

# Our Regional Transport Story

Herenga waka, herenga kōrero



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# Executive summary

## Kōrero whakataki

Transport is vital to everyday life, from going to where we work and play to getting access to the goods and services we need. The transport system shapes the places we live and how we live.

The Waikato transport system faces many challenges and with limits to what can be spent, national, regional and local prioritisation helps to decide what to invest in. Through meaningful collaboration, the Regional Transport Committee plays a central role.

By agreeing regional transport priorities, advocating for better outcomes for the Waikato and aligning what we do across regional and district boundaries our projects are more meaningful and our investment goes further.

With a growing population, changing climate, poor safety record and increasing demands for better services, it is more important than ever that our stakeholders understand how this system works so together we can build the transport system that our communities deserve.

We hope our regional transport story helps.







# Our transport investment

## Pūtea penapena ā-waka

New Zealand councils spend on average 25% of their annual budgets on transport (see Figure 1 below). Outside of core administrative functions this is one of the largest areas of council expenditure.

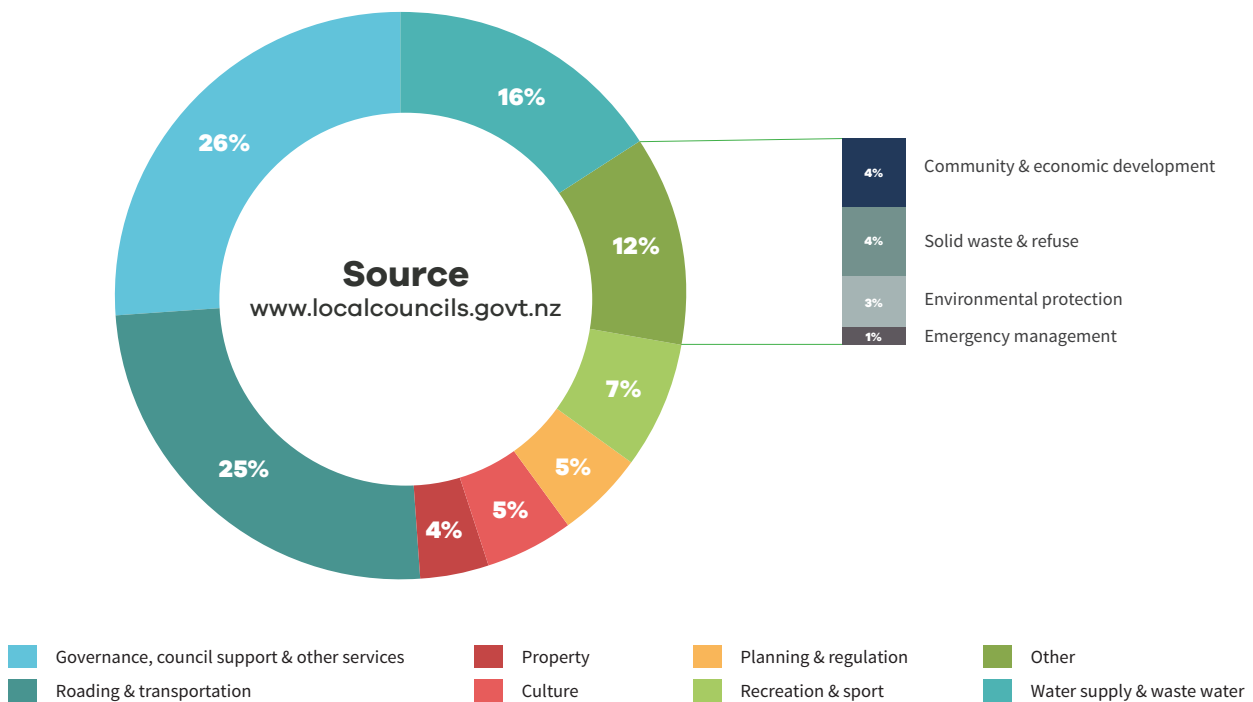


Figure 1 - Local council expenditure

In the Waikato region, transport spend varies a lot between council areas due to the different needs of the communities they serve and the services provided. This includes public transport which is provided by the Waikato Regional Council.

Tables 1 - Sample of Waikato councils estimated transport spend

Councils	Total annual spend (\$ millions)	Spend on transport	Transport percentage of total
Hamilton City Council	\$324	\$142	44%
Waikato Regional Council	\$152	\$32	21%
Waipa District Council	\$128	\$25	19%
Taupo District Council	\$129	\$15	11%
Hauraki District Council	\$47	\$9	19%

\*Based on annual plan 2019/20 expenditure rounded to nearest \$million

\*\*High level estimates due to varying classifications of transport expenditure and annual expenditure

With transport expenditure being such a large part of councils total spend there is a need to allocate funds to the things that will make the most difference. The funding system tries to achieve this by balancing national, regional and local priorities.





# The Transport Funding System

## Te pūtea tautoko

The National Land Transport Programme (NLTP) sets out the planned investment in New Zealand’s land transport system over a three-year period.

The NLTP is a partnership between local government which invests local funding (from rates and development contributions) and Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency which invests national funding through the National Land Transport Fund (NLTF).

The \$16.9 billion 2018-2021 NLTP includes \$12.9 billion from the NLTF and \$3.4 billion from local authorities. Government will also invest \$547 million in additional Crown funding to deliver specific programmes through the NLTP. The forecasted investment in the Waikato is \$1.6 Billion over the three-year period<sup>1</sup>.

To develop the NLTP approved organisations (e.g. territorial authorities, regional councils and the NZ Transport Agency) promote transport priorities through the RLTP while securing local funding through their annual and long-term plans. The RLTP is the regional view of where to invest to get the best outcomes. These projects are then prioritised regionally by the RTC. Once these transport activities have been regionally prioritised, they are prioritised nationally by Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency through the NLTP to seek funds from the NLTF. This multi-step prioritisation process aims to deliver maximum benefit to New Zealand.

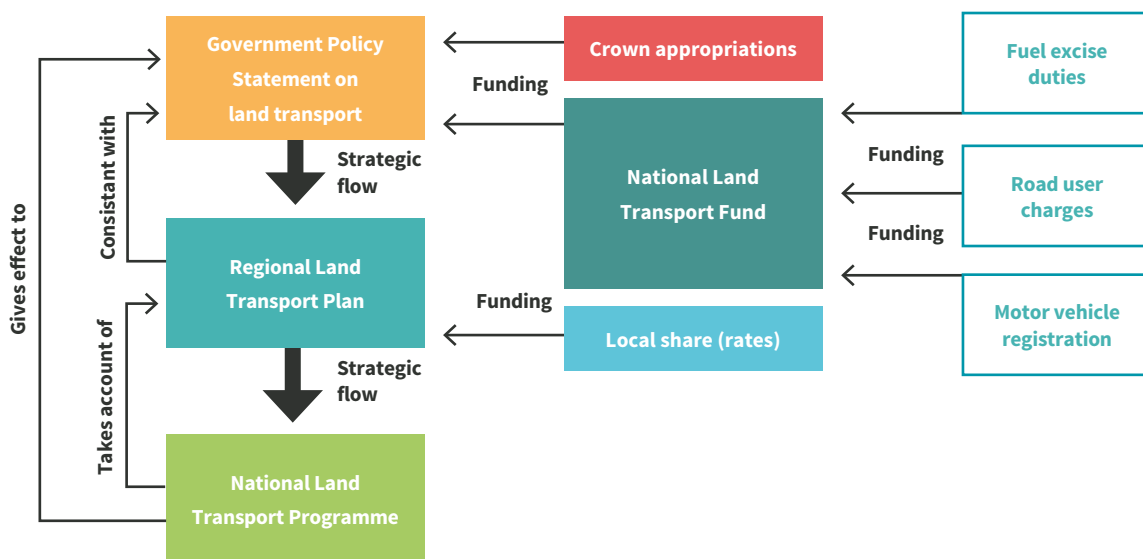


Figure 2 - Linkages between land transport documents  
 Source: MoT: Government Policy Statement on Land Transport

## Land Transport Management Act 2003 (LTMA 2003)

New Zealand’s land transport management system is set out by the LTMA. Under the LTMA the RLTP must support the purposes of the LTMA 2003 which is to contribute to an effective, efficient, and safe land transport system in the public interest. It also has to give effect to the Government Policy Statement on land transport (GPS) that is produced every three years.

1 NZTA 2018 Media releases: [nzta.govt.nz/media-releases/16-9-billion-investment-in-the-future-of-new-zealand/](https://nzta.govt.nz/media-releases/16-9-billion-investment-in-the-future-of-new-zealand/)







# The role of the Regional Transport Committee

## Ngā mahi a te Herenga Waka ā-Rohe

The Regional Transport Committee is a unique statutory committee formed under the LTMA 2003.

Although the RTC is a committee of the regional council, it is a collective and collaborative committee of all councils in the region with each having a voting member. The NZ Transport Agency is also a statutory member of the RTC, and in the Waikato, the NZ Police are appointed as a permanent non-voting advisor.

With each member bringing the views of their organisation to the committee it is the job of the RTC to bring this together and form a shared view of the region's transport priorities. The collective view of the RTC forms the basis of the RLTP and the regional layer in our land transport planning and funding system.

Each council has a voting representative...



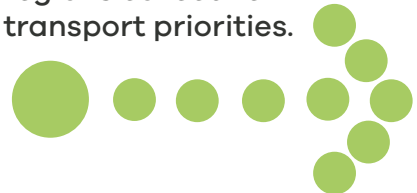
...bringing along their local transport priorities...



...adding their collective voice...



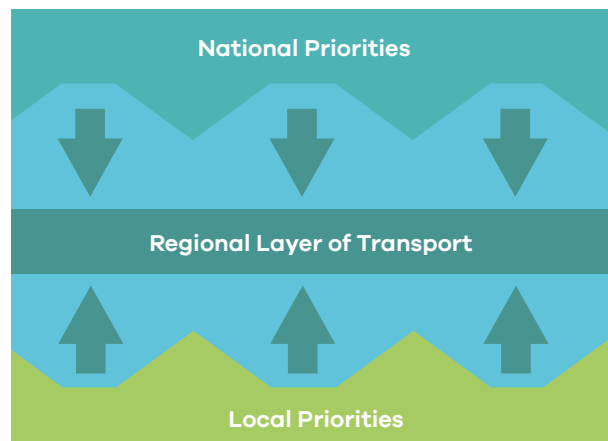
...to determine the regions collective transport priorities.



National and regional priorities don't always align. It is during these times that having a robust regional consensus regarding transport matters and coordinated advocacy is critical to working towards improved regional transport outcomes.

The regional layer of transport is important as it:

- Mediates national and local priorities
- Advocates for the region's transport priorities
- Supports the region in allocating its transport investment
- Provides an avenue for strong inter-regional collaboration.



# Some regional successes

## Ngā ekenga o te rohe

Having a strong regional layer in our transport planning and funding system enables us to:

- Look at the whole system
- Advocate for better regional transport outcomes
- Coordinate regionally to create build ready plans and ideas.

The following section highlights some regional successes.

### System view of transport

Taking a regional view enables us to look at the whole system across boundaries and organisations. It enables a strategic view of the whole system which helps us to focus on what will make the most difference to improve standards.

#### Case Study – Regional Road Safety

The Waikato region has a poor road safety record with road trauma incidents consistently one of the highest in the country. The RTC took a leadership position in championing road safety across the region establishing the Regional Road Safety Forum and promoting other road safety activities. The Waikato region takes a system view to road safety collaborating with wider stakeholders to address road trauma and transport safety.

The region took a road safety position paper supported by member Councils and the RTC when the Government went out for consultation for the new 'Road to Zero' national road safety strategy. A clear regional position has influenced the new strategy's direction. This position paper was undertaken using a system view of transport and the region has had a positive influence on the new strategy.

The region started working and developing a regional speed management plan and approach to assist with consistency across boundaries. The work in this area as a region has helped with the proposed changes nationally to address speed management.

The RTC and the region's coordinated efforts taking a system view to road safety has managed to make road safety a priority for all transport users.





## Advocacy

While the Regional Land Transport Plan and Regional Public Transport Plan must be consistent with the Government Policy Statement on land transport, the region can signal its own long-term intentions through:

- The regional priorities are in the RLTP
- Leading national initiatives, programmes and working groups
- Highlighting the benefits of wider transport, economic and social benefits in regional programmes
- Submissions on new policy and legislative changes
- Working with national transport partners and colleagues

## Build ready plans and ideas

The regional layer in the transport planning system is well placed to:

- Coordinate the response of multiple organisations
- Maintain cross boundary alignment
- Develop cross boundary and inter-agency business case
- Championing and collaborating ideas for execution.

This means that we can have plans that are ready to invest in when the time is right.

### Case study – Te Huia

Te Huia, the Hamilton to Auckland Start-Up Passenger rail service, is a transformational project for the Waikato region. It is being led by the Waikato Regional Council, with partners KiwiRail, Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency, Hamilton City Council, Waikato District Council and Auckland Transport.

Te Huia will provide an alternative mode of transport that regular commuters can use to travel to Auckland in a safe, comfortable and productive way.

The development of passenger rail services aligns with the Government Policy Statement on land transport which is committed to creating an efficient, modern and resilient transport system across all transport modes.

The project has been driven by the RTC and multi-organisation governance and technical groups. The strong collaborative advocacy for the project has enhanced the progress of the transformational service.

The successful funding of this project (\$90+ million) highlights the importance of advocacy and championing of projects combined with multi-organisation collaboration.

Source: [waikatoregion.govt.nz/services/regional-services/transport/rail/](http://waikatoregion.govt.nz/services/regional-services/transport/rail/)

### Case study - Waikato Expressway

The Waikato Expressway is expected to be complete in 2021. The expressway will run from the Bombay Hills in the north to just south of Cambridge passing to the east of Hamilton and the north east of Cambridge. The expressway will improve economic growth and productivity for Waikato, Auckland, and the Bay of Plenty through more efficient movement of people and freight to and from strategic destinations such as the ports.

With a total cost of over \$1 billion it will reduce travel times between Auckland and Tirau by 35minutes and save lives by significantly improving road safety.

The region's preparedness and long-term collaborative planning has led to this significant investment for the region. The project was consistently the number one regional priority across multiple RLTP's and its predecessor regional transport strategies and studies. The region is expected to benefit from the flow on effects of the asset which is expected to further increase economic productivity.

Source: [nzta.govt.nz/projects/waikato-expressway](http://nzta.govt.nz/projects/waikato-expressway)







# Some challenges ahead

## Ngā wero kei tua

There are many challenges facing the Waikato region, some large, some small. Many will require national, regional and local responses with some of these described below.

Tables 2 - Regional transport challenges

Challenges	Description	Potential Responses
Climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changing climate affects transport as more frequent severe adverse weather events (stronger storms and heavy rain etc) will disrupt the transport system.</li> <li>• Greenhouse gas emissions from the transport sector make up about 20 percent of New Zealand's total greenhouse gas emissions each year (MoT 2019).</li> <li>• The effects of a changing climate change can be seen and felt around the region in places like Port Waikato, Coromandel Peninsular and the Hauraki plains as the effects of sea levels rise and changing weather patterns change our coastlines.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investing in the resilience of strategic transport corridors and alternative connection.</li> <li>• Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions through more efficient cars.</li> <li>• Increased use of alternative modes such as public transport or active modes.</li> </ul>
Funding and financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are limited funds to meet all our transport priorities and needs.</li> <li>• Some councils are nearing their debt limits meaning they need to find other ways to pay for infrastructure.</li> <li>• Revenue for transport investment has been severely impacted by COVID-19.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using alternative funding and financing tools for transport investment.</li> <li>• Greater coordination and collaboration to reduce duplication and increase efficiencies.</li> <li>• Prioritisation of transport expenditure to address areas of greatest need.</li> </ul>
Transport safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deaths and serious injuries are a major strain on the wider society as its impacts affect the whole community.</li> <li>• The Waikato region has been the worst performing region for recorded fatalities for several years.</li> <li>• Although there have been gains made on road safety, road trauma continues to be a challenge for the region.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrated safety projects across the Waikato.</li> <li>• Focus maintenance on reducing safety risks.</li> <li>• Consistent, safe and appropriate speeds across the Waikato region.</li> <li>• Increased education and enforcement targeting high risk user groups.</li> </ul>
Increased growth pressures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A growing population place greater demands on transport infrastructure and services to meet their needs.</li> <li>• Population projections show Hamilton alone is estimated to grow from 165,000 in 2018 to 187,000 in 2028.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved integration with land use planning.</li> <li>• Optimisation of traffic flows and leveraging new technologies.</li> <li>• Increased public transport and active mode alternatives.</li> </ul>

# Summing up

## Ngā kupu whakatepe

The regional layer in the transport planning and funding system that is overseen by the Regional Transport Committee enables:

- Better alignment of priorities across the region
- Stronger collaboration across all partners and stakeholders
- A whole of system approach to solving problems
- Stronger advocacy for the region's priorities
- Increased investment
- The region to speak with 'one voice'
- Collaboration with neighbouring regions.

This helps us to face the challenges and grasp the opportunities that confront us today while building the transport system we'll need tomorrow.







**He taiao mauriora**

HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

**He ōhanga pakari**

STRONG ECONOMY

**He hapori hihiri**

VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

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**Waikato**  
  
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*Te Kaunihera ā Rohe o Waikato*