seeking comment on:

- Whether you agree with the Vision Statement identified for Taranaki?
- Whether you agree with the Land Transport Outcomes included in the 2006 RLTS?
- Whether you agree with the Strategic Land Transport Options developed in the 2006 RLTS?
- Whether you agree with the key transport issues and actions identified?

8.3 Deadline for submissions

All submissions must be received at the Taranaki Regional Council offices by:

4.00pm 25 September 2009.

8.4 Council contact

You are welcome to call either Gray Severinsen (Policy Manager) or Jo Bielski (Policy Analyst) at the Council's offices at 47 Cloten Road, Stratford or phone (06) 765 7127 to discuss any queries you may have with the Discussion Paper.

8.5 Submission form

The following is a submission form that you might want to use as the basis for your submission on the Discussion Paper.

Submission on the RLTS Discussion Paper: Key Transport Issues and Outcomes for the Taranaki Region

Name:	
Organisation (if applicable):	
Address:	
Telephone (after hours):	
Telephone (work hours):	
Email:	
Here are the particular areas the Regional Transport Committee for Taranaki would like you to focus on:	
1. Vision Statement (section 4.1)	
2. Land Transport Outcomes (section 4.2)	
3. Strategic Land Transport Options (section 4.3)	
3. Key transport issues and actions (section 5)	
4. Any other comments?	

Appendix 1: Legislative Requirements

Land Transport Management Amendment Act 2003

Section 73 Overview of regional land transport strategy

A regional land transport strategy, which (for regions other than Auckland) is prepared by the relevant regional transport committee for each region on behalf of the relevant regional council every 6 financial years and covers a period of at least 30 financial years, enables each regional council to provide guidance on the land transport outcomes sought by the region.

Section 74 Responsibility for preparing and approving regional land transport strategies

At least once in every 6 financial years, each regional council must:

- ensure that the relevant regional transport committee prepares, on the regional council's behalf, a regional land transport strategy that covers a period of at least 30 financial years; and
- approve the regional land transport strategy.

Section 75 Core requirements for regional land transport strategies

A regional transport committee must, when preparing a regional land transport strategy on behalf of a regional council:

- ensure that the regional land transport strategy:
 - (i) contributes to the aim of achieving an affordable, integrated, safe, responsive, and sustainable land transport system; and
 - (ii) contributes to each of the following:
 - a) assisting economic development
 - b) assisting safety and personal security
 - c) improving access and mobility
 - d) protecting and promoting public health
 - e) ensuring environmental sustainability; and
 - (iii) is consistent with any:
 - a) national land transport strategy
 - b) relevant national policy statement or any relevant regional policy statement or regional plan that is for the time being in force under the Resource Management Act 1991; and
 - (iv) avoids, to the extent reasonable in the circumstances, adverse effects on the environment; and
- take into account:
 - (i) the relevant GPS
 - (ii) any national energy efficiency and conservation strategy; and
 - (iii) any relevant district plans.

Section 76 Other matters that must be taken into account

When preparing a regional land transport strategy on behalf of a regional council, a regional transport committee must also take into account:

- any guidelines issued by the Minister for regional land transport strategies
- the land transport funding likely to be available within the region for implementing the strategy during the period covered by the strategy
- the views of affected communities
- the views of land transport network providers in the region
- the need to give early and full consideration to land transport options and alternatives in a way that avoids adverse effects to the environment and takes into consideration the views of affected communities
- the need to provide early and full opportunities for persons and organisations listed in section 78 to contribute to the development of those regional land transport strategies; and
- the need to take account of the relevant regional council's function under the Resource Management Act 1991 to consider the strategic integration of transport infrastructure with land use through objectives, policies, and methods.

Section 77 Contents of regional land transport strategies

A regional land transport strategy must contain the following matters:

- inter-regional and intra-regional transport outcomes relevant to the region
- the strategic options for achieving those outcomes
- an assessment as to how the regional land transport strategy complies with sections 75 and 76
- a statement of any relevant regional economic or land-use considerations, and the likely funding of any land transport infrastructure associated with those considerations
- a demand management strategy
- an assessment of the appropriate role for each land transport mode in the region
- an assessment of the role of education and enforcement in contributing to the land transport outcomes
- a statement that identifies any strategic option for which co-operation is required with other regions
- a statement that identifies persons or organisations who should be involved in the further development of strategic options
- measurable targets to be achieved to meet the outcomes of the regional land transport strategy
- a statement provided by an independent auditor of how the process followed by the regional transport committee complied with the requirements of this Act; and
- a summary of the policy relating to significance adopted by the regional transport committee under section 106.

Section 78 Consultation requirements

When preparing a proposed regional land transport strategy on behalf of a regional council, a regional transport committee must consult

- the adjoining regional councils and territorial authorities
- the approved organisations in the region
- the Secretary
- the Agency
- the Commissioner
- the New Zealand Historic Places Trust;
- the New Zealand Railways Corporation
- representative groups of land transport users and providers (including representative groups of coastal shipping users and providers)
- the Ministry of Health;
- the Accident Compensation Corporation
- the district health boards in the region
- affected communities
- Maori of the region; and
- the public in the region.

In carrying out the consultation required above, a regional transport committee must:

- act in accordance with the consultation principles set out in section 82 of the Local Government Act 2002; and
- use the special consultative procedure under sections 83, 87(2)(a), and 89 of the Local Government Act 2002.

A regional transport committee complies with the above if the required consultation on the regional land transport strategy is carried out in conjunction with the relevant regional council's consultation on its long-term council community plan or its annual plan under the Local Government Act 2002.

An approved organisation and the Agency must assist a regional transport committee that is preparing a regional land transport strategy by giving the regional transport committee any reasonably requested information that the regional transport committee needs in order to prepare the regional land transport strategy.

Section 79 Process for approving regional land transport strategies

A regional transport committee that has prepared a regional land transport strategy on behalf of a regional council must, after it has consulted under section 78, lodge the regional land transport strategy with the regional council.

The relevant regional council may, after considering a regional land transport strategy that has been lodged with it, decide:

- to approve the regional land transport strategy without modification; or
- to refer the regional land transport strategy back to the regional transport committee with a request that the regional transport committee reconsider 1 or more of the aspects of the regional land transport strategy.

If a regional council refers a regional land transport strategy back to its regional transport committee, the regional transport committee may, after reconsidering the aspects referred back to it by the regional council in its request, forward to the regional council either or both of the following:

- an amended regional land transport strategy that has been consulted on in accordance with section 78
- any additional information that has been requested by the regional council or that the regional transport committee considers will help the regional council with its decision.