

MEMORANDUM

Executive, Audit & Risk

Date: 17 June 2024

Subject: Deliberations on Better Travel Choices for Taranaki

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Document: 3278939

Purpose

1. The purpose of this memorandum is to deliberate on the submissions received on Better Travel Choices for Taranaki.

Executive summary

2. In December 2024 the Committee held a hearing of submissions on Better Travel Choices (BTC). It was subsequently agreed to delay deliberations by four months (from February to June 2024) in order to better align the final BTC with other transport work streams underway, in particular the public transport business case.
3. Attached is an Officers' Report summarising the key themes raised in submissions. The report provides an assessment of each of these submission points and provides recommendations to consider in response to the submissions.

Recommendations

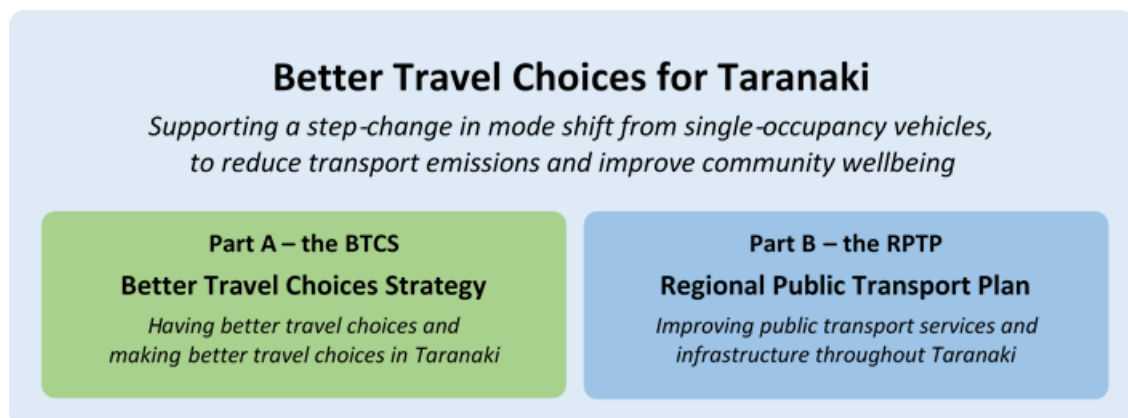
That Taranaki Regional Council:

- a) receives the memorandum Deliberations on Better Travel Choices for Taranaki submissions
- b) notes the length of time elapsed since the Hearing of submissions on 4 December 2023 is due to the need to align with related processes underway including the public transport business case
- c) receives copies of all submissions received in response to the draft Better Travel Choices for Taranaki documents
- d) receives the Officers' Report on submissions received in response to the draft Better Travel Choices for Taranaki
- e) advises staff on any changes from the recommendations contained within the Officers' Report and this memorandum
- f) notes staff will be making minor changes to the structure and format of the BTC ahead of the next meeting
- g) notes that the updated Better Travel Choices for Taranaki documents will be brought back to the 29 July 2024 meeting for approval

- h) determines that this decision be recognised not significant in terms of section 76 of the Local Government Act 2002
- i) determines that it has complied with the decision-making provisions of the Local Government Act 2002 to the extent necessary in relation to this decision; and in accordance with section 79 of the Act, determines that it does not require further information, further assessment of options or further analysis of costs and benefits, or advantages and disadvantages prior to making a decision on this matter.

Background

- 4. The Committee is responsible for overseeing development of Better Travel Choices for Taranaki (BTC), which incorporates a multi-modal Better Travel Choices Strategy (BTCS) and the draft Regional Public Transport Plan (RPTP) as shown below.



- 5. Release of the draft documents for consultation was endorsed by the Committee on 11 September 2023. Public consultation ran from 19 September to 29 October 2023, with a significant quantity of responses received, particularly through the online survey tool. On 4 December 2023, the Committee provided the opportunity for submitters to speak in support of their submission if they wished to. A Consultation Report, which collated key submissions themes across all response channels was received at that same meeting.
- 6. While the original intent was to deliberate on submissions early in 2024, the Committee subsequently agreed to delay deliberations until the June meeting in order to ensure better alignment with other significant transport plans underway in the first half of 2024 – the Regional Land Transport Plan 2024 and the public transport business case.

Issues

- 7. There is a need to deliberate on the key submission points received to provide guidance to staff on consequential document changes to make Better Travel Choices more robust and enduring.

Discussion

- 8. The Regional Land Transport Plan 2024 is to be finalised by the Regional Transport Committee on 13 June 2024, and the business case preparing for new public transport contracts is nearing completion, with a presentation update being provided earlier in the agenda. These work streams have helped to provide greater direction and specificity to the BTC Officers' Report, particularly when responding to submission points on public transport.

9. The attached Officers' Report provides an assessment of each of the key submission points made and makes suggestions on potential amendments to the documents. The Committee are asked to advise any changes to these recommendations or where a particular focus is needed to strengthen aspects of BTC.
10. Much has progressed in related work streams since the draft BTC was prepared that could now be woven into the final version to ensure that it is as up-to-date and robust as possible. As well as the Regional Land Transport Plan 2024 and public transport business case, the New Plymouth Integrated Transport Framework has progressed significantly, and there have been substantial changes at the national level from the new Government, in particular a revised draft Government Policy Statement on Land Transport 2024. It is proposed that where further information is available that provides greater direction and specificity this is incorporated within the BTC. Changes will only be made where they are in keeping with the direction and intent of the document as consulted on.
11. In addition to formal submissions, there was useful feedback on the structure of the documents to assist with their readability. It is proposed that these changes to layout will be made at the same time as content amendments.
12. The resulting updated documents will be brought back to the Committee for approval at the 29 July 2024 meeting.

Options

13. At this stage in the process, there is only one viable option being the consideration of submissions and progressing forward to finalising Better Travel Choices. Any other option to fundamentally change the document or to seek further consultation and/or engagement will result in the Council not being able to provide Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency with the necessary updated Regional Public Transport Plan to support funding requests ahead of retendering of contracts.

Significance

14. In terms of the Significance and Engagement Policy, the decision is determined as not significant as:
 - the decision does not affect a large number of residents and ratepayers to a moderate extent
 - the consequences of the decision do not affect a small number of residents and ratepayers to a large extent.
15. A detailed and iterative approach to consultation has been undertaken over the last 15 months as part of the preparation of BTC. As such, further consultation and/or engagement is not considered warranted.

Financial considerations—LTP/Annual Plan

16. This memorandum and the associated recommendations are consistent with the Council's adopted Long-Term Plan and estimates. Any financial information included in this memorandum has been prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice.

Policy considerations

17. This memorandum and the associated recommendations are consistent with the policy documents and positions adopted by this Council under various legislative frameworks including, but not restricted to, the Local Government Act 2002, the Land Transport Management Act 2003, the Resource Management Act 1991 and the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

Iwi considerations

18. This memorandum and the associated recommendations are consistent with the Council's policy for the development of Māori capacity to contribute to decision-making processes (schedule 10 of the Local Government Act 2002) as outlined in the adopted Long-Term Plan and/or Annual Plan.

Community considerations

19. This memorandum and the associated recommendations have considered the views of the community, interested and affected parties and those views have been recognised in the preparation of this memorandum.
20. Substantial engagement with the community and interested parties has been undertaken throughout 2023 and 2024 on their priorities and needs for land transport. All the feedback provided is feeding into the transport planning and funding options being considered through these documents.

Legal considerations

21. This memorandum and the associated recommendations comply with the appropriate statutory requirements imposed upon the Council.

Appendices/Attachments

Document 3275475: Officers Report on draft BTC submissions June 2024

Document 3269511: Better Travel Choices submission no. 1-147

Document 3269509: Better Travel Choices bespoke submissions 148-162

Document 3269512: Better Travel Choices submission no. 163-266

Officers' Report

Better Travel Choices for Taranaki 2024-54

known as 'Better Travel Choices'



Document: #3275475-v3

4 June 2024



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1 Introduction

This report summarises points made in submissions to the draft *Better Travel Choices for Taranaki* (BTC) document, which is made up of:

- Part A: Better Travel Choices Strategy (BTCS); and
- Part B: Regional Public Transport Plan (RPTP).

In partnership with the local councils, Taranaki Regional Council (TRC) produced BTC, and invited submissions between 18 September and 29 October 2023.

The BTCS focuses on active travel connections in the Taranaki region, including interfaces with the public transport network. The RPTP is a statutory requirement under section 120 of the Land Transport Management Act 2003 (LTMA).

Table 1: Summary of submission responses

Submission method	# of submissions
Online survey tool (Social Pinpoint)	250
Emailed bespoke submission	12
Total received	262

2 Methodology for submission responses

This report is based on a comprehensive review of all submissions received. Both quantitative results from the Social Pinpoint survey, and qualitative 'free text' comments have been assessed. The 12 bespoke submissions have also been reviewed, and relevant points addressed. In many cases, multiple submissions make the same point, and the report does not repeat these each time.

A full copy of the submissions received is provided separately.

Unless stated otherwise, comments are as provided by TRC staff. At this stage it is not always possible to recommend exact changes, as further work is ongoing particularly through the preparation of the public transport business case.

This report firstly summarises the **key headline messages** from the consultation responses, based on data from the online survey tool. These messages provide a clear overall view of the public transport / active travel issues from people who responded to the consultation.

To assess the detailed consultation responses, submissions have been group into four **themes**:

1. New Plymouth Citylink bus service changes;
2. Regional and rural public transport service changes;
3. Active travel; and
4. Integrated planning and delivery.

For each theme a number of **sub-themes** go into more detail, and enable a response to the key points.

For each of the four themes, this report has:

- Analysed the most relevant online survey results; and
- Highlighted key messages from the submissions.

For each sub-theme this report has:

- Outlined a selection of online survey results;
- Summarised relevant submission points;
- Assessed the submission points for applicability; and
- Either recommended a potential document change **or** outlined where further work is ongoing.

The number of responses to each question varies significantly. This is because there are two types:

- Questions which are generally answered by everyone, or most people;
- Questions which are contingent on the answer to a previous general question, and therefore only answered by a smaller sub-set of respondents.

Therefore the total number of respondents for contingent questions is a much smaller sub-set of the general ranking questions. This means that care must be taken not to imply that any response is representative of the population as a whole. Nevertheless responses show what is important to those people who took part in the consultation.

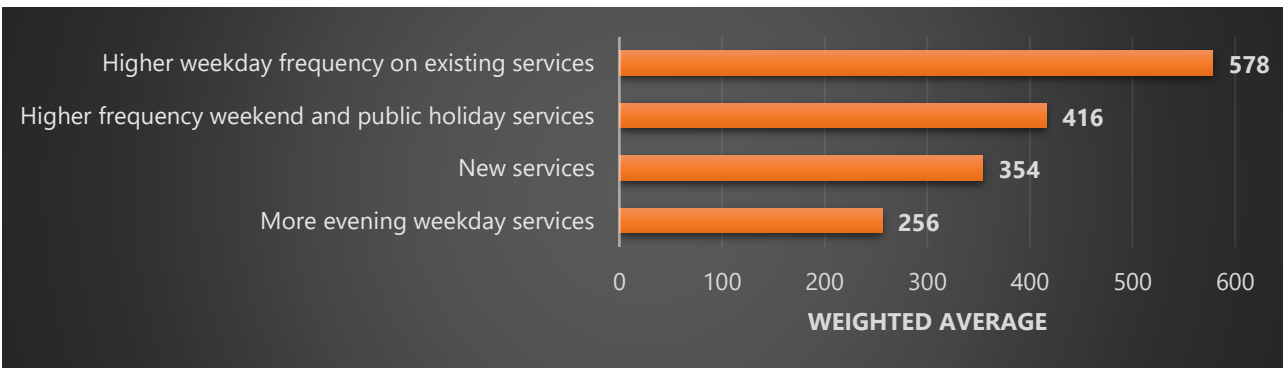
3 Key headline messages from online survey

3.1 Bus service frequency ranks highest

Respondents were asked to rank (from 1 to 4) bus service improvements as set out in Figure 1:

The results shown below are a weighted average of the responses, not the total number. The higher the weighted average, the greater the priority assigned to the service improvement.

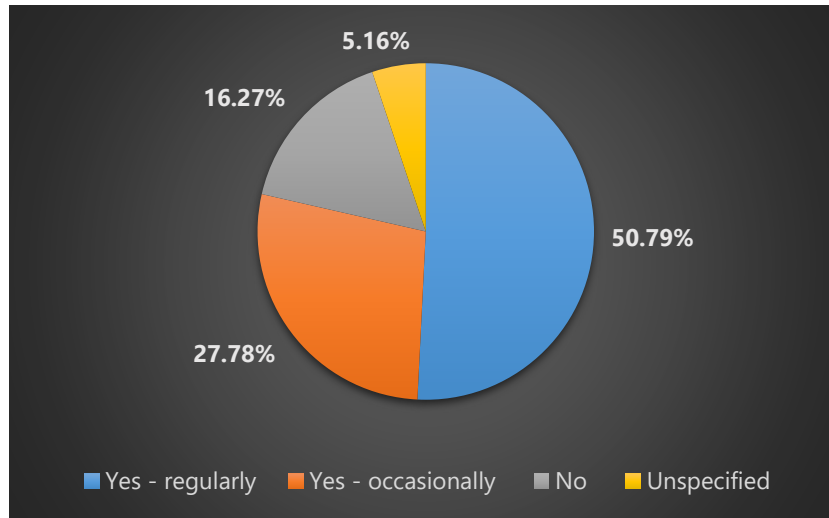
Figure 1: Service improvement ranking



3.2 Bus service frequency drives patronage

Respondents were asked whether they would be prompted to start using buses if they were more frequent.

Figure 2: Service usage and frequency

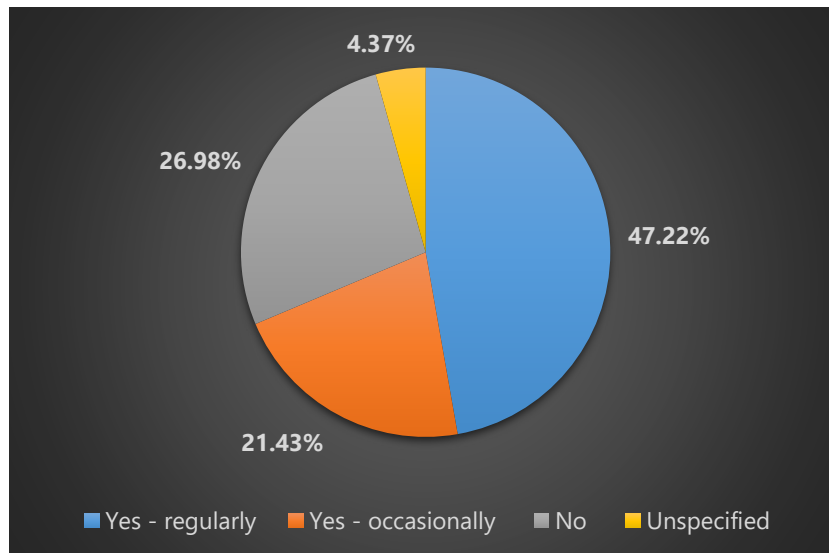


Over three quarters of the 252 respondents said they would start using the bus if the service was more frequent, with 50% saying they would do so regularly.

3.3 Bus user loyalty is important

Respondents were asked whether frequent user discount on fares would prompt them to start using public transport, or use it more:

Figure 3: Service usage and frequent user discounts

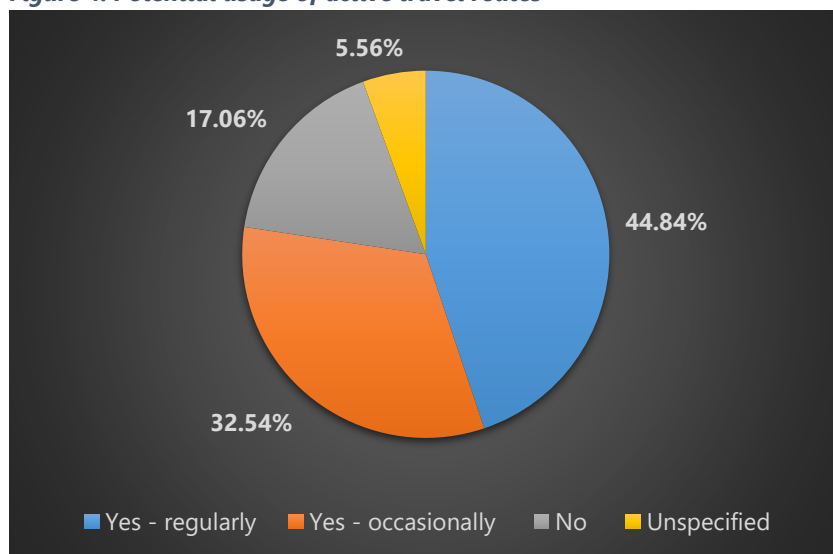


Nearly three quarters of the 252 respondents said they would start using the bus if there was a frequent user discount, with just under 50% saying they would do so regularly.

3.4 Use of active travel routes

Respondents were asked whether they would use new improved active travel routes if they were built.

Figure 4: Potential usage of active travel routes



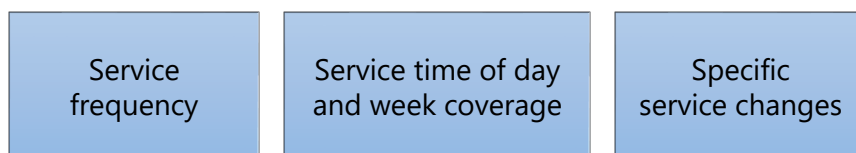
Nearly 80% of the 252 respondents said they would use the routes, and 45% on a regular basis.

4 Themes from qualitative and bespoke submissions

4.1 Theme 1: New Plymouth Citylink bus services

The first submission theme covers New Plymouth Citylink bus services – issues and proposals for change outlined in the RPTP.

There are currently ten routes which operate Monday to Friday between 7am and 6pm, and two routes on a Saturday. The three sub-themes presented in this section are:



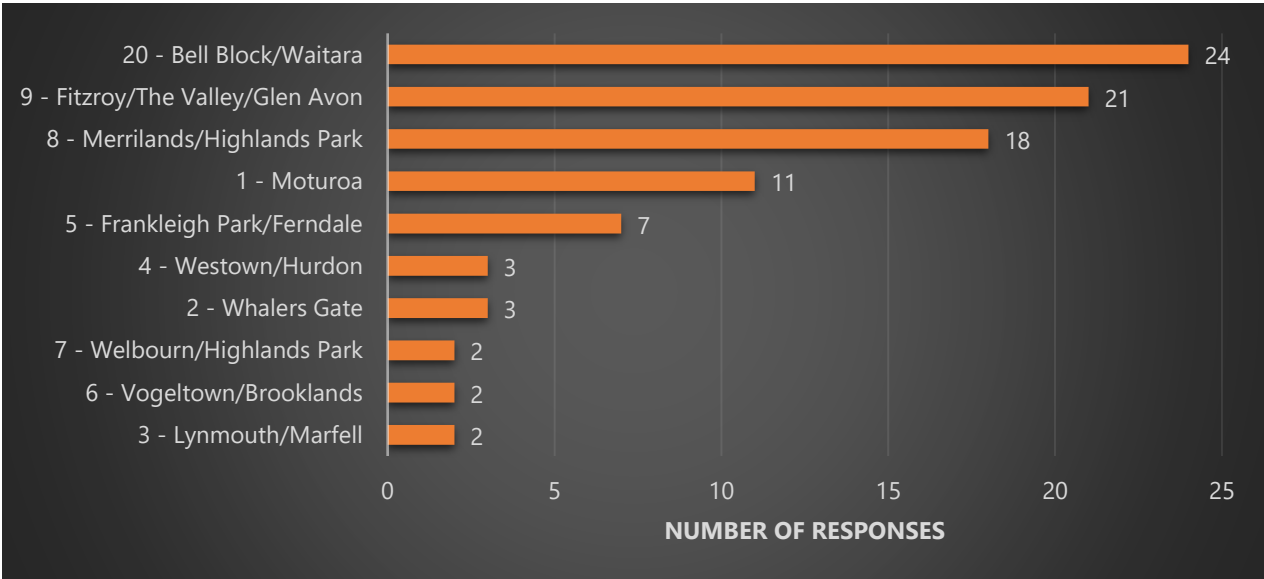
4.1.1 Service frequency

Service frequency describes the number of buses per time period interval, which arrive and depart from a bus stop. Currently, weekday service frequency varies throughout the day – anything between every 30 and 85 minutes – for routes 1 to 9. Route 20 runs approximately every two hours. The two weekend routes 10 and 11 operate two journeys per day.

Online survey results

Respondents who ranked higher weekday frequency on existing routes as the most important were asked to specify which ones(s). There was no limit on the number of choices.

Figure 1: Most important routes for higher weekday frequency



Route 20 Waitara / Bell Block to New Plymouth city centre generates the highest number of responses. Respondents feel routes 1 and 8 could benefit from higher frequency services.

Submission points and responses for New Plymouth service frequency

Table 2: New Plymouth service frequency submission points

Submission point summary	Officer assessment	Potential document change
Develop a patronage focussed network based on frequencies of 15 to 20 minutes, as opposed to 30 minutes.	The public transport business case is considering a range of service frequency options to assess both benefits (in terms of increased numbers of passengers and farebox recovery) and costs (in terms of more buses, drivers and vehicle kilometres travelled).	<p>In the current RTP, Table 14 [Public transport network review proposals within existing budgets] and Table 15 [Potential future service improvements requiring additional investment] should be replaced with a new section which outlines the short list and emerging preferred options. These options include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do-minimum.• Throughput (more direct routes and fewer coverage services).• Balanced (mix of throughput and coverage). <p>The pros and cons of each option, and criteria for selecting the preferred option, should be clearly summarised.</p> <p>The RTP is likely to be adopted before the level of TRC and NZTA funding available to implement the business case is known. The RTP should therefore note that government policy and funding availability may result in a do-</p>

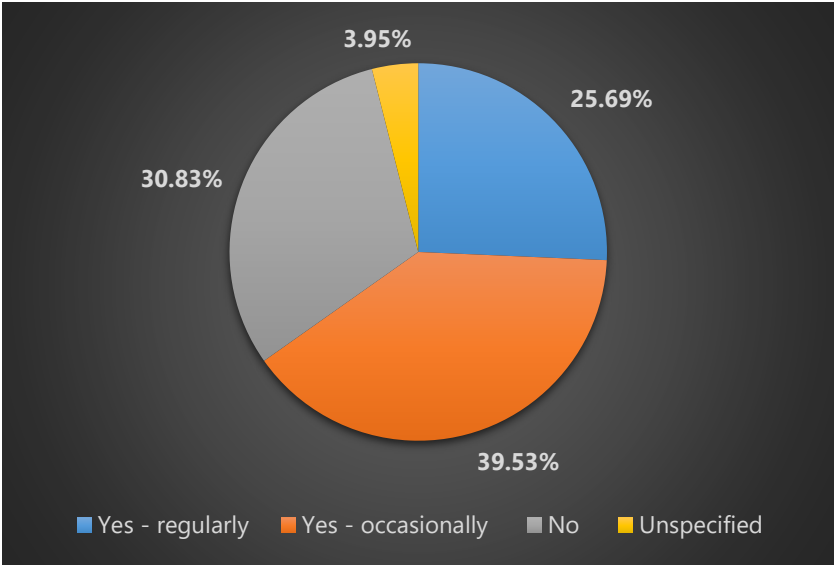
Submission point summary	Officer assessment	Potential document change
		minimum or lower cost option being progressed, at least in the short to medium term. Therefore potential need for a phased introduction of the preferred option should be highlighted.
Delay the process of seeking a new operator contract, or move quickly to a full network review ahead of the contract.	<p>The commercial and management cases of the public transport business case are being prepared with input from specialist advice. The conclusions of this work will enable a final decision on matters such as contract dates and length.</p> <p>At this stage, it is not envisaged that there will be a change to proposed contract dates, but the situation remains under review.</p>	The 'Service planning and procurement' section of the RTP (pages 26 and 27) should be updated to include any conclusions of the business case commercial and management case work.
Direct, quicker bus trips (e.g. less one-way loop services and improved ability to transfer across the bus network outside of the CBD) are requested. This will require increasing the number of direct, quicker services, and reducing coverage services of the current network, and providing more transfer points between services.	<p>As part of the public transport business case, both service frequencies and transfer points outside of the city centre are likely to be proposed as part of the preferred option.</p> <p>The economic case is considering current and future passenger numbers, and development of an improved network has been focused on providing an attractive service to the highest number of people in the most effective way – based on community consultation – by taking people where they need to go.</p> <p>The preferred option is likely to include proposals for infrastructure and transfer hubs which give effect to the proposed network and service pattern.</p>	<p>On page 22 of the RTP, Figure 5 [Potential route changes in New Plymouth] should be replaced with updated maps showing do-minimum and preferred route network options, which identify locations of transfer hubs.</p> <p>At the start of the RTP 'Strategic case for change' chapter (page 20) a new section should be added to clearly describe how the network has evolved away from primarily coverage to more frequent and direct services.</p> <p>Further updates relating to supporting infrastructure should summarise the approach outlined in the business case, and provide a clear outline of facilities that passengers can expect.</p>

4.1.2 Service time of day and week coverage

Bus services in New Plymouth currently run on weekdays from approximately 7am to 6pm. There are two Saturday loop routes which provide one morning service and one at lunchtime. There are no services on Sundays or public holidays.

Online survey results

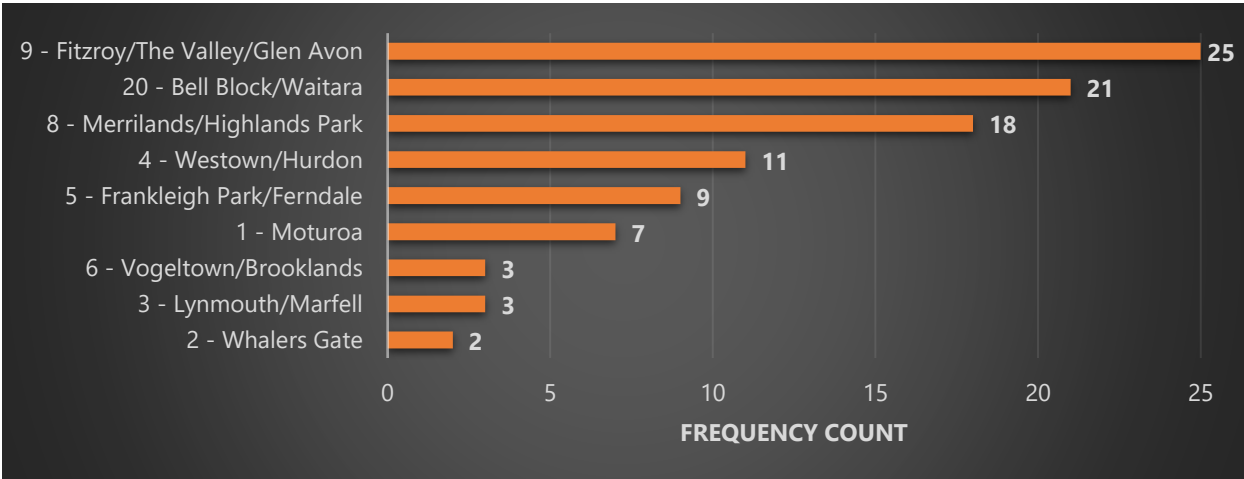
Figure 2: Use of New Plymouth weekend services



Just over two thirds of respondents said they would use weekend services, with a quarter stating this would be on a regular basis.

Respondents who answered yes were then asked to specify which routes. There was no limit on the number of choices.

Figure 3: Most mentioned routes for weekend travel



The results for public holiday services are similar to those of the weekend.

Figure 4: Use of New Plymouth public holiday services

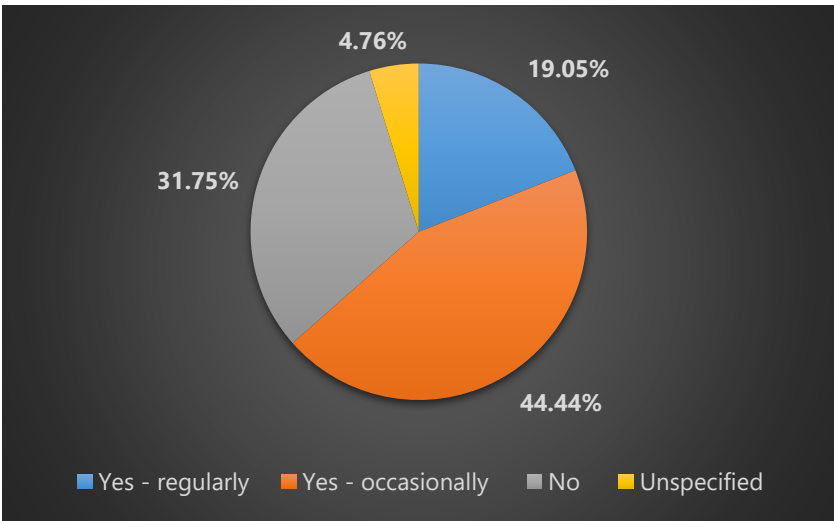
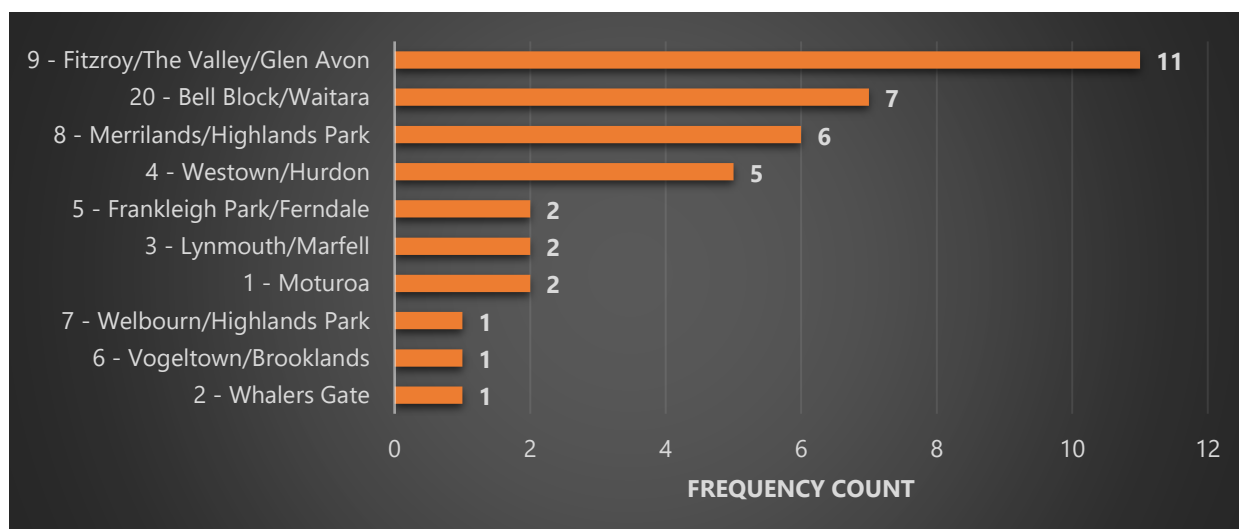


Figure 5: Most mentioned routes for public holiday travel



Submission points and responses for New Plymouth time of day and week coverage

Table 3: New Plymouth service time of day / week submission points and responses

Submission point summary	Officer assessment	Potential document change
Support for Saturday bus services in New Plymouth for access to sports events. Work with regional sports organisations to consider game location, length and the most appropriate transport frequency.	The RTPP highlights the potential to introduce Saturday services which run on the same routes as the weekday, based on a frequency that provides travel choice for all users. Basing timetables solely around game start and finish times may not optimise use of resources.	The RTPP narrative which justifies improvement to weekend services could highlight the potential market for sports-based leisure travel, and propose suitable marketing and publicity.
Support for Evening services to enable people to be out and about for a range of reasons, including physical activities after school and leisure / cultural purposes.	The RTPP identifies extending weekday services later into the evening as a potential service improvement requiring additional investment. The business case option short list includes services which are proposed to run later into the evenings. These services have been identified based on previous consultation exercises and also targeted engagement, with the community and councillors.	Updates to the 'Strategic Case for change' should include narrative which explains the potential benefits for trips that include shift worker, night-time economy and cultural journey purposes, and where possible identify those routes the business case short listed as having potential run later evening services. The RTPP could also highlight benefits of marketing and publicity for evening, and potentially joint promotions with venues who could benefit.
Support for weekend and public holiday services both for people who work on these days, and those who wish to visit the many attractions that New Plymouth (and its environs) has to offer.	The RTPP identifies improvements including Sunday and public holiday services, but acknowledges this will require additional investment.	The public transport business case will need to advise the RTPP on the costs and benefits of proposed evening services, including optimal finish time. If proposed by the RTPP, there should be a strong emphasis on

Submission point summary	Officer assessment	Potential document change
	<p>Weekend services in appropriate locations are being considered by the public transport business case.</p> <p>Proposals are being derived from consultation that was previously undertaken and business case project engagement.</p>	<p>marketing and publicity for evening services, and potentially joint promotions with destinations which are served by public transport.</p> <p>Updates to the 'Strategic Case for Change' should include a narrative which explains the potential benefits for trips that include worker, retail, leisure and tourism purposes and where possible identify those routes which weekend services should be identified.</p> <p>The RPTP, could also highlight benefits of marketing and publicity for weekend services, and potentially joint promotions with supermarkets and tourist attractions who could benefit.</p>

4.1.3 Specific service changes

Specific service changes describe any of the following:

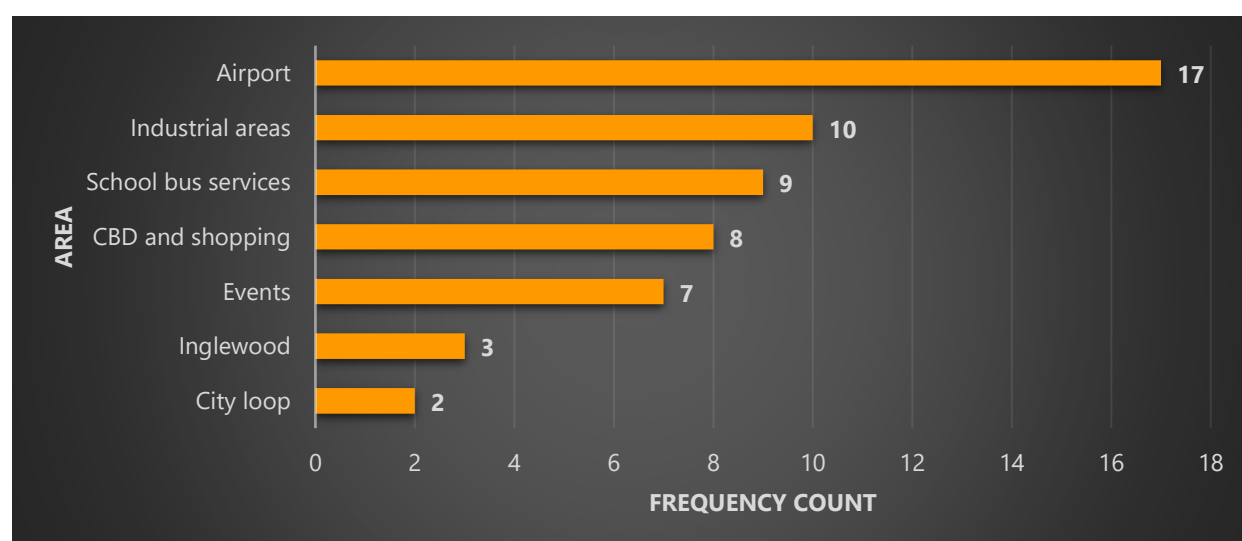
- Entirely new routes, serving different origins and destinations;
- Withdrawal of existing routes;
- More frequent existing routes;
- Less frequent existing routes;
- Extensions to existing routes, serving different origins and destinations;
- Changes to existing routes, primarily diversion on to alternative roads; or
- Reconfiguration of existing routes, generally combining two or more into a lower number.

Submissions under this sub-theme deal with proposals / requests for service improvements, and comments on proposals to change routes.

Online survey results

Respondents who ranked new services as the most important were asked to specify which ones(s). Within New Plymouth the responses were as follows:

Figure 6: Most important areas for new services



Within the city, the airport emerges as the most important destination to be served, followed by industrial areas like Bell Block.

Submission points and responses for New Plymouth specific service changes

Table 4: New Plymouth specific service change submission points

Submission point summary	Officer assessment	Potential document change
Regional Council undertakes further consultation with the community to assess the need for new routes.	<p>TRC has undertaken further consultation on the bus network refresh through the 'Hop on Board' engagement which took place from 22 April to 06 May.</p> <p>This consultation built on the previous Better Travel Choices public consultation in September and October 2023.</p> <p>Hop on Board requested more detailed feedback on issues such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service frequency. • Time of day and week coverage. • Needs of commuters. • Routes that services should take. <p>The results are informing the next stage of the public transport business case work.</p>	Add a new section to the Chapter 3 of the RTP, which summarises the findings from the two public consultation exercises and explain how these have influenced investment proposals in the business case.
Should evidence support creation of new routes, these should connect with suitable pathways for active transport.	This is a very important requirement, and is supported by the BTC taking an integrated approach to developing an active travel strategy with the RTP.	The BTC could include a stronger statement around linking service changes to active travel route improvements as part of a

Submission point summary	Officer assessment	Potential document change
	The RPTP emphasises the importance of improved active travel routes to bus stops to meet universal design principles.	'package' approach which targets the end-to-end journey.
Public transport could also be used to connect people in Oākura, Bell Block and Waitara to sport and recreation in New Plymouth.	<p>Bell Block and Waitara are recognised as being high potential growth areas for public transport as they are sizeable residential areas which provide significant levels of existing public transport patronage on route 20. The public transport business case is investigating further service enhancement options.</p> <p>Services to Oākura, other than schools, were withdrawn a few years ago because of very low passenger numbers. Therefore the public transport business case is examining the value for money case for re-instatement of a service.</p>	<p>Updates to the Strategic Case for Change should summarise service enhancement options in Waitara / Bell Block and (if appropriate) Oākura for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do-minimum. • Throughput. • Balanced. <p>The high-level pros and cons of each service option should be outlined (recognising that an economic assessment takes place at network rather than route level).</p>
All buses travelling between New Plymouth and Waitara should call at Bell Block, rather than an arrangement whereby every other bus runs direct along State Highway 3.	<p>The optimum configuration of service patterns for Waitara and Bell Block are being considered by the public transport business case.</p> <p>The key consideration is to establish both levels of travel demand between both Waitara and Bell Block towards the city centre, as well as demand for travel between them.</p>	The proposed change outlined in the row above can also address this issue. Therefore no further document changes are proposed.
New Plymouth serves a huge area including small towns around the mountain. Proposals for a huge, free car park (with security cameras) north and south of the city; with half-hour free buses travelling in bus fast lanes to and from the car parks into CBD.	<p>Park & Ride works well when there are constrained levels of parking (or where large parking areas are seen as undesirable) at destination end.</p> <p>Proposals in BTC for integrated multi-modal hubs could include Park & Ride facilities, especially in more outlying settlements where a bus such as Connector then provides the 'trunk' service into New Plymouth.</p> <p>The New Plymouth Integrated Transport Framework Programme Business Case identifies Park &</p>	<p>Updates to the 'Strategic Case for Change' should include a summary of any proposals for Park & Ride which apply in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do-minimum. • Throughput. • Balanced.

Submission point summary	Officer assessment	Potential document change
	<p>Ride as part of the medium-term option.</p> <p>The public transport business case is considering the role of Park & Ride, and the destinations that it could best serve.</p>	
<p>New Plymouth airport should be served by buses.</p>	<p>The New Plymouth Integrated Transport Framework Programme Business Case identifies an airport to city centre bus service as part of the medium-term option.</p> <p>In the public transport business case the airport is a key spine in both options being taken forward through short listing.</p>	<p>Updates to the 'Strategic Case for Change' should include a summary of proposals to serve the airport which apply in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do-minimum • Throughput • Balanced.
<p>Inglewood and Egmont Village require higher frequency services compared with the current Connector timetable, to at least the same as the (current) Waitara / Bell Block service 20 (six return journeys per day).</p> <p>The popularity of the service at peak times means that there is a lack of vehicle capacity for Inglewood and Egmont passengers.</p>	<p>As these settlements are a similar distance from New Plymouth compared Waitara / Bell Block, there is an arguable case for service frequency enhancements at Inglewood and Egmont village.</p> <p>The public transport business case is considering how to better serve Inglewood and Egmont village.</p>	<p>Updates to the 'Strategic Case for Change' should include a summary of proposals to increase frequency on the Inglewood – New Plymouth route which apply in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do-minimum • Throughput • Balanced. <p>The high-level pros and cons of each service option should be outlined (recognising that an economic assessment takes place at network rather than route level).</p>
<p>The existing Connector service does not have a high profile and the lack of bus stop infrastructure between New Plymouth and Inglewood is a significant challenge.</p> <p>A number of specific bus stop locations are identified.</p>	<p>The challenges with the lack of bus stop infrastructure, and hence profile of the bus services are known and discussions with road controlling authorities are ongoing.</p> <p>The feasibility and desirability of individual bus stop locations is a matter that is considered by NPDC (on local roads) NZTA (on State Highway 3) and TRC (as the bus service provider).</p>	<p>The RTPP could include more references to proposals in the BTC Part A document around investigation of multi-modal hubs, as well as identifying the need for improvements to bus stops in the regional towns and villages more generally.</p> <p>It is not proposed to suggest individual bus stop location changes in what is a strategic document.</p>
<p>Some concern about the proposal to reduce the frequency of route 5 (Frankleigh Park), and a desire to see the weekday frequency maintained (at the very least)</p>	<p>Route 5 is currently the weakest performer in terms of passenger numbers, and within existing budgets it would make sense to prioritise investment where passenger growth is more likely.</p>	<p>Updates to 'Strategic Case for Change' in the RTPP that set out the changes resulting from each of the following options, will identify any impact on frequencies for route 5 specifically. The options being considered:</p>

Submission point summary	Officer assessment	Potential document change
as well as introduction of Saturday services.	<p>The reference to additional housing development in the area could provide an opportunity to assess how route 5 could be improved and promoted to assist with passenger growth.</p> <p>The public transport business case is considering how to better serve this particular area of New Plymouth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do-minimum. • Throughput. • Balanced. <p>The high-level pros and cons of each service option should be outlined (recognising that an economic assessment takes place at network rather than route level).</p>
Significant concern about the proposal to remove the Glen Avon loop and (in effect) withdraw route 9. Particular concern over the impact on school children and adults who cannot drive (in particular elderly people).	<p>The Glen Avon loop currently has very low levels of patronage – outside of school time journeys, an average of less than six people per day boarding.</p> <p>The public transport business case is considering how to better serve this particular area of New Plymouth.</p>	<p>Updates to ‘Strategic Case for Change’ in the RTP that set out the changes resulting from each of the following options, will identify any impact on frequencies for route 9 specifically. The options being considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do-minimum • Throughput • Balanced. <p>The high-level pros and cons of each service option should be outlined (recognising that an economic assessment takes place at network rather than route level).</p>
The bus stop is too far to walk from Summerset Village in Bell Block, and quite a few people could use the bus if it was more convenient to access.	The public transport business case is considering how to improve routes in the Bell Block area, which seeks to find an optimum balance between direct throughput services and those which provide coverage across wider residential areas.	<p>Updates to ‘Strategic Case for Change’ in the RTP should include a summary of potential changes in Bell Block through the following options considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do-minimum • Throughput • Balanced. <p>The high-level pros and cons of directly or not directly serving areas such as Summerset Village should be outlined (recognising that an economic assessment takes place at network rather than individual site level).</p> <p>It may be necessary for hard-to-serve areas to be considered from provision of community transport solutions, which are often targeted at retirement villages. Therefore the community transport section of the RTP should be reviewed and updated to make this more explicit.</p>

Submission point summary	Officer assessment	Potential document change
<p>Support for the idea of cross-town routes which avoid the city centre.</p> <p>Suggestion that more through routes could be created.</p>	<p>The potential advantage of cross-town routes is that they provide more direct suburb-to-suburb services which avoid having to travel to, and potentially transfer in, the city centre.</p> <p>Through-routing and higher frequencies do not necessarily result in lower operating costs. But they do provide an opportunity to keep the buses and drivers in service for longer, and address the current situation where buses idle in Ariki Street for considerable periods of the day.</p> <p>Cross-town routes are included in the two public transport business case short list options, and are proposed to be higher frequency – potentially up to every 15 minutes in the daytime on weekdays.</p>	<p>Updates to 'Strategic Case for Change' in the RPTP should clearly describe how the network has been developed to provide more cross-town routes which avoid New Plymouth city centre and provide suburb to suburb connections.</p>
<p>Concern that the Waitara Express service would only use State Highway 3 and would therefore not serve the residential areas of the town.</p>	<p>The public transport business case is considering how to improve routes in Waitara, which seeks to find an optimum balance between direct throughput services and those which provide coverage across wider residential areas.</p>	<p>Updates to 'Strategic Case for Change' in the RPTP should include a summary of proposed route changes in Waitara in the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do-minimum • Throughput • Balanced. <p>The high-level pros and cons of directly or not directly serving some residential areas should be outlined (recognising that an economic assessment takes place at network rather than individual site level).</p> <p>It may be necessary for hard-to-serve areas to be considered from provision of community transport solutions. Therefore the community transport section of the RPTP should be reviewed and updated to make this more explicit.</p>
<p>Consider on-demand services in those urban areas which are hard to service by conventional public transport, e.g. Bell Block, Waitara (south of State Highway 3).</p>	<p>The suitability of community-run services for rural areas is questioned. Evidence focuses on provision of such services in more populated areas.</p>	<p>In the 'Vision and strategic objectives for public transport' chapter of the RPTP, a new section entitled 'On-demand public transport' should summarise existing evidence in New Zealand</p>

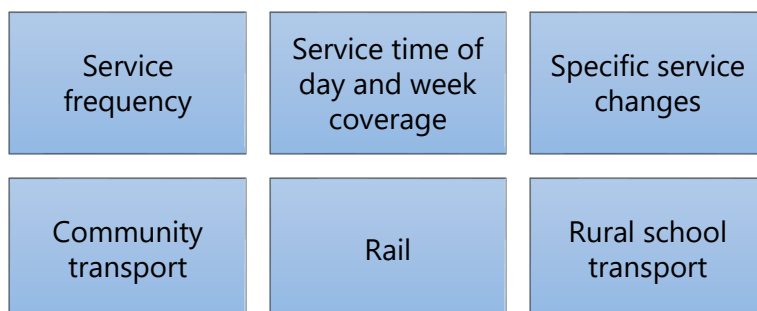
Submission point summary	Officer assessment	Potential document change
Community-based services are deemed more suitable for rural areas.	<p>Nevertheless the identification of areas that are not served by public transport network is a valid issue. On-demand public transport, for communities where regular public transport is not proposed, is identified as an activity example in the NPDC Integrated Transport Framework.</p> <p>There has been some consideration of on-demand services in the public transport business case. However this service model is considered more as a staged approach – a potential add-on once the preferred fixed route network has been established.</p>	<p>as to the impact of this service model, and emphasise that it is essential to optimise and improve the fixed network first before considering something which is more of a premium product.</p> <p>This section should also outline how community transport can provide an on-demand service.</p>
Requirement for more details and phasing of the potential improvements outlined in the RPTP.	<p>It is agreed that additional details could be added. The draft RPTP is a strategic document and it will benefit from having additional details from the Integrated Transport Framework (now published) and the public transport business case (in final preparation).</p> <p>A key output of the public transport business case will be a costed and phased delivery plan, which can become the basis of a new bus service contract.</p>	<p>The RPTP could make appropriate references to the proposals for public transport improvements in the Integrated Transport Framework.</p> <p>Updates to 'Strategic Case for Change' in the RPTP should include a summary of the options for a phased delivery.</p>

4.2 Theme 2: Regional and rural public transport service changes

The regional and rural bus services in Taranaki currently comprise two main groups of services:

- Regional Connector: services from Ōpunake, Hāwera and Stratford to New Plymouth; and
- Rural Southlink: covering routes in South Taranaki district.

The sub-themes for regional and rural public transport services are as follows:



4.2.1 Service frequency

There is a clear difference in service delivery between provision in New Plymouth and regional rural services. Much lower frequency is provided on regional and rural services. Connector has four weekday return trips per day between Hāwera and New Plymouth (one extended to Ōpunake at either end of the day). The three Southlink routes operate a single return journey one or two days of the week (Monday to Friday).

Online survey results

When asked which services across the region were most important for service frequency both Connector and Southlink were strongly identified.

Submission points and responses for regional and rural service frequency

Table 5: Regional and rural service frequency submission points

Submission point summary	Officer assessment	Potential document change
Support continued Connector improvements such as hourly frequency, weekend service and coastal connector.	<p>The RPTP identifies a potential increase in the Connector service frequency to hourly, as well as services around the coast.</p> <p>The public transport business case is considering service frequency improvements on the Connector and Southlink services.</p>	<p>Strengthen sections of the RPTP regarding services across the remainder of the region – that is, outside of New Plymouth.</p> <p>The narrative should clearly summarise the potential Connector service frequency improvements in order to improve accessibility through greater transport choice.</p>
Public transport options are often limited, irregular, or entirely absent in rural areas, leaving residents with no choice but to rely on private vehicles for transportation.	Whilst there are challenges for public transport service provision for rural communities. The RPTP can set aspiration direction to improve service where possible.	The RPTP document could include more explicit assessment of rural area transport needs and options for alternatives to driving a private vehicle.

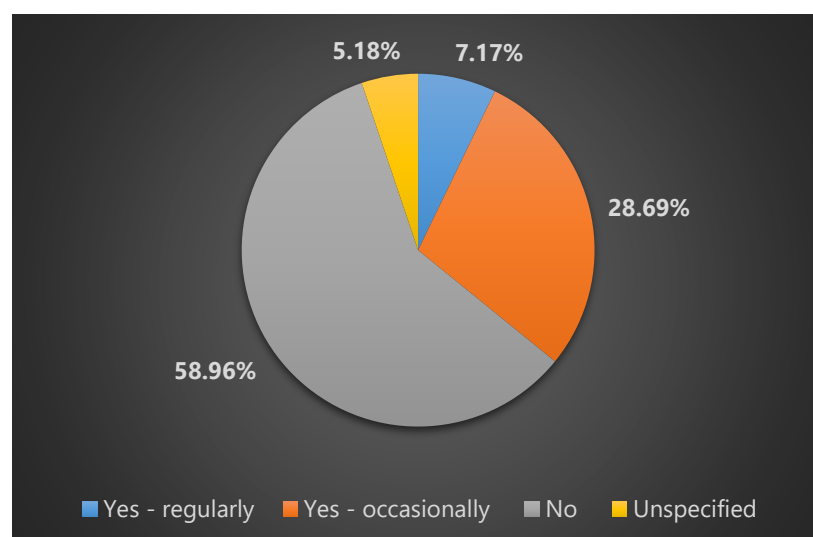
4.2.2 Service time of day and week coverage

There are currently no evening or weekend / public holiday services on regional or rural routes. On weekdays the last Connector service leaves Hāwera at 3:15pm and New Plymouth at 4:55pm.

Online survey results

Only just over a third of respondents said they would consider using the Hāwera to New Plymouth Connector service at the weekend, which is much lower than the same question for Citylink services.

Figure 7: Use of Connector weekend services



Submission points and responses for regional and rural time of day and week coverage

Table 6: Regional and rural time of day and week coverage submission points

Submission point summary	Officer assessment	Potential document change
Request for Connector bus that gets people from New Plymouth to Stratford by 7:45am, and back to NP from Stratford at 4:15pm.	<p>The basis for this request is to better connect to people's work hours, but the existing timetable is focussed on student commuter timing. This is part of the considerations occurring through the PT business case.</p> <p>The public transport business case is considering service frequency improvements on the Connector and Southlink services.</p>	<p>This issue would need to be addressed as part of a wider assessment as to the future service frequency and time span of Connector.</p> <p>Update the section of the RPTP which expressly deals with services across the remainder of the region.</p> <p>The narrative should clearly summarise the potential Connector daily service coverage improvements in order to improve accessibility through greater transport choice.</p>
While most New Plymouth city routes will receive a much-improved Saturday service from 2024, Connector is not included. As Connector is one of Taranaki's most used buses, it seems the greatest potential to boost patronage is in offering a Saturday service on the Connector.	<p>The results of the online survey reveal that the percentage of respondents who say they would use a weekend Connector service is much lower than for New Plymouth Citylink. This may reflect that the relatively large weekday usage is made up of students and, to a lesser extent, adult commuters.</p> <p>The public transport business case is considering weekend services for Connector.</p>	<p>This issue would need to be addressed as part of a wider assessment as to the future service frequency and time span of Connector.</p> <p>A new section of the RPTP which deals with services across the remainder of the region.</p> <p>The narrative should clearly summarise any proposals from the business case to introduce weekend services on the Connector.</p>

Submission point summary	Officer assessment	Potential document change
Support plans to make the Connector timetable more realistic from 2024. Having the last bus leave New Plymouth after 5pm will make this bus more usable for more people. However, this will probably further increase passenger numbers, making it harder for Inglewood users to use it as the bus is already oversubscribed at peak times.	<p>The recently introduced Connector timetable change has resulted in the last bus now leaving New Plymouth just after 5pm. The council will be monitoring patronage levels and any evidence of over-crowding.</p> <p>If the public transport business case concludes that additional local bus services to Inglewood are justified, this may also address any excess demand concerns.</p>	No change to the document is proposed, and the needs of Inglewood are being assessed by the public transport services business case.

4.2.3 Specific service changes

Submission points and responses for regional and rural specific service changes

Table 7: Regional and rural service specific service change submission points

Submission point summary	Officer assessment	Potential document change
There may be efficiencies in the Coastal Connector continuing north to Waitara, and this should be considered as part of a City Link review - as it may present efficiencies for the urban network.	The public transport business case is considering this issue, and will establish whether extension of this route would deliver efficiencies (given that there is the potential to increase frequency of the current route 20).	<p>A new section of the RPTP which deals with services across the remainder of the region.</p> <p>The narrative should clearly summarise any proposals from the business case to introduce weekend services on the coastal corridor between Hāwera and New Plymouth.</p>
Request for Connector to New Plymouth hospital to stop on the ring road so that people wanting to access the city centre do not have to go to the hospital first.	This has been addressed by the new timetable introduced on 12 March, with the bus going to Egmont Street before the hospital.	No change to the document is proposed.
Support for regional and inter-regional services which link core urban networks to other core urban networks, connecting smaller rural communities like Waitotara, Waverley and Patea where they sit along a route.	The lack of inter-regional services is identified in the RPTP and a potential improvement identified includes a service to Whanganui and Palmerston North.	The RPTP could provide more detail on a potential inter-regional bus service, including the benefits it would deliver to communities along the route.
Strengthen the relationship between Taranaki and Horizons Regional Councils given the importance of working together on cross-boundary services.	Agreed that inter-regional services require strong collaboration between councils who should both benefit.	The RPTP should include an additional policy which specifically identifies cross-boundary working with Horizons Regional Council for the purpose of service planning and delivery.

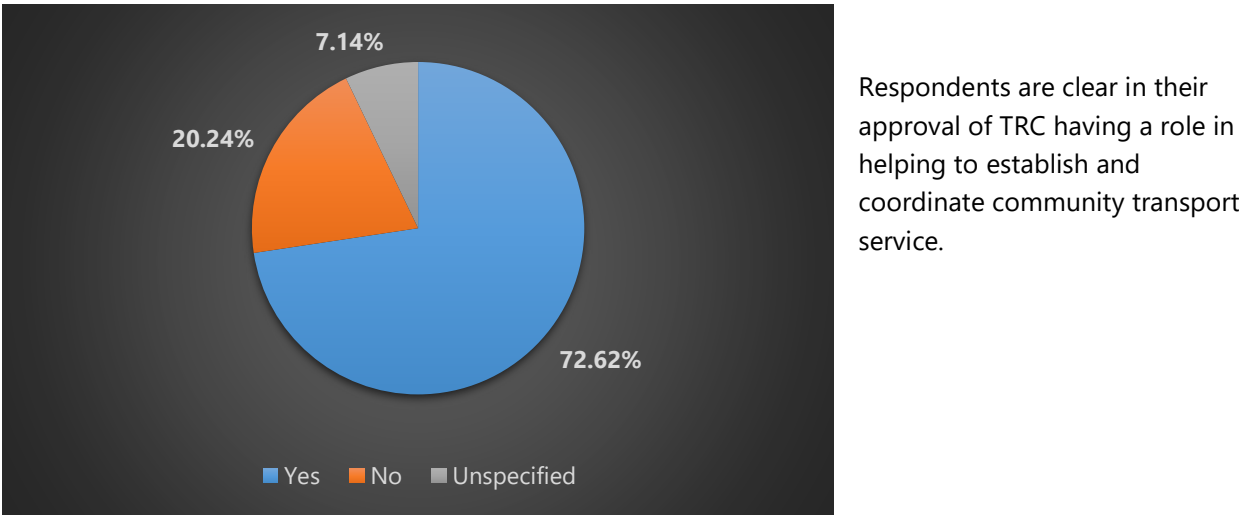
4.2.4 Community transport

Community transport is an umbrella term for shared travel services which are provided on a not-for-profit basis, generally by registered charities. Community transport is aimed at people who cannot drive, and supports a range of journey purposes including health appointments, shopping, education, work and visiting friends / family.

Online survey results

People were asked whether they support TRC helping to establish and coordinate community-run transport groups for areas where fixed bus services are not feasible.

Figure 8: Support for community transport



Submission points and responses for community transport

Table 8: Community transport submission points

Submission point summary	Officer assessment	Potential document change
Support investigating the feasibility of community based transport services – this is a potential means to provide smaller communities with greater access to public transport.	Acknowledge the support for community transport services.	Include a summary of potential next steps for what TRC could do to support community transport.
A wide range of potential locations for community transport are suggested, primarily in smaller townships and rural areas – including peripheral areas round New Plymouth, south Taranaki and communities along State Highways 3 and 43 northbound towards Waikato region.	These locations reflect locations without regular public transport.	In recognition of the support include a future action for investigations into potential community transport locations.
A number of specific groups of people who could benefit from community transport are highlighted – including youth, elderly, disabled, students, people travelling alone and financially disadvantaged people.	Acknowledge that there are greater challenges for some parts of the community to access services.	Update RPTP to include overarching demographic information that highlights who alternative service provision could benefit.

4.2.5 Rail

The rail line from New Plymouth to Whanganui runs right through the heart of the region and through a number of townships. The current services are limited to a small number of freight trains to and from the port. Not surprisingly there are calls for better use to be made of the rail line – specifically for passenger services.

Unlike bus services, passenger rail is not something that TRC is currently directly responsible for, though neighbouring regions are involved.

Online survey results

There was no specific question on rail in the public consultation, but a number of comments were made in the free text responses around other public transport initiatives to consider.

Submission points and responses for rail

Table 9: Rail submission points

Submission point summary	Officer assessment	Potential document change
Recognition of the role passenger rail could play between Taranaki and Horizons.	The RPTP identifies inter-regional passenger rail services - from New Plymouth to Whanganui and beyond to Palmerston North (and onward connections to Auckland and Wellington) – as a potential initiative.	Strengthen reference in the RPTP about the potential role for rail services, and identify some key actions TRC could undertake in working with Horizons.
A specific item included to explore passenger rail options for the region, as well as investigating how we could improve rail options for freight.	The same comments made immediately above apply here.	Strengthen reference in the RPTP about the potential role for rail services, and identify some key actions TRC could undertake in working with Horizons.
Commit to a feasibility study which investigates establishment of interregional passenger services between New Plymouth and Whanganui	<p>A feasibility study is a logical early stage of the process, and a number of key stakeholders will need to be involved in this work.</p> <p>This aligns with measures included in the RLTP. As the asset owner, KiwiRail would need to be heavily involved in any work.</p>	Strengthen reference in the RPTP about the need for a feasibility study to be undertaken for passenger rail. Align the message with the measures included in the RLTP.

4.2.6 Rural school transport

School transport from smaller townships and rural areas is provided by Ministry of Education (MoE), and not TRC.

Online survey results

There was no specific question on school transport buses, although there were plenty of comments within other sections.

Submission points and responses for school transport

Table 10: Rural school transport submission points

Submission point summary	Officer assessment	Potential document change
Further opportunities for the MoE and TRC to work co-operatively to develop, clarify and refine operational policies governing the provision of services.	The RPTP currently says very little about MoE services as they are not part of the TRC provision. However, there could be an opportunity to use the RPTP as a means of starting to assess future collaboration between TRC and MoE.	Strengthen the reference to rural school transport so that current service provision, policies, opportunities and future areas of work are outlined.
Establish and implement terms of engagement between TRC and MoE to collaborate on school transport planning.	The current school services are well utilised but will need future assessment as demand increases. TRC will prioritise strengthening its existing relationship with MoE to support a coordinated approach when developing an efficient school bus service.	Strengthen reference in the RPTP to the importance of establishing a relationship with MoE to improve alignment of services.
Request for TRC undertake regular engagement with MoE and schools when planning for routes that run near to school sites, including school bus services. This will enable a co-ordinated approach to ensure public transport networks are provided to and around school communities to support safe and accessible travel.	As per the point above.	Strengthen reference in the RPTP to the importance of strengthening the relationship with MoE to improve alignment of services.
Opportunity to review coverage of TRC school bus services and evaluate how rural students who currently transfer between MoE-funded and TRC services could benefit from an improved public transport network.	As per the point above.	Include this issue in the section on 'Strategic Case for Change'.
MoE is currently in discussions with schools regarding the potential introduction of enrolment zones. While Your Connector is a useful service for the community, there are impacts on the school networks in the neighbouring townships	It is agreed that future discussions with MoE should investigate this issue.	No change to RPTP required.

4.3 Theme 3: Active travel

Better Travel Choices is a combined active travel and public transport strategy, and the consultation contained a significant number of questions around walking and cycling.

The sub-themes for active travel are as follows:



4.3.1 Routes and infrastructure

Without **safe and convenient active travel routes**, people are much less likely to walk and cycle. Low levels of active travel are not necessarily an indicator of lack of demand or willingness to walk or cycle. The importance of providing **suitable infrastructure** to enable active travel routes and improve people’s travel choices is evident from the consultation responses.

Online survey results

As summarised in the headline messages section, people were asked where in Taranaki they would like to see new or improved active travel routes created. As this was a free text response, a wide range of views were provided. A number of people simply stated ‘everywhere’ – perhaps recognising that, at present, there lack of provision.

Coastal routes – for example Normanby to Hāwera, Hāwera to Omata and Oākura to New Plymouth featured prominently, which may recognise lack of safety / high speeds on ‘Surf Highway’ 45 and also potential for enhancing access to a beautiful part of the region. Linking New Plymouth, Bell Block and Waitara – including extension of the highly successful coastal path was also highlighted very frequently.

Within the New Plymouth urban area – and especially to and through the city centre – a number of specific routes and areas were identified as benefiting from enhanced active travel routes. Devon Street is mentioned a number of times, which reflects its role as a main travel demand artery, and not just for motorised travel.

There is a mix of views as to whether cycle routes should be on or off-road. As cyclists are a diverse group of people, with a range of abilities and confidence levels, one size does not fit all.

Submission points and responses for routes and infrastructure

Table 11: Active travel routes and infrastructure submission points

Submission point summary	Officer assessment	Potential document change
Rural regions typically lack the infrastructure needed to support active travel initiatives, such as extensive cycling lanes or pedestrian pathways. The absence of these facilities can deter residents from adopting alternative modes of transportation like cycling or walking.	The provision of dedicated infrastructure can sometimes be over-stated. Less busy rural roads can provide attractive links. Key challenges which deter active travel also include speed of traffic (often seen as desirable in the name of ‘efficiency’ and condition of the road surface which presents a hazard to riders (especially of faster e-bikes).	Update the BTC to include reference to the potential of lower-trafficked rural roads to provide cycle routes, where speeds can be managed, and the surface supports safer active travel.

Submission point summary	Officer assessment	Potential document change
Include cycle routes through Pukekura Park, this is safer, and could connect to the proposed Tuparikino Active Recreation Hub.	This is a matter for New Plymouth District Council as park owner.	No change required.
Sport Taranaki should be included as a key partner for active travel and in a tracks and trails strategy.	A multi-partner approach, especially when it comes to planning, advocacy and funding is important for the implementation of BTC.	Add Sport Taranaki as a partner to appropriate initiatives identified in Table 9.
There are too many barriers for people to change, in Inglewood. Until the roading infrastructure, safety, layout and public transport system is addressed, there is little to no point in us advocating for active travel modes. Our barriers are life and limb – one takes their life into their hands when they attempt a simple walk or cycle in our current system.	This submission summarises the frustration that is evident across a number of consultation responses. Whilst some parts of the region are reasonably well-served by active travel routes, many are not. More to the point, if the various 'good' parts are not connected to each other, the whole becomes less than the sum of the parts and people cannot undertake a wide range of journeys.	No change to the document is proposed.
Route through the Waiwhakaiho valley.	This location crops up several times and, because of its industrial / employment-based function, would appear to be a prime candidate for improvements to encourage more active travel commuting (including e-bikes). Furthermore The Valley mega centre is highlighted as somewhere that is challenging to walk / cycle to, with State Highway 3 providing a significant access barrier. The New Plymouth Integrated Transport Framework includes a proposal for a Waiwhakaiho pedestrian bridge to The Valley mega centre.	Update the BTC to identify The Valley as a key node for active transport opportunities.
A lot of people in Oākura cycle and work in New Plymouth but it is basically impossible to cycle into town because of the dangerous roads. Some kind of bike track to link the two towns would be used by almost everyone.	The draft BTCS already highlights extension of the coastal path to Waitara and Oākura as one of the four key projects in a regional active travel network.	No change to the document is proposed.
Connect Normanby to Hāwera. The current pathway that goes along Ketemarae Road is not great for biking because of hedges.	As it is a relatively small distance between the two settlements, an enhanced active travel link between the two – potentially as part of a wider regional route that parallels	Update the BTC to identify the opportunity for a State Highway 3 parallel route to the list of key projects for the regional active travel network.

Submission point summary	Officer assessment	Potential document change
	(but largely avoids) State Highway 3 – could be potentially beneficial.	
<p>There needs to be safe cycling routes to all main New Plymouth suburbs, through the city centre, and at least one 'ring' route circling the city.</p> <p>All schools need safe cycle access, as habits learned when young will stick.</p> <p>Pay by use rental cycle systems are popular internationally and could work well on the walkway connecting the Port, city centre, Pukekura Park and Fitzroy.</p>	A whole city network approach to New Plymouth is worth investigating, bearing in mind a number of initiatives are already being progressed by NPDC.	Now that the New Plymouth Integrated Transport Framework has been published, the BTCS should be updated to summarise relevant material in relation to the future active travel network (for example a cycleway business case).

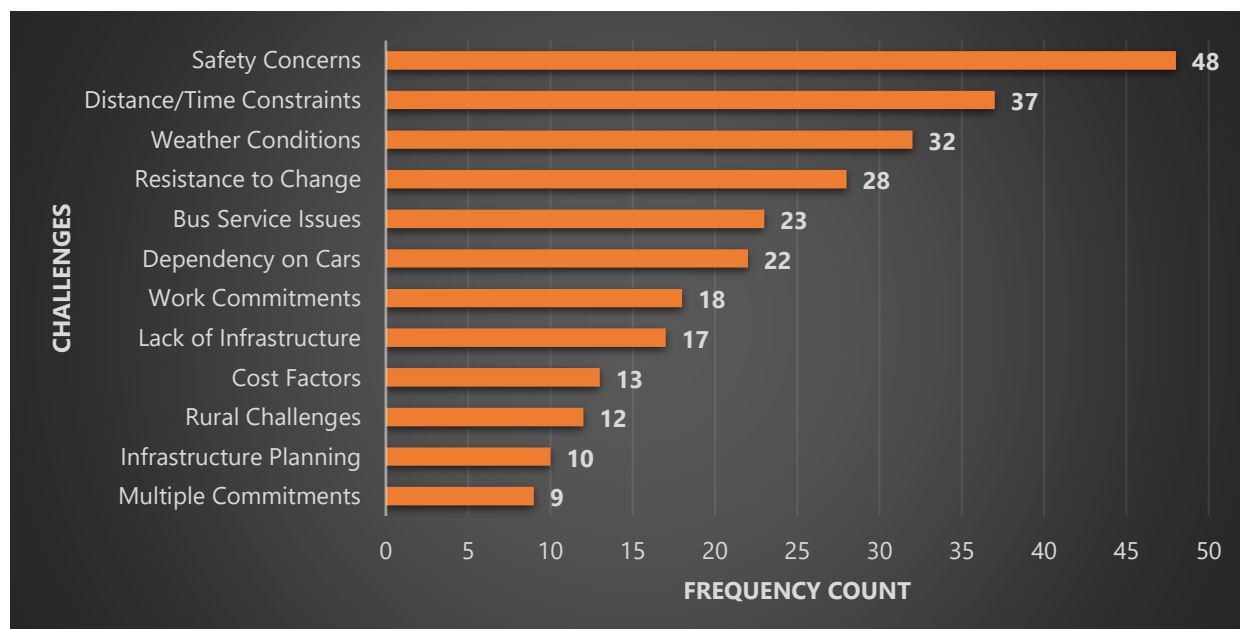
4.3.2 School travel

Not only is travel to school a significant source of travel demand, the habits formed during younger years have the potential to follow-through into adulthood.

Online survey results

Respondents were asked to identify the challenges of switching from driving a child to school to active travel:

Figure 9: Challenges of switching to active travel for school journeys

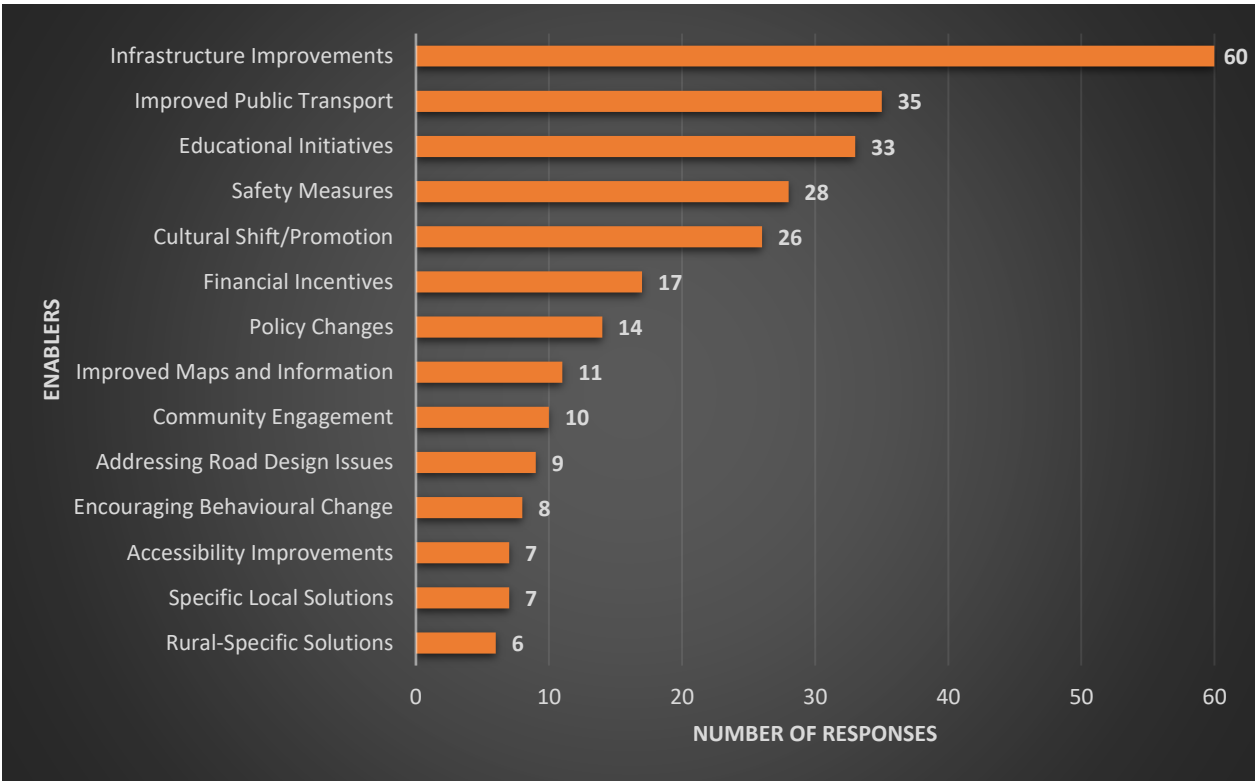


The number one challenge is safety with parental concern about the potential for serious harm if a child is hit by a motor vehicle whilst walking and cycling. Distance / time and adverse weather conditions also feature prominently. There is a high representation around 'resistance to change', which is perhaps a somewhat under-appreciated factor. This points to the needs for compelling reasons to break such

habits – including health and wellbeing. The health benefits of active travel can also be a counterweight to the risk of children developing health challenges because they do not undertake sufficient exercise.

Respondents were also asked what it would take to encourage more active travel:

Figure 10: Encouraging more active travel to school



Submission points and responses for school travel

Table 12: School travel submission points

Submission point summary	Officer assessment	Potential document change
The lack of bus shelters stops parents allowing their kids to take the bus, particularly on wet days but it also becomes a habit that extends into other days.	There are interventions which can mitigate the impact of weather – including provision of bus shelters. The BTC document makes a number of references to the need for weather-proof shelters.	No change to the document is proposed.
Having a cool map with lots of colours and what you can find / where you can go on the different paths / trails would encourage lots of people especially in the summer.	The power of maps to influence travel behaviour is often taken for granted and perhaps under-estimated. The existing BTC document highlights the importance of publicity.	No change to the BTC.
Bus timetables not aligned with schools or allowing the movement from dropping one kid at one school and then another kid at another school.	This point illustrates a drawback of providing services which are dedicated to only one or two schools. A future review of New Plymouth school transport could consider a revised approach where routes serve a greater	No change to the document is proposed. The RPTP identifies the need for a future review of school routes.

Submission point summary	Officer assessment	Potential document change
	number of schools, or increasing the frequency / coverage of urban routes to provide an alternative.	

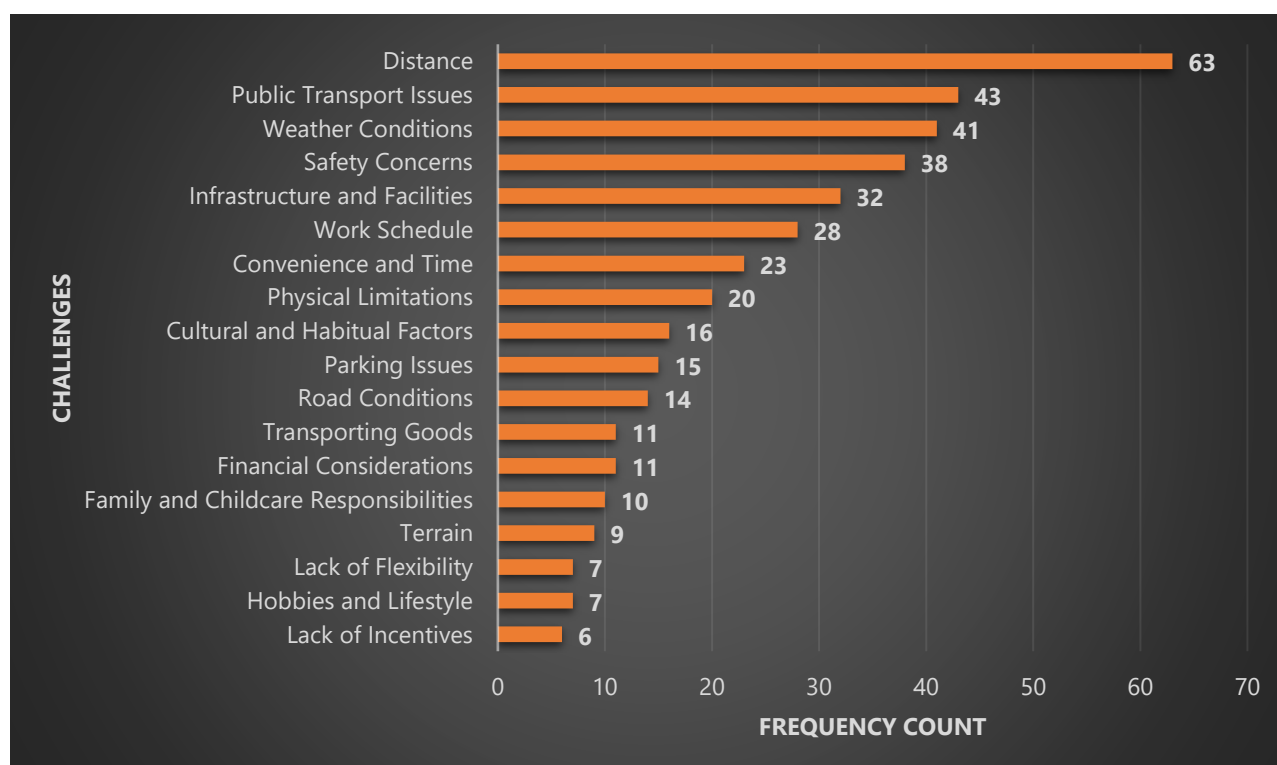
4.3.3 Commuting to work

Commuting to work remains an important generator of travel demand, and is also significant because habits for other journey purposes (for people in employment and of working age) could be influenced.

Online survey results

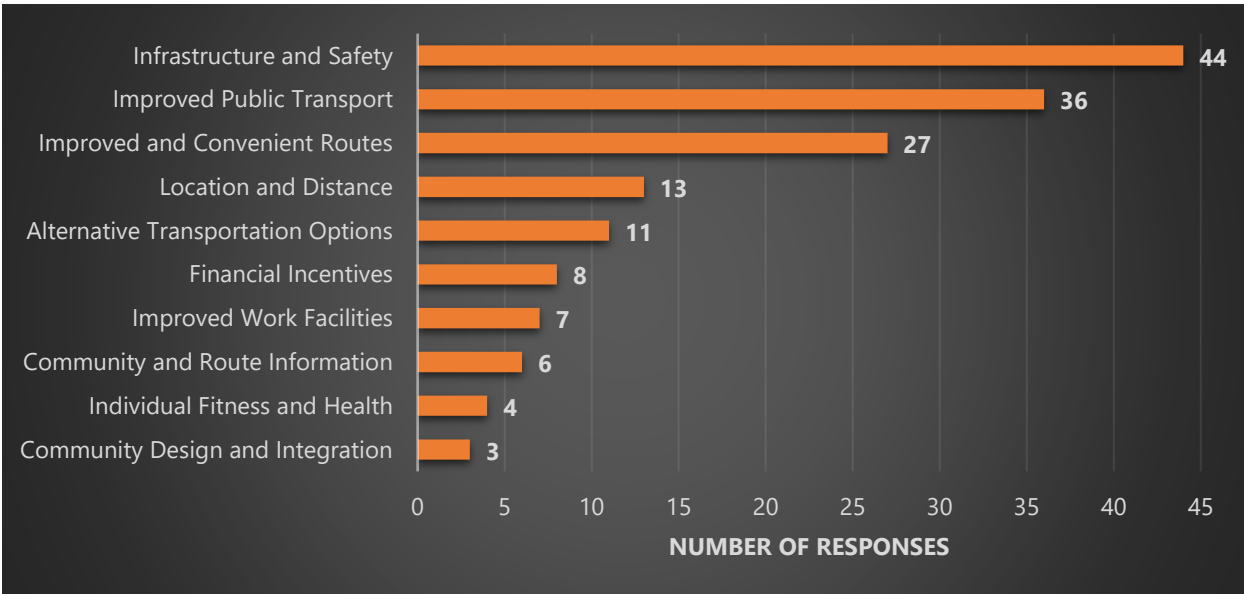
Respondents were asked to identify the challenges of switching commuting by car to active travel. The most significant deterrence factor – that of distance – is perhaps to be expected given the relatively rural nature of much of Taranaki. Other significant factors include public transport issues, weather conditions, safety concerns and infrastructure / facilities. The top-rated issues are very similar to those for school travel which supports the need for a regional approach to encouraging alternative travel choices.

Figure 11: Challenges of switching to active travel for work commuting journeys



Respondents were also asked what it would take to encourage more active travel:

Figure 12: Encouraging more active travel to work



Three key interventions stand out – infrastructure / safety, improved public transport and improved convenient routes.

Submission points and responses for commuting to work

Table 13: Commuting to work submission points

Submission point summary	Officer assessment	Potential document change
Quicker options. It would take an hour to get to work on a bus, a 12-minute drive. And there is no option to ride a bike off the street.	Providing credible alternatives are important, so that people feel they have a choice. Whilst journey time is not the only factor in travel choice, for many people it remains a compelling one.	No change to the document is proposed. The RPTP is proposing an improvement to bus services.
Dedicated and protected active travel mode spaces. If biking, somewhere safe to store bikes. Somewhere to shower if required.	These are a range of interventions that are needed to encourage more active travel. The BTC emphasises the importance of both road space re-allocation and provision of end-destination facilities, often as part of workplace travel plans.	Update the BTC to reference the opportunity to undertake a range of interventions should be identified as a package.

4.4 Theme 4: Integration

Better Travel Choices has been written as an integrated public transport and active travel strategy which enables people to make a wider range of journeys than would otherwise be possible. Whilst public transport and active travel sometimes suffer from the perception that they are less flexible than a car, they have other advantages, such as affordability and health and wellbeing. There are plenty of opportunities to integrate different modes to make public transport and active travel journeys both possible and pleasurable.

Integration is therefore not just an abstract concept, but a practical necessity for both how transport improvements are planned and delivered.

The sub-themes for integration are as follows:



4.4.1 Mobility hubs

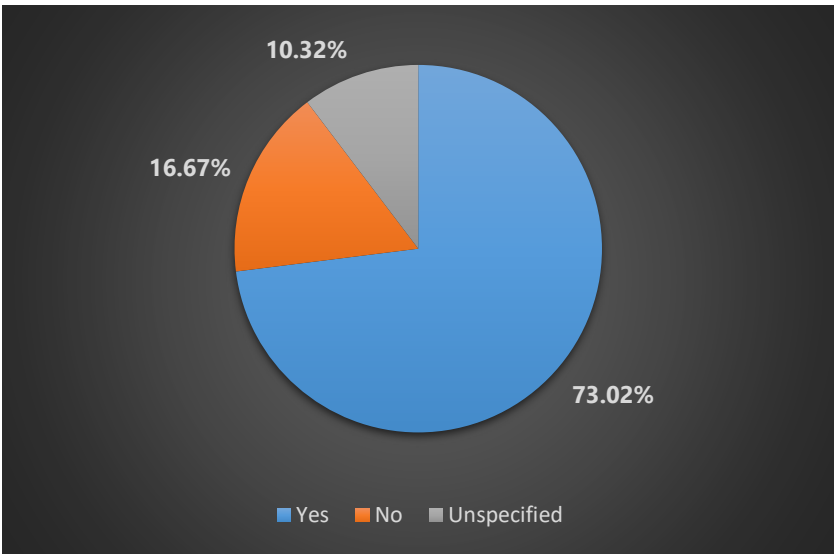
Mobility hubs are highly visible, safe, and accessible spaces where public, shared, and active travel modes are co-located alongside improvements to the public realm and community facilities, such as libraries and iSites.

The BTC document highlights an action to investigate and prioritise improvements to create potential integrated mobility hubs in New Plymouth, Waitara, Inglewood, Stratford, Eltham, Waverley, Patea and Ōpunake.

Online survey results

Respondents were asked whether they liked the idea of mobility hubs. A significant majority of respondents are in favour of this approach.

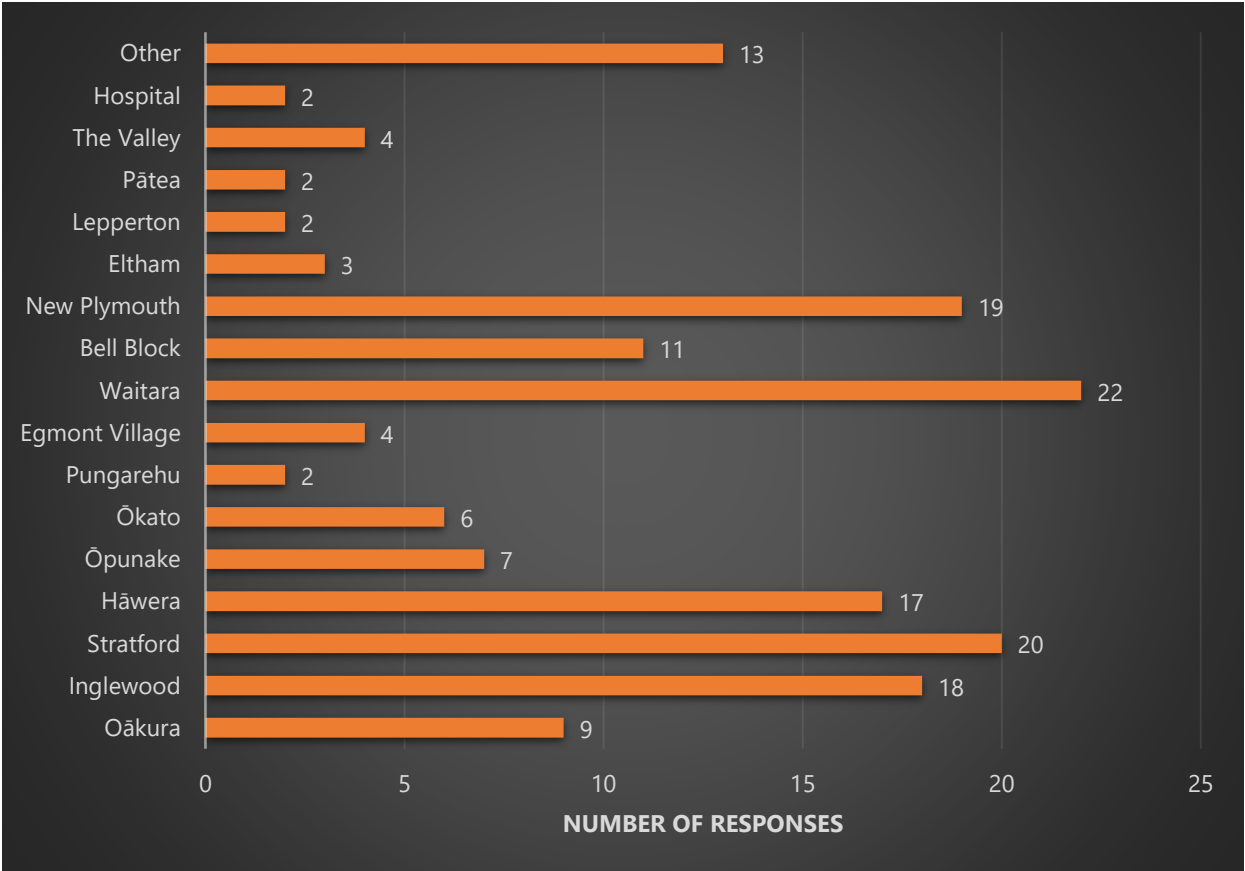
Figure 13: Support for creating mobility hubs



Respondents were then asked to provide their views on where mobility hubs could be located.

The two most identified locations are Waitara and Stratford, which are two important towns with existing facilities that could be improved. New Plymouth city came third in the list, closely followed by Inglewood and Hāwera.

Figure 14: Potential locations for mobility hubs



Submission points and responses for mobility hubs

Table 14: Mobility hub submission points

Submission point summary	Officer assessment	Potential document change
Connecting bicycle and bus routes is good. It has to be made easier to put bikes on the bus especially for older population. I would cycle into town and take the bus back if this was an easier operation.	This point demonstrates that people are often quite happy to think about using different modes for journeys, or even the same legs of a single journey. The challenge of distance for active travel can be addressed by offering a public transport option. The BTC already demonstrates the importance of connecting modes in achieving mode shift.	No change to the document.
Desired facilities include: food and drink, picnic tables, bike kitchen on site, mobility parking, a small playground, gender neutral toilets, open and visible from the road	This is a helpful list of potential facilities for mobility hubs.	Update the BTC to include a wider menu of possible facilities for inclusion in mobility hub projects

Submission point summary	Officer assessment	Potential document change
Bike stands and scooter parks very, very close to bus stops.		(recognising that every location will be different).
Well-designed multi-modal hubs would benefit both rural and urban residents by enabling convenient transfers between transport modes. However, good rural services are needed to connect to such hubs.	This is an important point, as hubs which have only very infrequent services will struggle to provide the community focus that is intended.	Update the BTC to provide an increased emphasis on service improvements to support mobility hub development.
This kind of thing is popular overseas! Wifi, public toilets, shops selling snacks or vending machines, banking services, Post Office, supermarket and landline phone.	The BTC document provides good examples of existing mobility hubs in other countries.	No change to the document is proposed.
As a transport provider would like to see space made available for wheelchair capable vehicles and enforced. A transport hub that is available to all bus companies. Coach parking for tour vehicles. A manned information centre including on the weekends.	Agreement with the point made. The BTC as a whole can take a much wider view than just services provided by the public sector.	Update the document to emphasise that mobility hubs are not just for scheduled services but should also be made available for wider forms of shared transport.
<p>Connectivity of bikes and buses could be improved to enable a new range of trips to be completed without a car, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus routes that stop at key points of bike infrastructure (e.g. the coastal pathway in New Plymouth). • Connection between the improved frequency on the Waitara bus route and the Coastal Walkway extension. • Making links between bus routes, walking and cycling routes visually obvious. • Bike parking at some of these bus stops, not just at the transport hubs. 	These are useful suggestions and there is an opportunity to provide more of these in the existing BTC document.	Update the BTC to improve the emphasis on the opportunities for bus-bike route integration, both along the coast and inland along the State Highway 3 corridor.

4.4.2 Future growth and development

The challenges and opportunities of new development for public transport and active travel are a key part of the BTC document. New development generates additional demand for travel, especially where it is associated with population increases and also socio-economic factors such as formation of smaller households by younger people leaving home earlier.

Online survey results

There was no specific question about this issue.

Table 15: Future growth and development submission points

Submission point summary	Officer assessment	Potential document change
Strongly support the intention to encourage more and denser development where there are good active travel links and consider transport links in our growth and development. However, we see some disconnect between this goal and specific initiatives included in the strategy. For example, the future urban zone at Smart Road in Glen Avon is already poorly served for walking and cycling, and this strategy also proposes removing their bus service.	The development of a Future Development Strategy for New Plymouth, provides the opportunity for TRC and NPDC to work together on future housing locations and to better align these with public transport service provision.	No change to the document is proposed.
<p>The section regarding 'location and design of new development areas' could be clearer about requiring developers of new suburbs to include pedestrian and cycling links.</p> <p>Currently, many existing and new developments include cul-de-sacs without 'cut-throughs' that enable walking and cycling.</p> <p>This type of development makes active travel distances artificially long and passively encourages car travel.</p> <p>Should encourage (and map) these cut-throughs in new developments, or make better use of grid-style street layouts, which have been shown to encourage more walking and cycling.</p>	The design of housing development and infrastructure provision is the responsibility of the district councils, however the BTC could be a document which is used to inform future district planning processes and ultimately service provision.	Update the BTC to further emphasise the role of good urban design.

4.4.3 Integrated decision making

One concern that has emerged through public consultation is the perceived lack of integrated decision making between Regional Council, local councils and Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency. BTC has been developed in partnership with these organisations, and joint working between these agencies is considered to be well established in Taranaki. Nevertheless, the current investment planning and funding system does not encourage integrated decision making, as public transport services are run by Regional Council with infrastructure the responsibility of four Road Controlling Authorities (three councils and Waka Kotahi). Whilst it is not the role of BTC to solve the root causes of this challenge, it is worth noting the concern and provide confidence that joint working will continue into project delivery.

Online survey results

There was no specific question about this issue.

Table 16: Integrated decision making submission points

Submission point summary	Officer assessment	Potential document change
It might be time for NPDC, TRC and Waka Kotahi (plus the other two district councils) to devise a method for greater collaboration and create one central organisation to coordinate the transportation efforts of the region.	This is beyond the scope of the BTC, but it is noted that the mentioned agencies already work together quite closely and as part of the recent RLTP deliberations' there has been the suggestion for a joint public transport committee to be set up. Commitment to investigate this arrangement has been made through the RLTP.	Update the document to further emphasise the need for collaborative working, which is something that is now being encouraged through the draft Government Policy Statement.
Establish a Public Transport Committee to formalise and align investment programmes and support open communication between key partners.	See point above.	Update the RPTP to note the investigation into a joint Public Transport Committee.
Concern about stating Public Transport as a "preferred mode of transport". It is one mode within a package of low emission transport choices, with walking and cycling being lower emission and are appropriate for many short trips. This statement should align with the overarching Better Travel Choices Strategy of 'Increasing wellbeing and environmental sustainability of Taranaki communities by enabling people to safely and conveniently travel by public transport and active travel'.	The statement is not intended to imply that public transport is more important than active travel; and it is correct that the modes are complementary and appropriate for a range of local journeys.	Amend the document to include the following updates: : 'An accessible, integrated and customer-focussed public transport system that enhances our wellbeing and environment, and becomes an attractive mode of transport within and between urban areas'. (words in bold are new)
KPIs are specified for the New Plymouth district, separate to the region as the district's population density, projected growth and urban form has the most potential for higher public transport use.	Agree would be useful, although as an integrated strategy there is a need to consider the regional picture.	The document can use the New Plymouth Integrated Transport Framework to identify appropriate KPIs, as a sub-set of regional KPIs.

5 Draft Government Policy Statement on Land Transport

The draft Government Policy Statement on Land Transport 2024 (GPS 2024) was released in early March 2024. The previous GPS strategic priorities, which were outlined in the draft BTC document were:

- Maintaining and operating the system: the condition of the existing transport system is maintained at a level that meets the current and future needs of users.
- Increasing resilience: The transport system is better able to cope with natural and anthropogenic hazards.
- Reducing emissions: Transitioning to a lower carbon transport system.
- Safety: To make transport substantially safer for all.
- Sustainable urban and regional development: People can readily access social, cultural, and economic opportunities through a variety of transport options; in resilient and productive towns and cities that have a range of low-emission transport options and low congestion.
- Integrated freight system: well-designed and operated transport corridors and hubs that provide efficient, reliable, resilient, multi-modal, and low carbon connections to support productive economic activity.

Some of the GPS 2024 strategic priorities are very different, and summarised as follows:

Table 17: Draft GPS 2024 strategic priorities

Strategic priority	Summary of main points
Economic growth and productivity	<p>The government's top priority is to support economic growth and productivity, which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road of National Significance, potentially funded through road tolling. • Major public transport projects in large urban areas. • Optimising use of existing networks to deliver an appropriate level of service for users. • Rail investment targeted on the most productive parts of the network – between Auckland, Hamilton and Tauranga. • Walking and cycling investment where there is a clear benefit to economic growth and improving safety (and where demonstrated volumes of pedestrians and cyclists already exist).
Increased maintenance and resilience	<p>This strategic priority – which covers both State Highways and local roads - is considered to be critically important in achieving the Government's overall objective of supporting economic growth and productivity. There is a specific focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tackling the growing number of potholes with ring-fenced funding from a new National Land Transport Fund (NLTF) activity class. • Increasing the total output of resealing and rehabilitation. • Increasing maintenance investment to increase planned (proactive) work. • Obtaining greater efficiency from highway maintenance investment. <p>Funding to reseal and rehabilitate roads damaged in the 2023 North Island weather events will be channelled through a separate process to the GPS.</p>
Safety	<p>Whilst still a strategic priority, the focus on safety moves away from Road to Zero and instead prioritises:</p>

Strategic priority	Summary of main points
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributions to road safety investment from ACC. • Greater road policing and enforcement, with driving under the influence of drink and drugs given specific targets. • Increases to financial penalties and demerit point levels for traffic offences. • Delivery of safe roading infrastructure by fixing potholes and increasing road maintenance. • Upgrading road infrastructure (new routes) to higher safety standards. • Low-cost safety interventions retrofitted on high-risk parts of the network, where they provide value for money. • Removal of the blanket approach to reducing speed limits, and reversal of these where it is safe to do so.
Value for Money	<p>The draft GPS states that a significant increase in transport investment has not resulted in better outcomes, and with \$20.2 billion allocated across New Zealand for 2024-27 there is a need a value for money focus, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing NZTA head office expenditure by 7.5%, and re-investing savings into delivery of GPS objectives. • Reduction in expenditure on temporary traffic management. • Improved road maintenance and safety outcomes. • Making better use of assets through time of use charging or dynamic lanes. • Focus on whole-of-life costs to maximise long-run value. • Use of digital infrastructure and information systems.

BTC will need to demonstrate how it aligns with the 2024 GPS. Staff will address this by adding such assessment to the BTC. Table 13 of the current draft document will therefore need revision, broadly as follows:

Table 18: Outline of Draft GPS 2024 alignment for BTC

Strategic Priority	Contribution of BTC
Economic growth and productivity	There is, for example, strong evidence that public transport and active travel are a part of the most dynamic and successful regions in the world. Public transport and active modes are also highly space-efficient and contribute to reducing traffic congestion – a point already made by BTC.
Increased maintenance and resilience	Active modes in particular have very little adverse impact on road structures and surfaces, unlike heavier vehicles such as logging trucks. A resilient transport system is one where there is a choice of transport modes, not just reliance on one.
Safety	BTC is already very strong in this area, and can make the point that both public transport and active travel modes make almost no contribution to road crash statistics, unlike motor vehicles.
Value for Money	Public transport and active travel can be low cost and high impact interventions where they address barriers to usage and make travel options much more convenient.

6 Conclusions and next steps

The BTC public consultation was a highly valuable exercise which was generally well-supported by the community, both in terms of the number of responses and their quality.

The quantitative questions demonstrated strong support for better public transport and active travel, and most importantly provided evidence there is an appetite for changing behaviour. Whilst some people stated that providing for the car should be the only priority, they were relatively few in number. Many more recognised that transport choice should be improved, so that people are able to consider lifestyle changes that benefit themselves and their families. This does not mean using just one mode of transport, but choosing the one that is right for the particular journey.

The qualitative comments, of which there were many hundreds of individual lines, have provided a rich picture of thoughts and suggestions which have been summarised in this report. The 12 bespoke submissions provide some highly valuable material for consideration, much of which continues through the public transport business case work. Furthermore, the New Plymouth Integrated Transport Framework, published in March 2024, will also provide material for consideration in updating BTC.

This report has summarised a huge amount of material into a relatively compressed number of pages, and inevitably judgements have been made as to what to include in a strategic document and what not. Nevertheless, even detailed comments which have not been explicitly summarised in this document have been read and understood, and the consultation results represent a valuable database that will continue to be used as BTC moves into implementation.

Following councillor consideration, the next steps are to make changes to the document as set out in this report, including input from the public transport business case as it develops. The final updated BTC will be brought back to Council in July for adoption.