

Draft Regional Public Transport Plan for Northland 2015 – 2025

Working Draft

Have your say ^[TL1]

Northland's Regional Transport Committee offers you the opportunity to give feedback on the Draft Regional Public Transport Plan 2015-2025.

The draft plan sets out how public passenger transport services and discounted taxi services like the Total Mobility Scheme are to be provided in Northland over the coming years.

This is your chance to have your say on the proposed public transport priorities and activities in Northland for the next 10 years.

Submissions close at 5pm on Friday 30 January 2015.

Have your say at www.nrc.govt.nz/haveyoursay

Foreword

This Regional Public Transport Plan is an important document as it provides the strategic blueprint for the region's public transport for the next ten years. It is an update of the previous plan, adopted in 2012. It takes into account new legislation and changes in the provision of public transport.

This plan covers public passenger transport services and discounted taxi services such as the Total Mobility Scheme. Among the challenges we collectively face in the coming years is how to maintain the affordability and quality of these services while continuing to grow patronage alongside investigating new services within the region.

The plan proposes investigating ways of improving user experience, including public transport information and ticketing options.

Both CityLink, which is Whāngārei's public bus service, and the Total Mobility Scheme have been successful and popular with Whāngārei's urban users. The bus service alone now carries over 315,000 passengers each year; four times the 80,000 its predecessor did when it began operating in 2000.

However, the plan also recognises that providing access to public transport in other parts of Northland is of equal – if not greater – importance. It also acknowledges that achieving this poses a real challenge because so many of our communities are relatively small, rural-based and essentially car dependent.

It is recognised that other public transport services already exist elsewhere in the region and guidance on how their operators can try to gain subsidies to help reduce their costs is provided in this plan.

The plan proposes helping those with a disability by maintaining the Total Mobility scheme in the Whāngārei urban area and also looking for opportunities to expand it to areas outside of Whāngārei.

I look forward to implementing this plan over the coming years and developing affordable and quality public transport services within the region.

John Bain, Chairman, Northland Regional Council Regional Transport Committee.^[TL2]

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Introduction

This is the draft Regional Public Transport Plan (RPTP) for Northland 2015-2025.

It sets out how public passenger transport services and discounted taxi services like the Total Mobility Scheme are to be provided in Northland over the coming years.

The RPTP is prepared by the Northland Regional Council's Regional Transport Committee under the Land Transport Management Act 2003 (as amended in 2013). It replaces the current RPTP adopted in 2012 which was prepared under the repealed Public Transport Management Act (PTMA) 2008.

The plan is set out in three parts:

Part 1: Background and context

Describes:

- A profile of Northland
- Current public transport services operating in the region
- Drivers for public transport in the region
- The legal and wider policy framework the RPTP is written under.

Part 2: Strategic direction

Describes:

- Strategic direction for contracted services, total mobility and related council including objectives, policies and methods.

Part 3: Operating and funding public transport

Describes

- How the Public Transport Operating Model will apply in the Northland context.
- Future direction for how we intend to fund public transport, including details on the Regional Farebox Recovery Ratio and support for rural services.
- How this plan has regard to the needs of the transport disadvantaged.
- Monitoring and review.

Finally, there are a number of appendices which include information on:

- Compatibility with relevant national and regional plans and strategies
- Council's policy on significance
- Example of economic evaluation criteria for new public transport services
- Current fares and timetables of the Whāngārei CityLink service.

Part 1: Background and context

1.1 Overview of Northland

The Northland region borders Auckland to the south and stretches from just north of Wellsford to Cape Reinga, approximately 300km to the North.

It has one regional council, Northland Regional Council, and three district councils: Kaipara, Far North and Whāngārei.

The region has a population of about 151,000 ranking it eighth in population size out of the 16 regions in New Zealand. Whāngārei is by far the largest centre with a population of about 52,000 in 2013 or about 30% of the region's population. Other urban centres include Kerikeri, Kaikohe, Kaitiāia and Dargaville, all containing populations fewer than 10,000 people.

Much of the region is characterised by large rural hinterlands, dispersed travel patterns, and relatively low population densities. This pattern of development presents a different set of challenges when considering the provision of public transport services.

Figure 1: Northland region transport picture

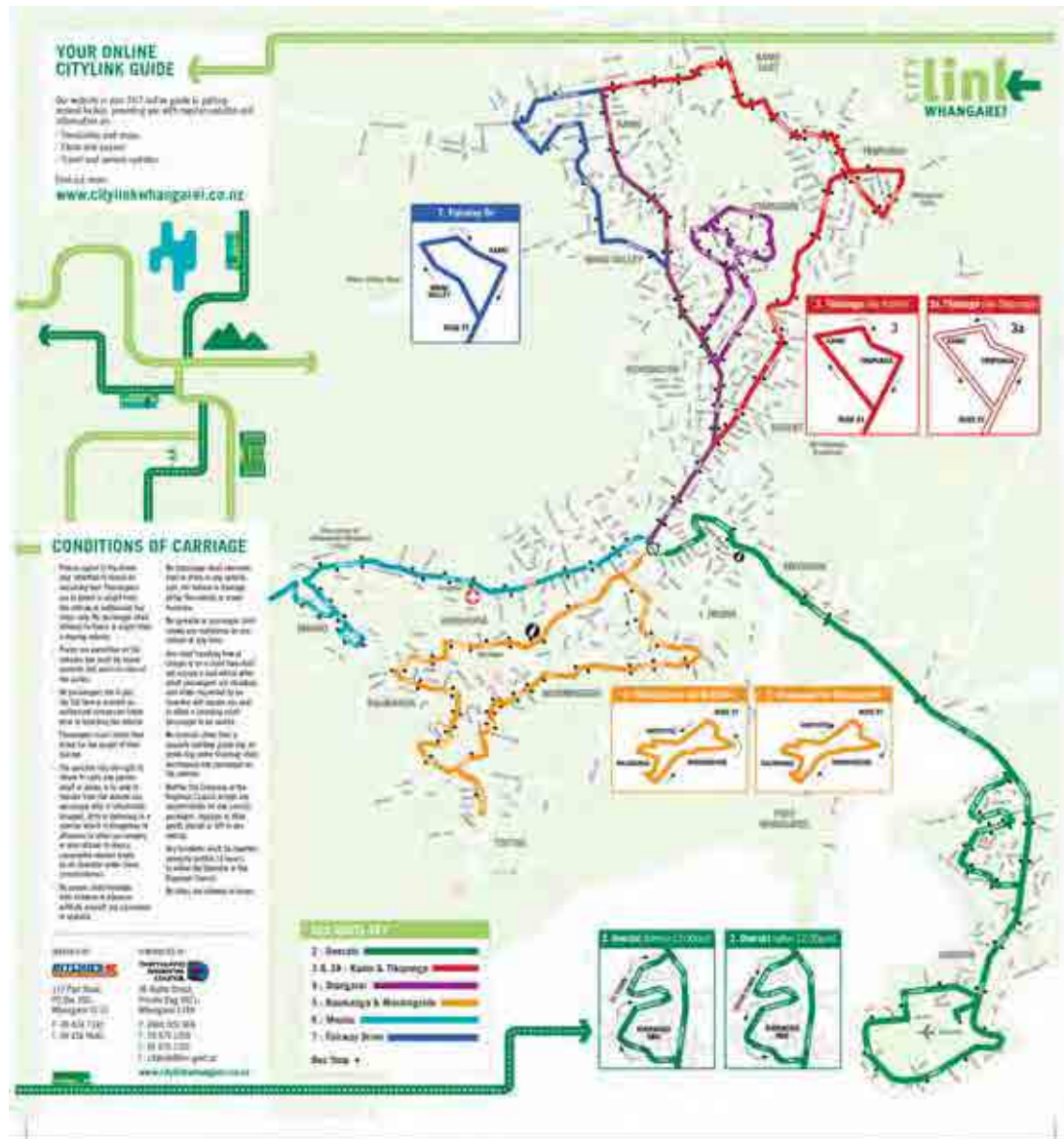


1.2 Background to public transport in Northland

CityLink Whāngārei

The key feature of the region’s public transport system is the Whāngārei bus service, (branded as CityLink). It is a contracted subsidised bus service operating in Northland, and it operates entirely within urban Whāngārei.

Figure 2: CityLink Whāngārei routes (as of 2014)



Features of CityLink:

- CityLink consists of five routes, operating on weekdays from as early as 6am and as late as 6pm on some routes, with a morning and early afternoon Saturday service. There is no Sunday service.
- The buses in use are low floor models, which assist in meeting the needs of mobility restricted patrons, and are fitted with low emission Euro 4 motors. These meet the Requirement for Urban Buses in New Zealand.
- The present service operates on a flat-fare system (customers are charged a standard fare for each trip). In addition, the service offers transfer tickets (allowing the passenger to transfer to another route within a period of one hour). SuperGold Card holders are able to travel for free under the scheme between 9am and 3pm.
- A smart card system – Snapper – was introduced in March 2014, replacing the old paper-based 10-trip concession cards. Snapper enables faster loading of buses and quicker, more accurate transfers between routes. Other benefits include administrative efficiencies and a clearer picture of demand to assist officials in future planning. There will also be less cash carried on board, reducing potential security risks. Top-up options include Snapper 'feeder' which allows passengers to carry out their own credit card top-ups through their home computer. Snapper can integrate with Android smartphones using an app that allows users to check their real-time balance and top up any Snapper card on the go¹.
- The current CityLink contract dates from 2009 (5+3 year contract). It is due for review in 2016.

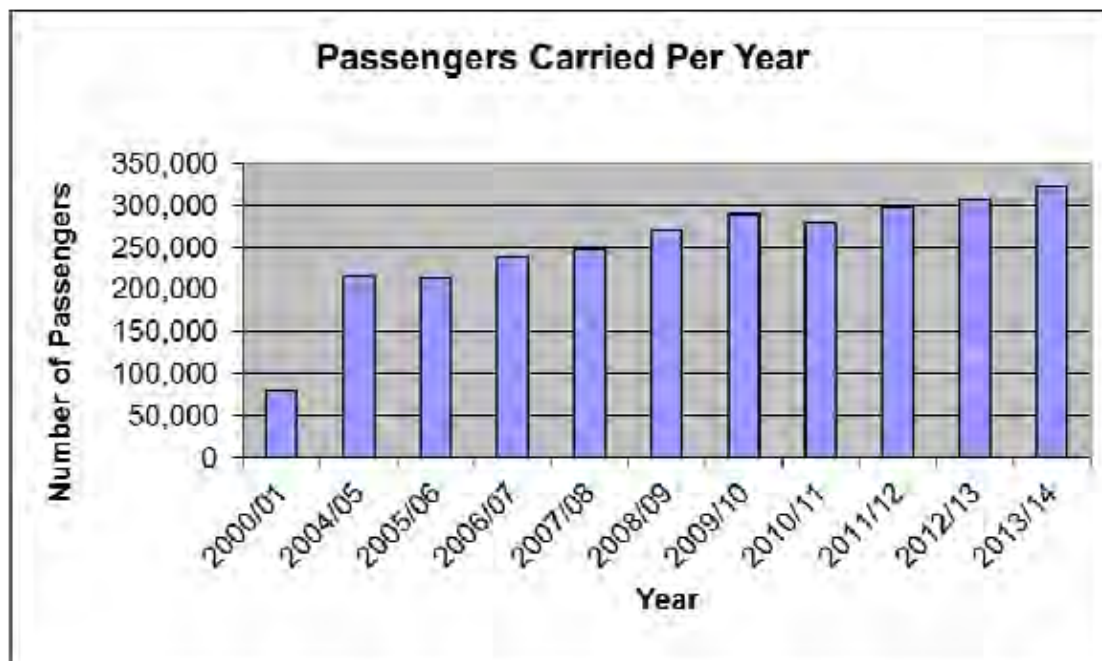
Appendix 6 includes full details on current fares and timetables.

CityLink patronage

Passenger numbers have nearly quadrupled from 80,000 during the service's first year in 2000/2001 to over 315,000 passengers in 2013/14. Factors influencing this growth could include rising motoring costs, the higher quality of facilities and buses, positive user feedback, more flexible payment options and effective marketing.

¹ Snapper smart card is an interim solution that may be replaced by a nationally-procured smart card system within the next two years, which will have enhanced functionality and allow the region greater access to public transport information.

Figure 3: CityLink patronage



Other public transport services

BusAbout Kaitāia service

BusAbout Kaitāia is currently contracted to run by the Northland Regional Council. Originally established with funding from the Ministry of the Environment's Sustainable Management Fund, BusAbout Kaitāia receives a small amount of funding from a local community group 'CBEC' (the colloquial name for the Community, Business and Environment Centre) in addition to funding received from Northland Regional Council. The service does not receive any national subsidy. The daily service covers the Far North around Kaitāia, including Doubtless Bay, Ahipara and Pukenui. Patronage has generally been around 7,500 - 8000 passenger trips a year.

Total Mobility Scheme

The Total Mobility Scheme is a nationwide scheme designed to increase the mobility of people with disabilities. Assistance is provided in the form of a 50% discount on taxi fares and shuttle services.

For Northland this service is only offered in the Whāngārei urban area to those aged 14 and over who meet the eligibility criteria. A definition of eligibility is:

Eligible people are those persons who for reasons of physical, sensory, intellectual or psychological disability, whether congenital, acquired or age related satisfy the following criteria:

Cannot unaided (or could not if a public passenger transport system were available) complete one or more of the component activities involved in making use of public passenger transport. The component parts of public passenger transport use are defined as:

- *Proceeding to the nearest bus stop.*
- *Boarding, riding securely or alighting,*
- *Proceeding from the destination stop to the trip end.*

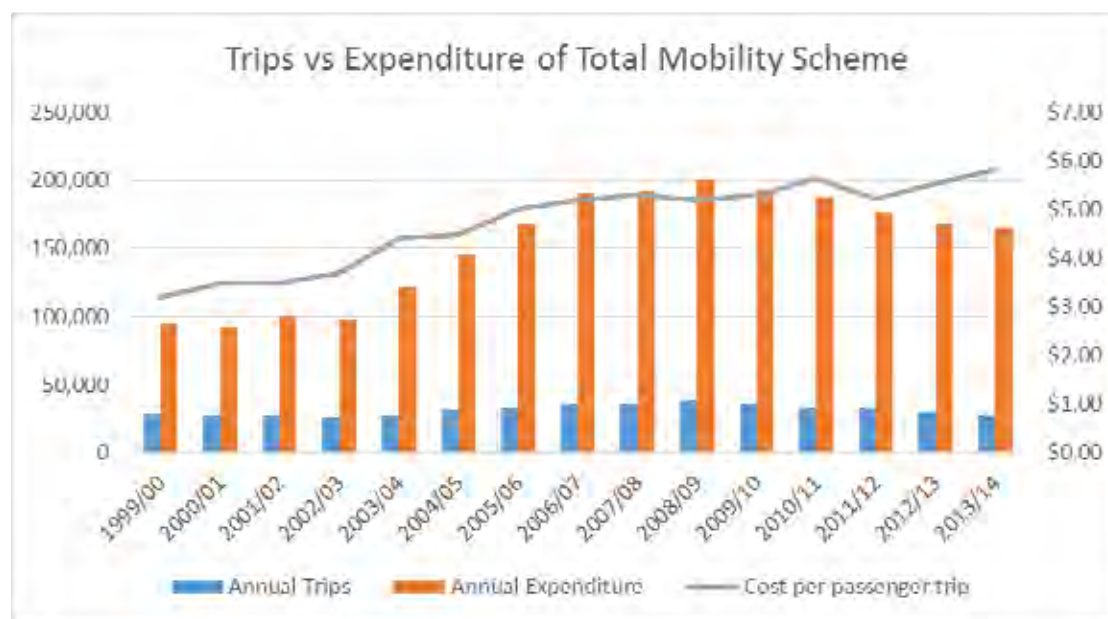
The Total Mobility Scheme is administered by Northland Regional Council and funded by the Whangarei District Council (60%) and the NZTA (40%). The regional council applies for a set funding allocation from these agencies each year based on anticipated demand to service the scheme.

After an initial rise in the cost of the scheme, directly attributable to increases in vehicle operating and compliance costs, expenditure has levelled off while patronage has stabilised and, most recently, declined slightly. Costs per trip however are still significantly higher than 13 years ago (\$3.20 per trip in 1999/00 vs \$5.82 in 2013/14) and this trend has generally had an upward trajectory.

Year	Annual Trips	Annual Expenditure	Cost per passenger trip
1999/00	29,325	\$94,808	\$3.20
2000/01	26,881	\$92,780	\$3.50
2001/02	28,488	\$100,135	\$3.50
2002/03	26,363	\$98,587	\$3.70
2003/04	27,943	\$122,245	\$4.40
2004/05	32,220	\$145,950	\$4.50
2005/06	33,929	\$169,044	\$5.00
2006/07	36,313	\$190,356	\$5.20
2007/08	36,500	\$192,489	\$5.30
2008/09	38,347	\$200,377	\$5.20
2009/10	36,262	\$192,731	\$5.30
2010/11	33,373	\$188,101	\$5.63
2011/12	33,778	\$176,863	\$5.23
2012/13	30,336	\$167,994	\$5.53
2013/14	28,453	\$165,691	\$5.82

The graph below shows the rise in costs per trip that has occurred over a 13 year period.

Figure 4: Trips vs Expenditure of Total Mobility



Although the scheme is currently limited to Whangarei, the regional council will investigate all applications for total mobility services in Northland. The implementation of any new or extended service is heavily dependent on available national and local funding and the availability of a service provider.

It is likely that nationally, a review of the total mobility scheme will be undertaken during the first three years of the RTP period. The regional council will work closely with NZTA and other agencies to assist the review process.

Non-subsidised transport services

There are a number of other services in Northland that are not contracted or subsidised by Northland Regional Council. Although the council has no direct control in these services, it does have an interest in ensuring they are maintained as they contribute towards the core objectives of the council's Long Term Plan and the Regional Land Transport Plan. These are:

- Commercial operators – including Intercity, Naked Bus and Northliner operate scheduled intercity coach services into and around the region from Auckland. Through the Intercity network, Kaitiāia, Doubtless Bay and the Bay of Islands can be reached and Naked Bus serves the Bay of Islands. Routes both cover Whāngārei and various settlements along State Highway 1. Connections are available in some instances to other destinations through local operators. At the time of writing there is only one non-subsidised commercial service by a local operator serving communities in Northland outside of Whāngārei. This is a Dargaville - Whāngārei service called the 'Westcoaster' which runs twice a day in both directions.
- School bus operators – currently run either on a commercial basis or are subsidised by the Ministry of Education. There may also be opportunities for other fare paying passengers to be accommodated on these services at the discretion of the school and/or operator.

- Tour operators – catering for tourists, these services are non-scheduled and are concentrated around peak season.
- The following ferry services operate in Northland:
 - Passenger ferry in the Bay of Islands between Paihia and Russell;
 - Passenger/vehicular ferry in the Bay of Islands between Opua and Okiato; and
 - Passenger/vehicular ferry in the Hokianga between Rawene and Kohukohu (this service is partially subsidised by Far North District Council).

It is considered that there is no need for any further contracting requirements for commercial services in the region at this time.

Part Two contains details on how council subsidised services and other services in the region not reliant on a council subsidy will fit into the new Public Transport Operating Model structure.

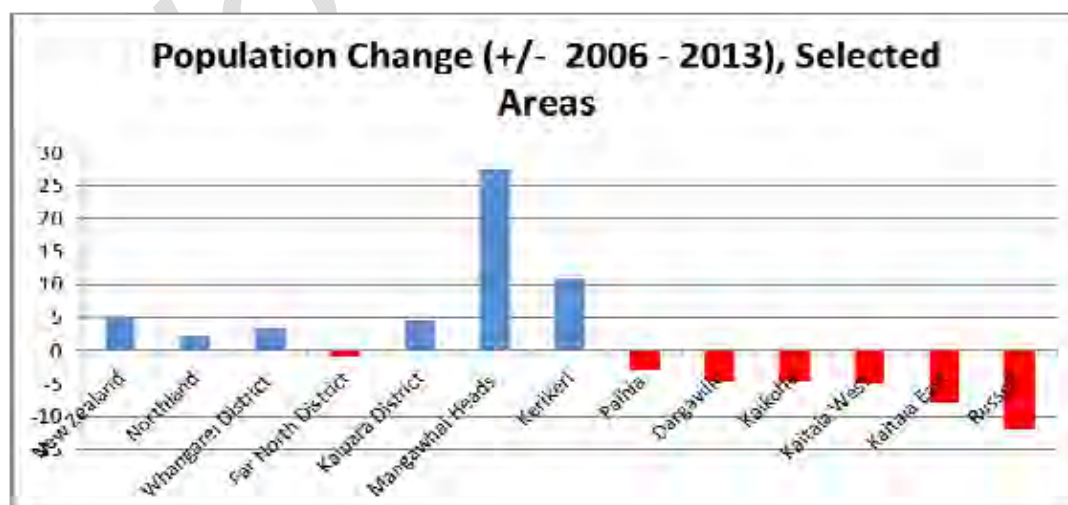
1.3 Key drivers for public transport demand

Population change

Northland’s population is changing with patterns of both population growth and decline.

Figure 5 shows average rates of change in New Zealand, the Northland region and the three districts of Northland. It also shows rates of change for Northland’s three largest rural towns – Dargaville, Kaikohe and Kaitāia (due to census data being separated into ‘meshblocks’, Kaitāia is represented as ‘Kaitāia West’ and ‘Kaitāia East’). ‘Lifestyle’ communities are also included such as Kerikeri, Paihia, Mangawhai Heads and Russell.

Figure 5: Population change in Northland’s communities



As can be seen, Whāngārei District and Kaipara District have seen an absolute population growth in recent years. In Whāngārei District growth of 3.4% between

2006 and 2013 (roughly 2,500 people) has been recorded. In Kaipara District growth of 4.5% (equivalent to 825 people) has been recorded. In the Far North District however, the population has declined by 1% since 2006 (equivalent to 114 people).

Rural towns have seen a decline in population; for instance, Dargaville has recorded a decline of 4.6%, Kaikohe a 4.8% decline, Kaitiāia (East) an 8% decline and Kaitiāia (West) a 4.9% decline. This largely mirrors national trends for declining populations in small rural towns. Population growth nationally has, in general, favoured urban areas and areas of coastal lifestyle subdivision (such as around the Bay of Islands). Forecasts suggest that this trend is likely to continue in Northland with the main growth nodes being the Kerikeri-Waipapa area and Whāngārei city, including its immediate coastline. Population growth may drive the need for more public transport both in areas with an established service (Whāngārei) and without one (Kerikeri).

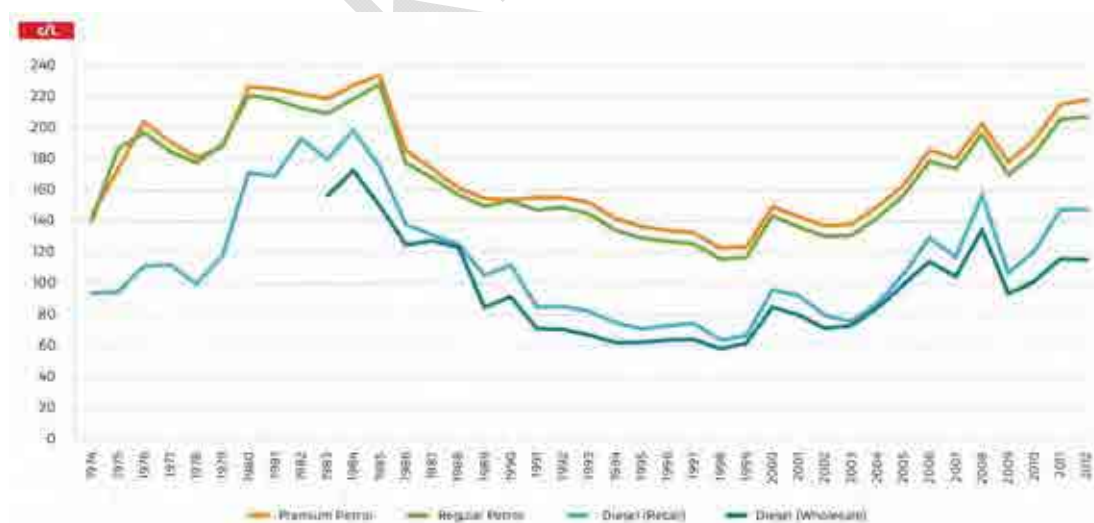
Fuel prices

Energy use in New Zealand is dominated by transport and the country is reliant on imported oil for almost half of our energy needs, making us vulnerable to international supply disruption and volatile oil prices.

The real price of oil has been subject to significant fluctuations in the past decade. Supplies are not expected to suddenly run out but are likely to become more expensive as demand grows and production costs rise. Forecasts indicate that in the medium term, oil prices are likely to plateau but remain at historically high levels, before increasing sharply beyond 2028 as accessible world supplies diminish².

Higher fuel prices will impact on the affordability of private car use for many people. Consequently, future fuel prices are likely to be an economic driver for the provision of public transport as a more affordable travel option.

Figure 6: Fuel prices (cents/per litre) New Zealand 1974-2012



Deprivation

Northland has high rates of relative deprivation compared to other regions of New Zealand. Drawing on results from the 2013 census, the following trends are apparent:

- Income has generally risen across Northland; however, it still falls below the national average. In this regard the future ability of the community to pay the local share for infrastructure and public transport is a significant issue.
- Unemployment is typically higher in Northland than the national average. Although national unemployment has increased since 2006, Northland has seen a more rapid increase. One driver of unemployment is a difficulty in accessing jobs and educational opportunities, particularly in more remote areas.
- Although Northland has a higher proportion of households with access to a motor vehicle than the national average, some parts of the region have areas with a lower rate of access. These areas also tend to suffer from higher unemployment and lower average incomes, implying there is a relationship between these different factors of deprivation.

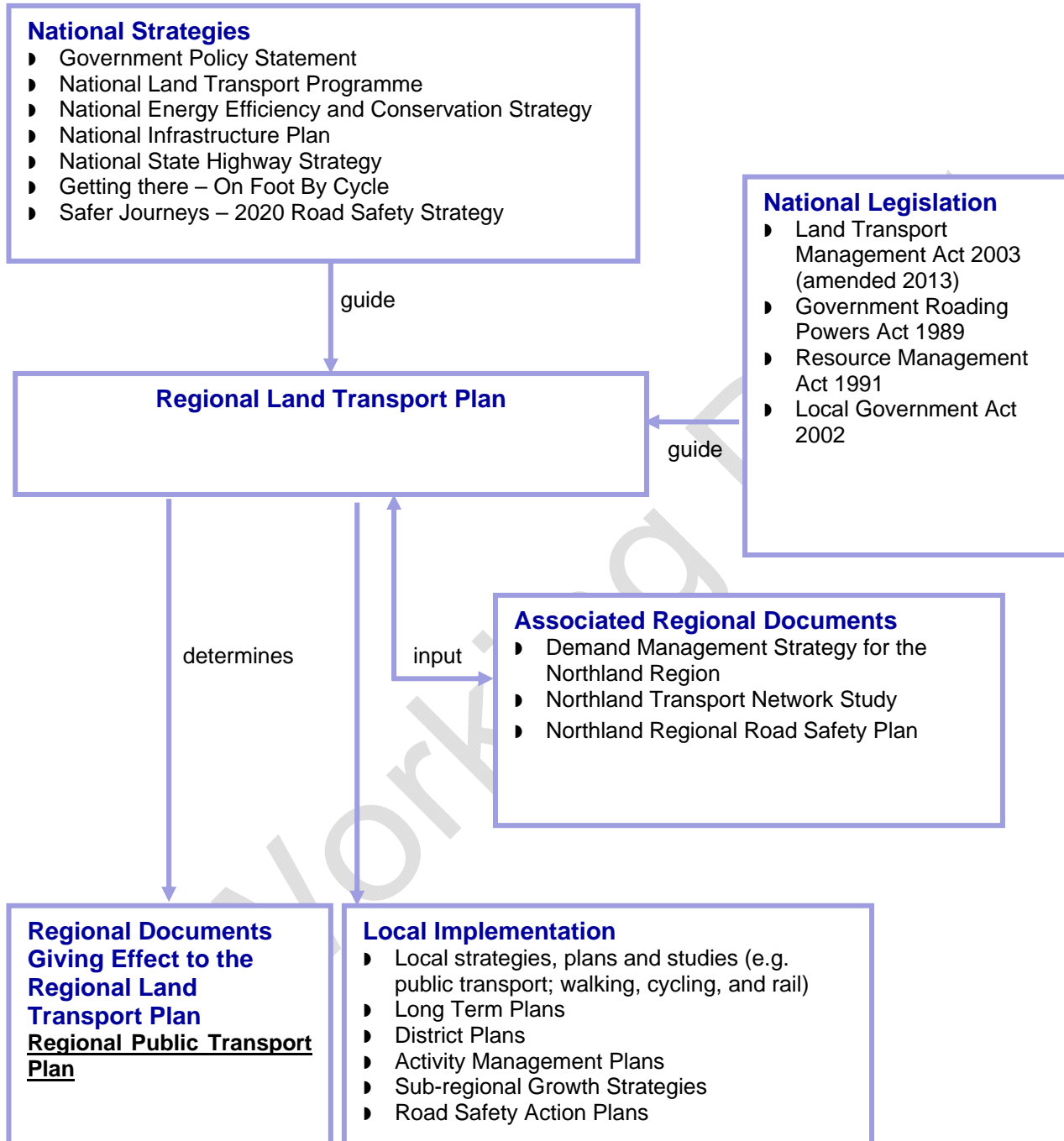
Aging population

Northland's population is ageing (mirroring national and international trends for most developed economies). A look at regional, district and selected communities shows that this trend is greater in Northland than the national average. As the population ages, demand for public transport and total mobility services is likely to increase. This will have issues for the planning and prioritising of public transport investment in the region.

Further details on these trends can be found in **Appendix 7**.

1.4 Legislative background

Figure 5: Regional Public Transport Plan fit in the wider policy environment



National legislation/strategies and plans

Land Transport Management Act 2003 (as amended 2013)

The Land Transport Management Act (LTMA) 2003 was amended in 2013, repealing the Public Transport Management Act 2008 and bringing the relevant provisions into the LTMA.

The amendments also legislated for a Public Transport Operating Model – a new framework for the planning, procurement and delivery of public transport services. Under this framework there is a strong emphasis on early engagement and collaboration between regional councils, territorial authorities and public transport operators.

The government expects the sector to respond to the aim of growing patronage with less reliance on subsidy and to achieve the following two objectives:

- Grow the commerciality of public transport services and create incentives for services to become fully commercial.
- Grow confidence that services are priced efficiently and there is access to public transport markets for competitors.

The new purpose of the LTMA is to 'contribute to an effective, efficient and safe land transport system in the public interest'.

The LTMA requires a regional council to adopt a Regional Public Transport Plan (RPTP) if it intends to:

- a) enter into any contract for the supply of any public transport service;
- b) provide any financial assistance to any operator or user of:
 - i. a taxi service;
 - ii. a shuttle service.

This means Northland Regional Council must prepare an RPTP because it administers – and rates for – Whāngārei's public bus service 'CityLink', and it administers the Total Mobility Scheme, which gives the disabled and elderly access to discounted taxi trips.

The role of a RPTP is three-fold:

- A means for encouraging regional councils and public transport operators to work together in developing public transport services and infrastructure; and
- An instrument for engaging with the public in the region on the design and operation of the public transport network; and
- A statement of:
 - i. the public transport services that are integral to the public transport network; and
 - ii. the policies and procedures that apply to those services; and
 - iii. the information and infrastructure that support those services.

Adoption of the RPTP will enable the council to procure services required to deliver an integrated public transport network.

Legally, an RPTP must:-

- (i) identify the public transport services that are integral to the public transport network that the regional council proposes to provide;
- (ii) provide an outline of the routes, frequency, and hours of operation of the services identified under subparagraph (i);
- (iii) arrange all of the public transport services identified in this way into units;
- (iv) indicate the date by which a unit is expected to start operating;
- (v) indicate the date by which any exempt service that is to be replaced by a unit is to be deregistered;
- (vi) identify any units for which the regional council intends to provide financial assistance;
- (vii) identify any taxi services or shuttle services for which the regional council intends to provide financial assistance;
- (viii) describe how the network of public transport services and the taxi/shuttles services will assist the transport-disadvantaged.

The RPTP must also specify any objectives and policies that are to apply to any units; and taxi/shuttle services. It may describe what are termed 'exempt services' but they cannot be subject to policies and objectives.

In relation to identified units, a regional council must include policies on:

- (i) accessibility, quality, and performance;
- (ii) fares and the method or formula or other basis for setting and reviewing those fares;
- (iii) the process for establishing units;
- (iv) the approach that will be taken to procuring the delivery of the service or services in a unit;
- (v) how the procurement of units will be phased in over time;
- (vi) managing, monitoring, and evaluating the performance of units.

The plan must also contain a policy on significance. Other actions can also be included in the plan (for example, actions to be taken by the Regional Transport Committee or a particular agency).

The RPTP must be current for a minimum of three years and a maximum of 10. It must be reviewed and, if necessary, renewed or varied at the same time as (or as soon as possible after) the public transport components of the Regional Land Transport Plan are adopted or varied.

In preparing a RPTP, we also have to prepare it in accordance with the Transport Agency Guidelines for the preparation of RPTPs², and take into account any national and regional strategies, plans, legislation and guidelines and the need to obtain best value for money in fair and open competition for tender. The council also has to consider the views of public transport operators, the NZTA, the transport disadvantaged and the general public.

Part Two and Part Three of this document fulfils the statutory requirements listed above.

² Under S124 of the LTMA

Government Policy Statement on Land Transport Funding

The Government Policy Statement on Land Transport Funding (2015) establishes the government's funding policy and priorities for land transport development on a three-yearly cycle with a 10 year outlook. The RPTP has been designed to align with the government's priorities described in the policy statement.

This latest policy statement continues the strategic direction found in the previous one, with a focus on economic growth and productivity, road safety and value for money.

Long-term public passenger transport outcomes the government is seeking from the National Land Transport Fund include:

- A land transport system that addresses future and current demand
 - Support economic growth and productivity through provision of better access to markets, employment and business areas.
 - Improved returns from investment in public transport.
- A land transport system that provides appropriate transport choices
 - Enable access to economic and social activities particularly for those with limited access to a motor vehicle.
- A land transport system that appropriately mitigates the effect of land transport on the environment.

National Infrastructure Plan

The National Infrastructure Plan sets out the government's overall vision for infrastructure which is:

- Our markets will function smoothly and efficiently, unconstrained by over-congestion, poor asset quality, or other infrastructure deficiencies that inhibit economic activity.
- Our infrastructure will offer appropriate resilience to natural disaster and changing patterns of use caused by climate change, rising energy prices and social, technological and demographic trends.
- Our economic infrastructure will be sufficient to enable all who are willing to pay their fair share of the cost to use it for social and business activities without impediment, while our social infrastructure will be sufficient to deliver the services demanded by the community wherever the social and economic benefits exceed the costs.

For transport the government would like to see:

'A variety of transport options will make New Zealand an easy and safe country to move around in and visit. The full social cost of each transport mode will be transparent and priced accordingly, enabling people and firms to make the best choice about how they move themselves, their goods and their ideas'

Regional/local strategies and plans

Regional Land Transport Plan 2015-2018

The Regional Land Transport Plan 2015-2018 is the Regional Transport Committee's document (prepared on behalf of Northland Regional Council) setting out how we will optimise our land transport programme aspects outside the National Land Transport Programme.

The Regional Land Transport Plan looks at the entire land transport network including public transport, the interactions between the different modes to achieve the outcomes desired by the community, and addressing the needs of the transport disadvantaged.

The Regional Public Transport Plan is prepared within the scope of the Regional Land Transport Plan and must not be inconsistent with this higher level document. In this sense, the strategic direction and priorities for public transport have already been broadly set by the Regional Land Transport Plan.

The Regional Land Transport Plan's public transport outcomes are:

- Our people have transport choices to access jobs, recreation and community facilities.
- A sustainable transport system that supports the growth and existing economic development of Northland and New Zealand.
- The transport system enhances the environmental and cultural values of Northland.

Outcomes specific to public transport have been developed for this Regional Public Transport Plan - these give practical effect to the outcomes above in the Regional Land Transport Plan³.

Long Term Plan (2012 - 2022)

Legally, council is required to produce a Long Term Plan (LTP) every three years. A new plan is being consulted on in 2015 which provides details on key long term goals and funding priorities for the period 2015-2025. Relevant outcomes in LTP 2012 – 2022 that public transport can contribute include:

- Maintain and improve the quality of Northland's overall environment.
- Promote regionally significant infrastructure and improvements that enable economic development, enhance the environment, and connect people and Northland to the wider world.
- Invest in Northland to increase all our communities' economic performance and quality of living and reduce disparities.

In addition, a public transport performance measure was included to increase bus patronage in Whāngārei on an annual basis. This has largely been met to date.

³ **Note: Appendix 1** of the RPTP contains a compatibility matrix of high level outcomes from certain national and regional high level policy documents.

Part 2: Strategic direction

This section contains the objectives, policies and methods for public transport in the region.

2.1 Objectives, policies and methods for public transport

Objectives to support public transport in the region are designed to support relevant outcomes from the Regional Land Transport Plan 2015-2018 (see Appendix 1 for compatibility matrix between plans). They are as follows:

- 1) An effective and efficient bus network in main centres
- 2) People have access to shared transport options
- 3) Reliable travel times and transport choice for communities servicing employment areas, retail and public services
- 4) Public transport opportunities on appropriate corridors
- 5) Transport management is effectively incorporated into land use planning
- 6) A procurement system that supports the efficient delivery of public transport services.

With the exception of Objective 6 which has been added to support the Public Transport Operating Model, these objectives are similar to those objectives that were in the last Regional Public Transport Plan.

The following tables contain the key policies and methods proposed for public transport in the region, giving effect to the objectives above. The package also serves to give effect to the broader transport direction expressed in the Regional Land Transport Plan.

Objective 1: An effective and efficient bus network in main centres

This objective seeks to maintain and enhance the service quality of Northland's main bus service, CityLink.

Policy	Actions
Policy 1.1: Maintain (and enhance where practicable) existing service levels for CityLink	<p>Method i: Continue to provide and fund (according to the regional farebox recovery policy – urban services) a low floor, accessible bus service in Whāngārei through competitive tender process. The buses used must meet the Requirement for Urban Buses in New Zealand 2011.</p> <p>Method ii: Continue to maintain current service patterns and frequencies in Whāngārei, subject to levels of patronage, and optimise these services through regular</p>

	<p>network reviews.</p> <p>Method iii: Develop a network plan which focuses on the expansion of service and growth of bus patronage within Whāngārei.</p> <p>Method iv: Expand coverage of the CityLink service over the longer term to include areas of new growth and development (for instance Okara Park) where feasible and where there is demand.</p>
<p>Policy 1.2: Maintain a fair and equitable funding approach to the CityLink service</p>	<p>Method i: Maintain a fair and equitable farebox recovery policy for urban services in the region (refer to Part 3 for the detail of the ratio that is to be applied).</p> <p>Method ii: Maintain fares at a level that will help meet farebox recovery targets.</p> <p>Method iii: Review fares on an annual basis and the structure of fares on a six yearly basis (refer to Appendix 4). A fare structure review should be undertaken in 2015.</p> <p>Method iv: Maintain concessionary fares for children (aged 5-14 or those still attending a secondary school).</p> <p>Method v: Investigate extending the concessionary fare regime to other groups (for example tertiary students).</p> <p>Method vi: Investigate new ways of funding the service, for example funding partnerships with tertiary education providers, and commercial sponsorship.</p>
<p>Policy 1.3: Improve public transport information for the CityLink service</p>	<p>Method i: Continue to maintain a text messaging and email alert system to provide information on the timing of bus services.</p> <p>Method ii: Over the longer term of the plan period, investigate the viability of introducing real-time electronic messaging for key bus routes in Whāngārei. The order of priority</p>

	<p>should be 1. Rose Street Bus Station. 2. High patronage/frequency bus routes. 3. Other routes.</p> <p>Method iii: Improve the publicity and signage of the bus service in Whāngārei including at key points (e.g. central business district, information centres at town basin and Otaika Road, Kamo and Onerahi).</p>
<p>Policy 1.4: Improve payment options for CityLink</p>	<p>Method i: Maintain the Snapper smart card system (replacing 10 card concession fares) and investigate the feasibility of incentivised pricing to further encourage the use of Snapper.</p> <p>Method ii: Promote Snapper to retailers and increase the number of locations where Snapper kiosks are located.</p>
<p>Policy 1.5: Regularly collate and monitor customer feedback on the CityLink service</p>	<p>Method i: Regularly collect information (as it relates to customer experience) on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Timeliness of service - Customer satisfaction - Passenger facilities - Complaints, resolved and unresolved.
<p>Policy 1.6: Improve bus infrastructure in Whāngārei</p>	<p>Method i: Coordinate with the Whāngārei District Council on provision of new infrastructure in association with public transport. As a priority seek to fund improvement for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accessibility, lighting and safety improvements at Rose Street Bus Station - Accessibility improvements at bus stops, especially for stops that serve those with restricted mobility - Accessibility, lighting and safety improvements at Okara Park - Bus priority measures. <p>Method ii: Investigate the potential for bicycle racks/ bicycle accommodation on the bus service.</p>

	Method iii: Liaise with Whangarei District Council to develop general opportunities to enhance infrastructure to improve security.
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Objective 2: People have access to shared transport options; and

Objective 3: Reliable travel times and transport choice for communities servicing employment areas, retail and public services

These two objectives seek to improve modal choice and accessibility to employment opportunities and services. They are focussed region-wide.

Policy	Actions
Policy 2.1: Improve modal choice in the region	<p>Method i: Work with providers of rural public transport services where possible to promote and develop non-contracted services.</p> <p>Method ii: Submit on resource consents/plan changes for new hospitals, schools, retail and large business, promoting travel plans and encouraging integration with public transport options.</p> <p>Method iii: Support transport connections between significant population centres and centres of employment and review bus services to ensure employment areas are effectively serviced. Ensure links to main health facilities (hospitals) are prioritised.</p> <p>Method iv: Develop and enhance appropriate multimodal connections (e.g. an airport bus link).</p> <p>Method v: Investigate ways to better integrate cycling into bus travel (mixed mode).</p> <p>Method vi: Promote parking management strategies for urban areas.</p> <p>Method vii: Develop rideshare opportunities. This can include highlighting opportunities for car or van pooling.</p> <p>Method viii: Promote and submit on parking management strategies for urban areas.</p>

Policy 2.2: Reduce the affordability gap.	<p>Method i: Investigate potential to access funding from alternative funding sources to support services in isolated areas.</p> <p>Method ii: Maintain support for the SuperGold Card scheme.</p> <p>Method iii: Maintain a fair and equitable Farebox Recovery Policy for rural areas (refer to Part 3 of this plan for details on the ration that is to be applied).</p>
Policy 2.3: Improve accessibility for those without access to a car.	<p>Method i: Promote individual travel plans for town centres that lead to creating walkable, pleasant environments for communities and visitors.</p> <p>Method ii: Investigate the potential for accessibility to be mapped in Whāngārei and rural towns/areas.</p>
Policy 2.4: Maintain support for disabled users	<p>Method i: Provide ongoing administrative support for the Total Mobility Scheme. Work with Whāngārei District Council to review subsidy rates in consultation with stakeholders.</p> <p>Method ii: Investigate the viability of extending total mobility to other centres.</p> <p>Method iii: Support and liaise with district councils to improve infrastructure for greater accessibility.</p>

Objective 4: Public transport opportunities on appropriate corridors where economically viable

This objective is focussed on developing region-wide public transport connections, both between centres and within centres. The services will need to demonstrate that they are economically viable (refer to **Part 3** below for more detail on this).

Policy	Actions
Policy 4.1: Develop and maintain public transport routes.	Method i: Investigate public transport services opportunities in other centres or between other centres subject to economic viability.

Objective 5: Transport management is effectively incorporated into land use planning

This objective is focussed on ensuring joined-up land use and transport planning decision making.

Policy	Actions
Policy 5.1: Integrated land use and transport decisions	<p>Method i: Ensure public transport considerations are effectively integrated into development proposals where appropriate.</p> <p>Method ii: Ensure demand management measures are effectively integrated into development proposals.</p>

Objective 6: A procurement system that supports the efficient delivery of public transport services

This objective is focussed on implementing the Public Transport Operating Model (PTOM) approach to contracting and operating public transport services.

Policy	Actions
Policy 6.1: Establishing and operating contracted services under PTOM	<p>Method i: Procurement arrangement for public transport services in Northland will implement PTOM. Services integral to the network identified in Part 3, section 1 of the RPTP will form the basis for PTOM units.</p> <p>A contract can only be operated for the entire unit and must meet the service specifications and contracting requirements in Part 3 of this document.</p> <p>Method ii: New PTOM units may be established during the course of the RPTP. These new units will be established using the following principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The unit will be a marketable whole servicing key destinations, targeting certain demographics including the transport disadvantaged - Establishing units in a manner that maintains a competitive and attractive market with a range of unit sizes across the region - Emphasis on financial returns generated by services and innovation - Exclusivity of operation - Economic efficiency and operational efficiency.
Policy 6.2: Identify specific services that are not subject to PTOM contracting-	<p>Method i: Provide for exempt services to operate in the region outside PTOM.</p> <p>Method ii: Maintain a schedule of exempt services for the avoidance of doubt.</p>

<p>Policy 6.3: Require robust information from public transport operators under PTOM contracts</p>	<p>Method i: The following information shall be required of public transport operators under contract to the regional council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Reliability (early running)- Reliability (cancellation)- Punctuality (late running)- Patronage and passenger kilometres.- Service inputs (in service kilometres and hours delivered).- Farebox revenue- Safety and security- Driver training. <p>These will be regularly monitored and reported on by the regional council where appropriate (refer to 'monitoring and review, Part 3).</p>
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Part 3: Operating and funding public transport

The Public Transport Operating Model requires all services in a region to be segmented into units and provided for under exclusive contracts to the regional council. Services that do not form part of a region's core urban public transport network will be exempt from operating under contracts and will be identified as exempt services.

3.1 Allocation of services to units

One of the major components of the proposed operational framework is the allocation of services to operational units. Each unit is made up of a service route or group of service routes operating to a timetable that applies to the entire route or group of routes specified for that unit.

As described in **Part 1** above, the regional council currently contracts two bus services – the Whāngārei CityLink service and Busabout Kaitiāia.

Whāngārei City-Link

This service is considered to be integral to public transport in the region.

It is not proposed to split this service into individual units for the following reasons:

- A split would be unlikely to deliver two or more 'marketable wholes', as there is in fact considerable overlap of vehicles and drivers on the services. Operating two units may result in increased costs rather than efficiencies, and could struggle to find operators prepared to add them to an existing business.
- Tenderers would be likely to want to group the units anyway, subject to the regional council procurement policy.

This service is classed as an urban service under the terms of the 'Requirement for Urban Buses'.

Unit	Service Level	Description	Commencement
Whāngārei City Link	Urban	Operates between Mon-Sat excluding public holidays. Existing service patterns and frequencies are outlined in Appendix 6 of the RTP.	New contracting period commences in 2016

Objectives, policies and methods on performance, quality and monitoring requirements for this service unit are outlined in **Part 2** of this document.

Busabout Kaitaia

Busabout Kaitaia is considered to be a rural bus service as it is a service that begins or ends in a rural area. This service provides an important function in the area in which it serves but it is unlikely to function as more than one operating unit due to the small scale nature of the service and low patronage and turnover. The service is maintained on an annual renewable contract between CBEC and the regional council. The contract contains levels of service and other standards appropriate to the rural nature of this service.

Unit	Service Level	Description	Commencement
Busabout Kaitaia	Rural	Operates mainly between Mon-Fri excluding public holidays. (some routes are less frequent)	Annually renewed contract

Potential Future Contracting Units

The following is identified as a future potential contracting unit. Provision of this unit will be subject to rigorous investigation verifying demand and funding availability.

Unit	Service Level	Description	Commencement
Mid North Service (Opononi – Kaikohe)	Rural	To be determined	To be determined

This service will need to be identified as a unit in this plan if it is to form a contracting arrangement with the regional council and receive subsidy (from council, NZTA or both). This will necessitate a variation to this plan under the significance policy – refer to **Appendix 3** – as well as alignment with Objective 6 and subsequent policies and methods in **Part 2** above.

In addition, other viable services may be identified during the course of the plan period. It is recommended that those wishing to access subsidy from the regional council and/or the NZTA refer to Section 3.6 below: (guidelines on establishing a trial bus service).

Total Mobility

The regional council will also continue to administer the Total Mobility service (policies and methods for Total Mobility are included in **Part 2** above).

Exempt services

The Land Transport Management Act (2003) requires all exempt services in a region to be registered before operation.

The following criteria are to be used to determine whether a service is to be exempt.

- Inter-regional public transport services;
- A public transport service that:
 - begins, or is to begin, operating after the plan is adopted;
 - is not identified in the plan as integral to the public transport network; and
 - operates without a subsidy for the provision of the service;
- Bus services registered with the council as a commercial public transport service before 30 June 2011 that did not offer fares in accordance with the fare schedule published by the regional council;
- A public transport service that began operating after 30 June 2011 that is not identified in the Plan and operates without a subsidy; and
- A public transport service that is specified as exempt by an Order in Council.

There are registered commercial services that operate without any financial support from the council. These are discussed in **Part 1** of this plan and include inter-regional bus services and school services. As these services operate independently, operators are able to set fares, timetables and routes as they see appropriate. Section 153 of the Land Transport Management Act (2003) states these services will be treated as registered exempt services.

In addition several ferry services operate in Northland:

The Rawene – Kohukohu (Hokianga) vehicle ferry is classed as an “excluded service’ as it receives subsidy from the road funding budget as an alternative to a bridge.

The Opuā – Okiato vehicle ferry service and Paihia – Russell pedestrian ferry service are classed as exempt services because they pre-exist the Land Transport Management Act and operate without subsidy.

Other than the Whāngārei CityLink and BusAbout Kaitiāia service therefore, all other public transport services in the region are exempt. For the avoidance of doubt, a register of exempt services will be maintained by the council. There are no exempt services that council intends to de-register and replace with a unit.

3.2 Sources of funding for contracted bus services

Funding for contracted public transport services comes from three main sources:

- Fare revenue from passengers (currently contribute slightly less than half of bus costs);
- The regional council, which raises most of its funds from local ratepayers via a targeted rate (currently contributes slightly more than 25% of costs); and
- The NZ Transport Agency, which matches the funding made available by the regional council (currently contributes slightly more than 25% of costs).

Other external funding sources may include but are not limited to:

- Paid partnerships with, for example, tertiary institutes;
- Partnerships with other government agencies (for example, the District Health Board);
- Commercial advertising in and on vehicles;
- Sponsorship.

These external funding opportunities will be investigated further during the 10-year period of the plan.

3.3 Affordability, best value and our approach to contracting public transport services

When considering subsidised public passenger services, the Regional Public Transport Plan must take into account affordability and value for money.

Affordability can relate to Northland's ability to source the required funding to operate such services through:

- National subsidies;
- Local share funding; and
- Farebox revenue.

This type of affordability is addressed in 'Farebox Recovery Policy' (**Part 4**).

Affordability can also relate to users ability to pay. Council's Fare Review Policy (see **Appendix 4**) provides a framework for monitoring fare suitability against various criteria, including affordability.

Value for money looks at how the various policies in the Regional Public Transport Plan might impact on the desirability of encouraging public transport operators to compete in an efficient market. This is particularly important if we are planning to introduce a new contracting requirement for bus operators through the Regional Public Transport Plan.

Value for money is a key part of the overall direction of the Government Policy Statement on Land Transport Funding. In addition, NZTA's 'early planning and investment signals' document, (released in November 2013), centres its key investment priorities and expectations for public transport on value for money outcomes. These include:

- The NZTA expects public transport services to be optimised within existing budgets.
- The NZTA's investment focus will be on services in congested major urban areas as well as maintaining and improving existing public transport services.
- Network reviews should identify efficiencies that can be reinvested in other public transport services that meet the investment criteria, consistent with other activity classes.

A network review of CityLink was undertaken in 2014 prior to the completion of this plan. Patrons of the bus services were asked whether they would support new routes, changes to timetabling and an increase in a single ticket price. The network review findings included:

- Support for new services, including an Okara Park service and suggestions on route and timetabling changes.
- Support for a more sophisticated fare system, broader concessionary fare usage and suggestions a fare structure review should be undertaken. Some feedback suggested the council should explore a zoned fare system.
- Mixed views on a proposed fare increase greater than \$3 for a single trip.

- Support for later buses on Saturday and a service on Sunday.

The council will take into account the 2014 network review when determining fare reviews and fare structure reviews (refer to Appendix 4) and optimisation of service frequency, route patterns and timetabling.

Approach to contracting

In determining value for money for contracting activities, council takes into account the 'Procurement Strategy 2014 – 2017 for Activities Funded through the National Land Transport Programme'.

The staged delivery model will be used for both the procurement of professional services and for the contracting of non-frequent single route bus services outside of a large urban area. This model is most appropriately used when there is a single service required (e.g. investigating a specific issue, developing a Regional Land Transport Plan, purchasing a low frequency single bus service such as a 'shopper' service). *Note: Busabout Kaitaia uses a tailored contract due to the specific circumstances of this service and its lack of national subsidy.*

A partnering delivery model will be used for the procurement of urban bus services in Northland. The partnering delivery model is the main delivery model for the procurement of scheduled urban public transport services under Public Transport Operating Model.

3.4 Expenditure on public transport

Northland Regional Council contributes financially to the bus service in Whāngārei through a targeted rate. The estimated total Targeted Transport Rate amounts to \$504,722 for the 2014/15 financial year. The fixed charge is currently set at \$12.54 for each separately used or inhabited parts of rating units in the Whāngārei district.

Projected figures in the Regional Land Transport Plan 2015-2018 show the total spending on public transport services in Northland up to 2024:

	2015/2018	2019/2021	2022/2024
Projected total spend	\$7,857,702	\$8,068,438	\$8,142,441

Figures are based on a combination of the national and regional share and based on current rates of inflation and a continuation of the current farebox recovery ratio (although see below for a discussion on how the regional council proposes to increase the farebox recovery ratio in Whāngārei). The regional council intends to seek NZTA funding through the standard assessment process.

Proposals for new subsidised services by the regional council and NZTA will be assessed on the basis of relevant information supplied, (see **Section 3.6**).

3.5 Regional farebox recovery approach

The council has to show how it recoups from users a “fair and equitable” amount of what it costs to operate subsidised public transport services. We do this through a “Farebox Recovery Policy” which shows how council collects revenue that isn’t subsidised.

How the policy contributes to key documents

A farebox recovery policy contributes to nationally and regionally important documents in the following ways:

Policy	Comment
Regional Land Transport Plan	This policy contributes to the objectives of the Regional Land Transport Plan particularly <i>‘a sustainable transport system that supports the growth and existing economic development of Northland and New Zealand’</i> .
Regional Public Transport Plan	<p>This policy contributes to the RPTP (which is reflective of the broad outcomes of the Regional Land Transport Plan including the development of a sustainable transport system) by ensuring an effective and efficient bus service can be run.</p> <p>Without a policy that is fair and equitable in spreading the cost of maintaining the service, the service would not be sustainable. Funding pressures mean that some element of user pays contribution is vital to supporting the service.</p>
Government Policy Statement on Land Transport Funding and Land Transport Management Act 2003	This policy contributes to national objectives in the Government Policy Statement and principles of the Land Transport Management Act in improving access and transport choices.

Linkages with Regional Public Transport Plan policy and objectives

The Farebox Recovery Policy is essentially embedded in objectives, policies and methods in the Regional Public Transport Plan. The urban component (below) of the Farebox Recovery Policy is supported by the following objectives, policies and methods in the Regional Public Transport Plan:

RPTP Objective	RPTP Policy	RPTP Method
Objective 1: An effective and efficient bus network in main centres.	Policy 1.2: Maintain a fair and equitable funding approach to the CityLink service.	Method i: Maintain a fair and equitable farebox recovery policy for urban services in the region-.

The rural component (below) of the farebox recovery policy is supported by the following objectives, policies and methods in the Regional Public Transport Plan:

RPTP Objective	RPTP Policy	RPTP Method
Objective 2: People have access to shared transport options; <i>and</i> Objective 3: Reliable travel times and transport choice for communities servicing employment areas, retail and public services.	Policy 2.2: Reduce the affordability gap.	Method iii: Maintain a fair and equitable Farebox Recovery Policy for rural areas.

Regional farebox recovery ratio

The farebox ratio has reduced slightly in recent years due to continually rising costs related to the operation of the service. The regional council proposes the following measures in an effort to increase the fare box recovery ratio to the national target of 50%:

Method 1: Improve operating efficiencies

Improvements to operating efficiencies will reduce costs and therefore improve fare-box recovery. The regional council in association with the transport provider is constantly monitoring the costs and revenues of services and investigating how to improve operating efficiency. Services with poor passenger loading and results on farebox recovery will be identified and efforts made to improve their performance. Changes may include better coordination and integration of services, which may for example be achieved through small timetable changes and/or route optimisation.

Method 2: Increase patronage

Increasing patronage will increase revenues and therefore improve fare-box recovery. The regional council will look to increase patronage by undertaking general and targeted publicity as well as improving service quality through improving infrastructure, maintaining high vehicle quality standards and optimizing routes and service levels to increase accessibility.

Method 3: Review of fare products and fare levels

Increasing fares will lead to increases in revenue and therefore improve fare-box recovery however balance is required due to negative effects on bus patronage. Small increases in fares may be required occasionally to cover the increases in costs of providing bus service. Other options may include reviewing the availability and eligibility criteria for concession fares, reviewing the levels of discount available and

seeking supplementary sources of funding. The regional council undertook a network review in 2014 and is proposing to undertake a fare structure review in 2015.

The farebox recovery ratio is calculated using the following NZTA provided formula:

$$\text{FRR} = (\text{Ft} + \text{S3}) / (\text{Fn} + \text{St})$$

Where:

Farebox revenues

Fn = Farebox revenues – net contract + commercial services

Fg = Farebox revenues – gross contract services

Ft = Total farebox revenues (Fn + Fg)

Operating subsidies

S1 = Contracted services

S2 = Concession fare payment

S3 = SuperGold card payments

St = Total subsidy payments (S1+S2+S3)

Urban and rural farebox recovery ratio

Council proposes to vary the regional farebox ratio across urban and rural areas in Northland to take into account the different circumstances in which they operate.

'Urban' – In Whāngārei, the regional council will strive to raise the current regional farebox recovery ratio for the duration of the RPTP to the national target of 50%. (Statistics New Zealand defines 'urban' as settlements of more than 30,000 people and 'rural' areas with less than 30,000. Under this definition, Whāngārei is the only Northland centre to be classed 'urban'.)

'Rural' – Recognising that it may initially be difficult to achieve the regional ratio in areas outside of Whāngārei, we propose a staged approach over several years. This would see the following ratios applied to establishing rural services:

1 – 3 years 30% farebox recovery ratio (NZTA 35%, NRC 35%)

4 – 6 years 40% farebox recovery ratio (NZTA 30%, NRC 30%)

7 years + 50% farebox recovery ratio (NZTA 25%, NRC 25%)

This approach provides a fair and equitable method of accounting for the particular challenges of running a bus service in rural areas, which account for two-thirds of Northland's population. It also contributes to the objective of establishing bus services outside of Whāngārei where they can be found to be economically viable.

At the time of compiling the RPTP, BusAbout Kaitaia has a farebox recovery ratio below the rural farebox recovery target. This service operates at the request of the public and, as discussed earlier, does not receive a national subsidy.

All proposed new public transport services seeking subsidy should, however, follow the guidelines listed in **section 3.6** below. Anyone wanting to operate new services should contact the council as early as possible.

In Northland it is considered important to maintain an affordable passenger fare to maintain and grow patronage. Too high fares have been proven to result in a corresponding decrease in passenger numbers. This will be particularly relevant for socially and economically deprived communities in Northland. Similarly, councils in Northland have limited funding bases. Should there be a significant change in the price of oil, this has a direct correlation with changes in passenger numbers.

See **Appendix 4** for information on how the farebox recovery ratio will be used as part of the determination of fare structure reviews.

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3.6 Guidelines on establishing a trial bus service

All proposed new public transport services seeking subsidy should follow the guidelines listed below:

- 1) Establish a need for the service through:
 - establishing demand
 - reviewing potential fares and routes-
 - establishing a willingness to pay (for example via a survey)-
 - reviewing social and economic factors in the applicable area (such as transport disadvantage).
- 2) Seek to have the service recognised as a unit in the RPTP. The regional council can assist in this process.
- 3) Source a local share through the Annual Plan or Long Term Plan process.
- 4) Source other revenue (examples may include grants, advertising revenue, and utilising spare capacity to carry freight).
- 5) Economic evaluation (a link to current NZTA criteria is included in Appendix 5).
- 6) Apply for NZTA funding.
- 7) Put service out for tender.
- 8) Demonstrate vehicles meet national standards for bus travel as set out by the NZTA
- 9) Undertake bus service for appropriate trial period.

3.7 Meeting the needs of the transport disadvantaged

Northland Regional Council is legally required to consider the needs of the transport disadvantaged as part of the development of this public transport plan.

The legal definition of transport disadvantaged is *“people whom the regional council has reasonable grounds to believe are the least able to get to basic community activities and services (for example, work, education, health care, welfare and food shopping)”*.

Key factors that lead to disadvantage include: urban form designed around the private car (accessibility), lack of modal choice, affordability and disability. An additional factor relevant to many rural regions is isolation.

The following table includes the list of key factors above and an outline of the groups affected along with a cross-referencing of specific objectives, policies and methods in this plan to address these factors.

Transport disadvantage factor	Groups affected	Relevant Provisions in the RTP
Lack of modal choice	<p>Households that do not have access to a motor vehicle, which may include older people and youth, are the main groups affected by this. This is closely tied to accessibility in that lack of modal choice (i.e. restricted to public transport use, cycling or walking) can act as a barrier to accessing more remote services.</p> <p>Northland-wide the statistics suggests this has improved recently. In the 1996 census 87% of people had access to a motor vehicle; this had increased to 93% in the 2011 census. This can be broken down to 93% in Whāngārei district, 94% in Far North district and 95% in Kaipara district.</p> <p>These figures, however, mask considerable local variations. According to the 2011 census, Whāngārei's Otangarei suburb had 65% of people with access to a motor vehicle compared with 82% in Raumanga East and 97% in Maunu.</p>	<p>Objective 1: An effective and efficient bus network in main centres.</p> <p>Policy 1.6: Improve bus infrastructure in Whāngārei (Method ii).</p> <p>Objective 2: People have access to shared transport options; and Objective 3: Reliable travel times and transport choice for communities servicing employment areas, retail and public services.</p> <p>Policy 2.1: Improve modal choice in the region (Methods i – viii).</p>
Affordability	<p>Households with lower incomes, youth and older people are the main groups affected by this. Income can be a barrier to owning and maintaining a motor vehicle or being able to afford to use public transport.</p> <p>There are also considerable variations in income in Northland. According to the 2011 census, in Otangarei, the median income for over 15s is \$14,500. This compares with a median of \$23,400 for all of Northland region, \$20,900 in</p>	<p>Objective 1: An effective and efficient bus network in main centres.</p> <p>Policy 1.2: Maintain a fair and equitable funding approach to the CityLink service (Methods i – vi).</p> <p>Objective 2: People have access to shared transport options; and Objective 3: Reliable travel times and transport choice for communities servicing employment areas, retail and public services.</p>

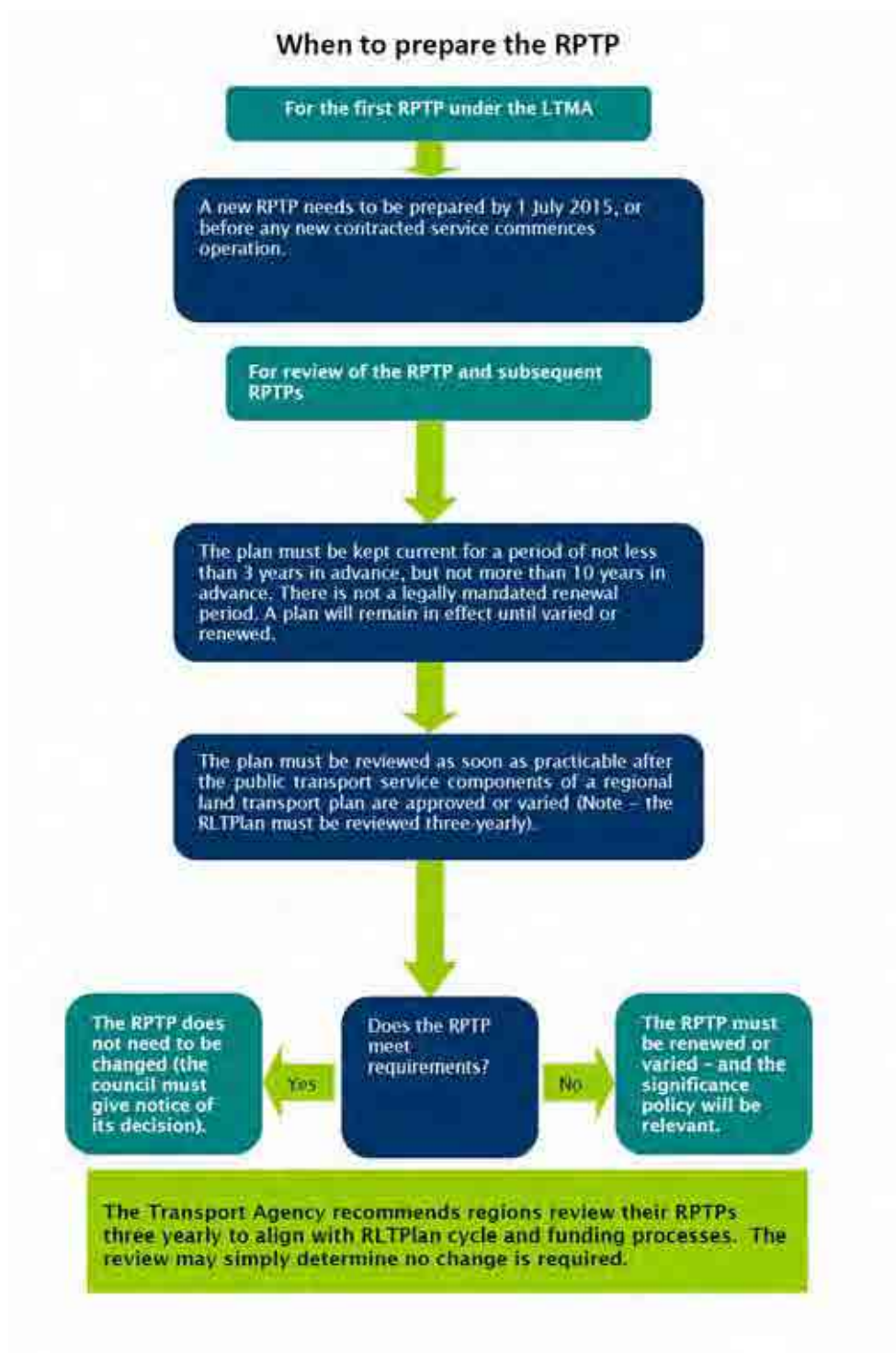
	Whāngārei's Raumanga East and \$27,600 in Whāngārei's Maunu. In Whāngārei's Western Hills area, this is even higher at \$32,500.	Policy 2.2: Reduce the affordability gap (Methods i – iii).
Accessibility	Accessibility is closely linked to the other disadvantage factors, especially lack of modal choice. Urban areas have developed around widespread ownership and use of the private car. Many facilities may be inaccessible for those without the use of a motor vehicle. Bus services may not reach outlying areas and distances may be too far to walk and cycle.	<p>Objective 1: An effective and efficient bus network in main centres.</p> <p>Policy 1.6: Improve bus infrastructure in Whāngārei (Methods i –iii).</p> <p>Objective 2: People have access to shared transport options; and</p> <p>Objective 3: Reliable travel times and transport choice for communities servicing employment areas, retail and public services.</p> <p>Policy 2.3: Improve accessibility for those without access to a car (Methods i – ii).</p>
Disability	People with reduced mobility, including older people and those with a limiting long term illness that reduces mobility, are mainly affected by this. Disability is a barrier to owning and operating a motor vehicle, using public transport (if not designed for the disabled) and walking and cycling longer distances.	<p>Objective 1: An effective and efficient bus network in main centres.</p> <p>Policy 1.6: Improve bus infrastructure in Whāngārei (Method i).</p> <p>Objective 2: People have access to shared transport options; and</p> <p>Objective 3: Reliable travel times and transport choice for communities servicing employment areas, retail and public services.</p> <p>Policy 2.4: Maintain support for disabled users. (Methods i-iii). <i>Note: Methods relate to total mobility scheme</i></p>
Isolation	People who live in areas remote for infrastructure and services in rural areas and	Objective 2: People have access to shared transport options; and

	<p>remote coastal townships.</p>	<p>Objective 3: Reliable travel times and transport choice for communities servicing employment areas, retail and public services.</p> <p>Policy 2.1: Improve modal choice in the region (Method i). Policy 2.3: Improve accessibility for those without access to a car. (Method ii).</p>
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3.8 Monitoring and review

Northland Regional Council intends to monitor the implementation of this plan on an ongoing basis. A review will be undertaken three years after the plan’s adoption. Further reviews will take place on three-year cycles until 2024 when a new plan will be prepared. Each review will be undertaken concurrently with reviews of the Regional Land Transport Plan. The review of the RPTP may determine that no significant change to the plan is necessary (having regard to the significance policy in **Appendix 3** below).



Monitoring of the plan will be undertaken using the following key performance indicators.

Service delivery performance indicators

- Patronage – total public transport boardings and by category.
- Passenger km – total passenger kilometres travelled.
- Fare box revenue – fare box revenue by time period.
- Service reliability – scheduled trips completed in full.
- Service punctuality – trip start, en route and at destination.
- Customer satisfaction – for public transport users.
- Disability access - proportion of services with disability access.
- Patronage growth – total patronage growth on all services.

Public Transport Operating Model performance indicators

- Contract negotiations
- Average number of qualifying bids/tenderers
- % of tenders with only one bid
- Operator turnover of contracts

Procurement measure performance indicators

- Reporting timeliness – number of supplier reports delivered within timeframes.
- Service inputs – in-service bus hours and kilometres delivered.
- Safety and security – maintenance of an up-to-date incident register.
- Fleet composition – conformance with fleet composition in contract.
- Complaints – percentage cleared within 10 working days.
- Farebox Recovery Ratio

Appendix 1: Compatibility matrix between high-level outcomes of national and regional documents

The table below demonstrates how the Regional Public Transport Plan fits with the high level outcomes from key national and regional policy documents.

Regional Public Transport Plan	Regional Land Transport Plan (2015-2018)	Northland Regional Council Long Term Plan (2012-2022)	Public Transport Outcomes from the Government Policy Statement (2015/16-2024/25)
Effective and efficient bus network in main centres.	<p>A sustainable transport system that supports the growth and existing economic development of Northland and New Zealand.</p> <p>Our people have transport choices to access jobs, recreation and community facilities.</p>	<p>Invest in Northland to increase all our communities' economic performance and quality of living and reduce disparities.</p> <p>Promote regionally significant infrastructure and improvements that enable economic development, enhance the environment, and connect people and Northland to the wider world.</p>	<p>A land transport system that addresses future and current demand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support economic growth and productivity through provision of better access to markets, employment and business areas.
People have access to shared transport options.	<p>Our people have transport choices to access jobs, recreation and community facilities.</p> <p>A sustainable transport system that supports the growth and existing economic development of Northland and New Zealand.</p>	<p>Invest in Northland to increase all our communities' economic performance and quality of living and reduce disparities.</p> <p>Promote regionally significant infrastructure and improvements that enable economic development, enhance the environment, and connect people and Northland to the</p>	<p>A land transport system that provides appropriate transport choices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enable access to economic and social activities particularly for those with limited access to a motor vehicle.

		wider world.	
Reliable travel times and transport choice for communities servicing employment areas.	<p>A sustainable transport system that supports the growth and existing economic development of Northland and New Zealand.</p> <p>Our people have transport choices to access jobs, recreation and community facilities.</p>	<p>Invest in Northland to increase all our communities' economic performance and quality of living and reduce disparities.</p> <p>Promote regionally significant infrastructure and improvements that enable economic development, enhance the environment, and connect people and Northland to the wider world.</p>	<p>A land transport system that addresses future and current demand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support economic growth and productivity through provision of better access to markets, employment and business areas.
Public transport opportunities on appropriate corridors.	<p>A sustainable transport system that supports the growth and existing economic development of Northland and New Zealand.</p> <p>Our people have transport choices to access jobs, recreation and community facilities.</p>	<p>Invest in Northland to increase all our communities' economic performance and quality of living and reduce disparities.</p> <p>Promote regionally significant infrastructure and improvements that enable economic development, enhance the environment, and connect people and Northland to the wider world.</p>	<p>A land transport system that addresses future and current demand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support economic growth and productivity through provision of better access to markets, employment and business areas. <p>A land transport system that provides appropriate transport choices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enable access to economic and social activities particularly for those with limited access to a motor vehicle.
Transport management is effectively incorporated into land use planning.	<p>A sustainable transport system that supports the growth and existing economic development of Northland and New Zealand.</p>	<p>Invest in Northland to increase all our communities' economic performance and quality of living and reduce disparities.</p> <p>Promote regionally</p>	<p>A land transport system that addresses future and current demand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support economic growth and productivity through provision of better access to markets,

	<p>Our people have transport choices to access jobs, recreation and community facilities.</p> <p>The transport system enhances the environmental and cultural values of Northland.</p>	<p>significant infrastructure and improvements that enable economic development, enhance the environment, and connect people and Northland to the wider world.</p> <p>Maintain and improve the quality of Northland's overall environment.</p>	<p>employment and business areas.</p> <p>A land transport system that provides appropriate transport choices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable access to economic and social activities particularly for those with limited access to a motor vehicle. <p>A land transport system that appropriately mitigates the effect of land transport on the environment.</p>
<p>A procurement system that supports the efficient delivery of public transport services</p>	<p>A sustainable transport system that supports the growth and existing economic development of Northland and New Zealand.</p>	<p>Invest in Northland to increase all our communities' economic performance and quality of living and reduce disparities.</p>	<p>A land transport system that addresses future and current demand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support economic growth and productivity through provision of better access to markets, employment and business areas. <p>A land transport system that provides appropriate transport choices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable access to economic and social activities particularly for those with limited access to a motor vehicle.

Appendix 2: Specific measures to meet objectives in the Government Policy Statement on Land Transport Funding 2014/15 – 2024/25

Public transport outcomes and results sought in GPS 2014/2015 – 2024/25	Regional Public Transport Plan for Northland (RPTP)
<p>A land transport system that addresses future and current demand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support economic growth and productivity through provision of better access to markets, employment and business areas. 	<p>The RPTP includes measures to ensure that links to key employment centres are prioritised. Services are kept under constant review and where demand exists; the council will develop or extend services to meet that demand.</p> <p>An additional service stop has been developed at Whāngārei airport, in collaboration with the district council, without significantly extending service time.</p> <p>Congestion is not a major problem in Whāngārei. However, it is an increasing issue especially in the CBD and around key junctions on SH1. Congestion is being addressed through road improvements around the city. The regional council will also work with the district council to identify opportunities for infrastructure improvements to improve bus services.</p> <p>The bus patronage on the subsidised Whāngārei service has grown steadily since 2000. It is recognised that there is the possibility that higher fuel prices and additional population growth could potentially drive demand further.</p> <p>In Northland, population growth is expected to be around 12% between 2006-2031. There are however considerable differences between districts –Whāngārei district’s estimated growth is 20%, Far North district’s is 5% and Kaipara district’s remains static. However, it is important to recognise that within districts, one part of the district may experience significant growth and another may experience a decline. It is therefore</p>

	<p>important to understand local pressures as well as regional trends. Growth is also being directed by sub-regional growth strategies.</p> <p>It is important that although Whāngārei is currently the focus for subsidised public transport, services and service potential are kept under constant review to meet changing demands across the region.</p>
<p>A land transport system that provides appropriate transport choices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable access to economic and social activities particularly for those with limited access to a motor vehicle. 	<p>The RTP will continue to promote Total Mobility, the Super Gold Card and bus links to key facilities such as hospitals for those with a disability or in vulnerable groups. Opportunities to expand these initiatives will be closely monitored.</p> <p>NZTA approved vehicle quality standards (which practically apply legislation) specify that bus services must be accessible to disabled patrons.</p> <p>In addition, Northland Regional Council will liaise with the three district councils and NZTA to improve infrastructure. Such opportunities might include kassel kerbs, sensory enhancements around bus stops, and information in Braille.</p> <p>In the longer term, accessibility to the transport network could be mapped, especially around areas of growth.</p> <p>The regional council is a member of the district council-run disability sector reference group and will continue its membership.</p>
<p>A land transport system that appropriately mitigates the effect of land transport on the environment.</p>	<p>The expansion of the bus network in Whāngārei has led to an increase in patronage and trips on the bus network. Further growth in patronage is possible as fuel prices continue to rise and the population grows. Bus engines are all fitted to Euro 4 low emissions standards which meet the current national standards. Bus travel can be beneficial for the environment as there are fewer greenhouse gas emissions per capita than from private motor vehicles. Northland Regional Council may also lend support to other commercial operators to follow suit.</p>

Appendix 3: Policy on significance

This plan can be varied at any time. However, consultation will be required in accordance with the special consultative procedure (i.e. section 83 of the Local Government Act (2002) in accordance with s20(1) and s125 of the Land Transport Management Amendment Act (2013) if the variation is found under this policy to be significant.

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

The implication of not meeting the significance threshold is that the special consultative procedure required by the Local Government Act 2002 will not need to be followed.

However, the Northland Regional Council will undertake targeted consultation on matters affecting specific communities and stakeholders, even if the significance threshold outlined in this policy is not invoked.

General determination of significance

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

- Signals a significant material change to the planned level of investment in the public transport network
- Impacts on the purpose of the Land Transport Management Amendment Act 2013-
- Affects residents (variations with a moderate impact on a large number of residents, or variations with a major impact on a small number of residents will have greater significance than those with a minor impact)
- Affects the integrity of this plan, including its overall affordability.

Significant and non-significant matters

Matters that will always be considered 'significant' are:

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

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

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

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

- A matter that has already been consulted on, i.e. the addition, removal or amendment of any matter that has already been consulted on in accordance with the special consultative procedure
- Minor changes to the description of services following a service review, e.g. changes to the frequency and hours of a service which result in the same, or better, level of service
- Changes to the description of services or grouping of services as a result of an area wide service review, provided that there is no significant increase in cost.

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

Consultation for minor changes in the delivery of public transport services

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

Other non-significant variations

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

Appendix 4: Fare review policy

Northland Regional Council will undertake a fare review annually at the conclusion of each financial year. Such an approach will have regard to:

- The farebox recovery ratio, including the ability to meet the farebox share
- Affordability indicators such as the Consumer Price Index and other socio-economic indicators
- Service running costs including the price of fuel and indexation of contract prices
- Any other relevant factors.

Northland Regional Council will undertake a fare structure review every six years. Such an approach will review:

- The suitability of a flat fare model
- The suitability of different fare types (e.g. single, transfer, concession fares).

Appendix 5: NZTA economic evaluation criteria for new public transport services

The economic evaluation criteria for new public transport services can be viewed on the NZ Transport Agency's website at www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/economic-evaluation-manual/economic-evaluation-manual/index.html

The latest version (at the time of writing) was published in November 2013.

Appendix 6: Current fares and timetabling of Whāngārei CityLink bus service

(Correct at October 2014)

Route 2: Onerahi

Mon-Fri: 6.05am then approx. every half hour at peak till 6.15pm

Sat: 7.15am then hourly till 1.15pm

Route 3 Tikipunga via Kamo

Mon-Fri: 6.30am to 5.15pm half hourly at peak

Sat: 8.15am to 12.15pm every two hours

Route 3A: Kamo via Tikipunga

Mon-Fri: - 6.05am to 6.00pm half hourly at peak

Sat: 7.15am to 1.15pm every two hours

Route 4: Otangarei

Mon-Fri: 7.00am to 5.40pm half hourly at peak.

Sat: 7.35am – 1.40pm every hour-

Route 5: Raumanga via Morningside

Mon-Fri: 7.30am to 5.15pm hourly at peak

Sat: 8.30am to 12.30pm every 2 hours.

Route 5: Morningside via Northtec

Mon-Fri: 7.00am to 5.45pm hourly at peak

Sat: 7.30am to 1.30pm every 2 hours

Route 6: Maunu

Mon-Fri: 7.15am to 5.15pm every hour

Sat: 7.00am to 1.00pm every hour-

Route 7: Fairway Drive

Mon-Fri: Twice daily at 10am and 3.10pm-

Fares

Adult single - \$3.00

Child single - \$2.00

Under 5's free

Transfer fares

Adult - \$4.00

Child - \$2.50

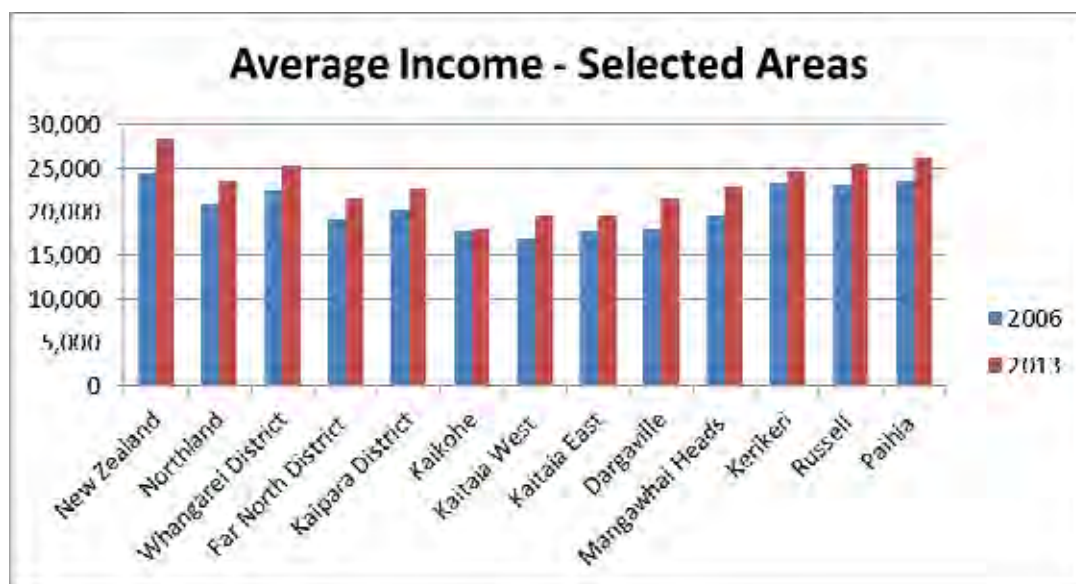
Under 5's free

Smartcard concessionary fares

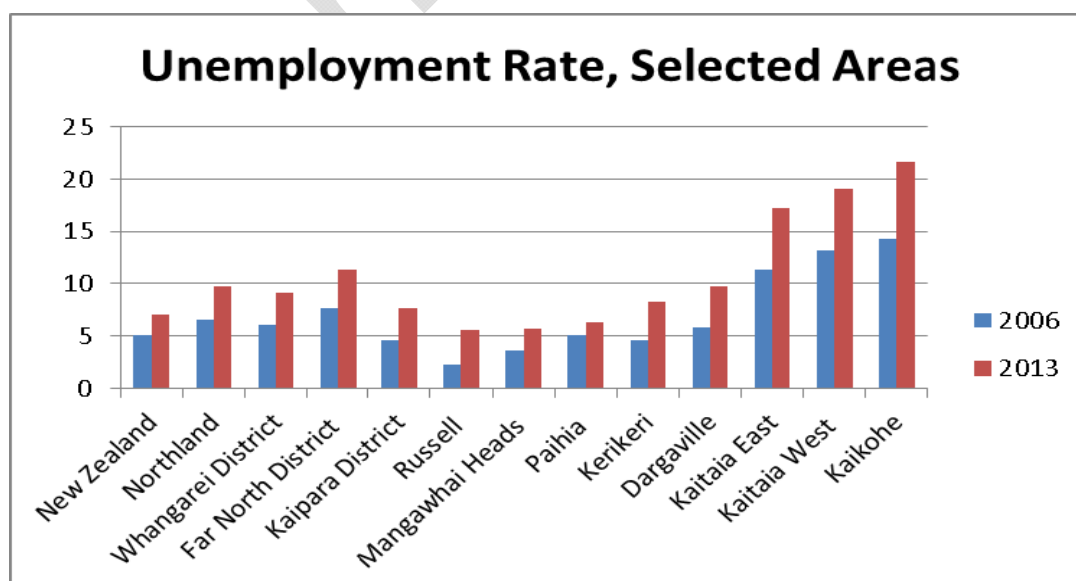
A child is someone aged 5-14 years of age (inclusive), or someone who is still attending a secondary school, and can produce a photo identification card as proof of attendance - \$1.60 per trip.

Appendix 7: Background census data

The following graph shows average income across some of Northland’s largest communities (excluding Whāngārei which is a special case due to its size and difficulty in aggregating census data). Since 2006, income has generally risen across Northland (Kaikohe being the exception in the graph below) however still falls below the national average. The ability of the community to pay the local share for infrastructure is a significant and growing issue.

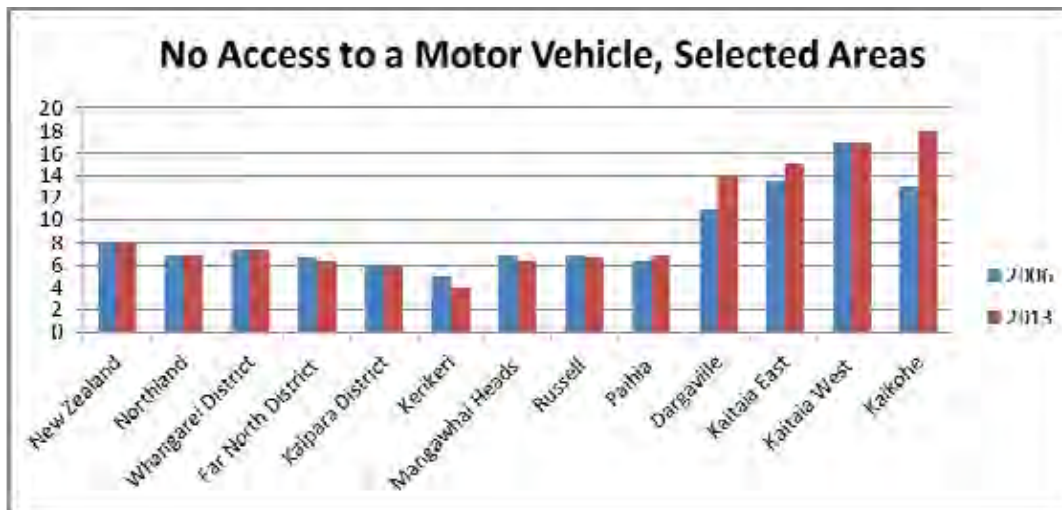


Unemployment is typically higher in Northland than the national average. Although national unemployment has increased since 2006, Northland has seen a more rapid increase. Areas that are particularly high and have increased markedly in recent years include Kaikohe and Kaitiāia.

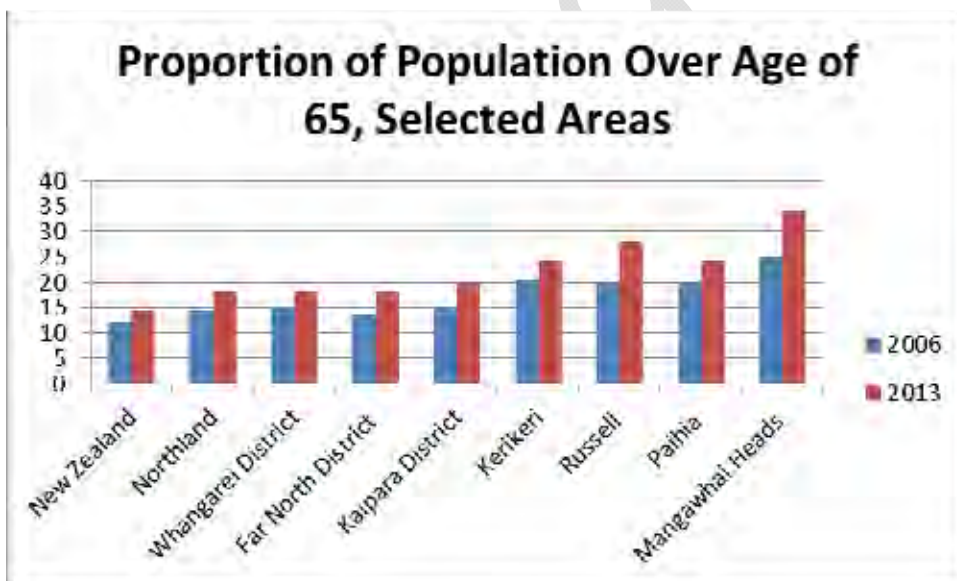


Although Northland has a lower proportion of households without access to a motor vehicle than the national average, some parts of the region do have some areas

where there is a lower rate of access. For those of working age, alternative modes of travel may include walking and cycling or sharing a ride with co-workers. As discussed above, Kaitiāia has a local bus service partially supported by the regional council.



Northland has a growing retirement community. The graph below shows the proportion of the population over the age of 65 in New Zealand, the Northland region and the three districts of Northland. Also shown are proportions for four of Northland’s largest coastal communities, Kerikeri, Russell, Paihia and Mangawhai Heads.



Northland’s east coast communities in particular have an older age profile than the national and regional average. The aging of the population is also happening at a faster rate than the national average, in some areas such as Mangawhai Heads and Russell, significantly faster. Those in this age group can have issues with reduced mobility which is a point to bear in mind when planning for public transport and total mobility services.

