

Analysis of key issues arising from submissions on the Draft Regional Travel Demand Management Strategy

1. Vision, objectives and outcomes

1.1 The vision, objectives and outcomes were supported by the majority of submitters.

1.2 One submitter felt the vision was poorly defined and suggested it should include ‘an integrated and efficient transport infrastructure’. This submitter also suggested objectives and outcomes should be weighted to allow evaluation of trade-offs.

Comment

The submitters proposed wording for the vision is covered by the Strategy’s objectives.

1.3 The following additional objectives were suggested:

- i) reduce the need to provide new infrastructure, especially roads
- ii) improve the viability and quality of Passenger Transport (PT) services

Comment

- i) **adequately covered by the Strategy objective ‘ensure the most efficient use of existing transport infrastructure and services’**
- ii) **falls outside the scope of this strategy, most appropriately dealt with under the Regional Passenger Transport Plan (RPTP) currently under development.**

1.4 The following additional outcomes were suggested by submitters:

- i) an increase in the use of integrated public (passenger) transport
- ii) increased “transport work”

Comment

- i) **recommend new outcome ‘improved integration between passenger transport and other modes’**
- ii) **several existing outcomes in the Strategy address the issue of providing for movement of people and goods through the network by minimising low value or inefficient trips and maximising essential or high value trips.**

1.5 Several submitters advocated changing the wording of the **outcome** ‘maintain journey to work mode share’ to ‘improve journey to work mode share’.

Comment

It is noted that the region currently enjoys a very high passenger transport mode share. Maintaining mode share is in fact by definition actual growth of 2-4% per year,

which has different implications to increasing mode share. Walking also has a high mode share in Wellington compared to other regions. Maintaining the mode share of walking and cycling as an outcome means ensuring the proportion of active trips amongst all trips is not eroded. Any consideration of increasing the mode share by these modes should be referred to the RPTP and RLTS for consideration.

- 1.6 A private submitter disagreed with the outcome ‘maintain journey to work mode share’ as they felt it involved retaining rail passenger services where these could more effectively be provided by other modes.

Comment

Mode types are separated into Active, Passenger Transport and Car (pg 32 of strategy) for the purpose of this outcome (in addition to the associated performance indicator and target). The viability and effectiveness of different types of PT is most appropriately addressed under the RPTP. However it is noted that the Rail Business Case analysis which supported the retention of urban rail services, has been accepted by Land Transport NZ.

- 1.7 Wellington City Council (WCC) suggested rewording the outcome ‘reduced traffic demand, while maintaining accessibility’ to ‘limit car traffic growth particularly at peak times, while maintaining accessibility’ due to concern that the former may suggest limiting mobility.

Comment

This suggestion is considered an improvement. The wording of this outcome has been amended accordingly.

2. Targets and monitoring

- 2.1 Transport 2000+ commented that although maintaining 2001 base levels may seem challenging, a small vehicle reduction via TDM may mean 2001 Vehicle Kilometres Travelled (VKT) levels are achievable. They noted that the challenge will also be accommodating economic growth while maintaining stable VKT.

Comment

The Strategy’s VKT target of 1008 annual million kilometres travelled is nearly 20% below the modelled 2016 forecast. Achieving such a reduction in the face of a continued preference for private transport is a key challenge for all the non-riding investment programmes.

- 2.2 WCC felt the use of 2001 as a base figure was too simplistic and preferred to see greater explanation around target selection. They also wanted to see a robust monitoring regime to determine measurable benefits from travel demand management (TDM).

Comment

2001 is the latest Census year, so there is verifiable, independent objective national and regional data for this year but not for any more recent year. Choosing 2001 means that Census data is the reference, and data/targets can be updated in Census years 2006, 2011 etc. We have consistently used the latest Census year as the base year throughout the RLTS for this reason.

- 2.3 Cycle Aware Wellington (CAW) would like to see an indicator for ‘accessibility – walking and cycling’ included and would like a target for cycle use to focus on increasing mode share.

Comment

The Regional Cycling and Pedestrian Strategies and the RLTS Annual Monitoring Report include specific indicators for these modes. The Strategy includes a target for ‘active’ modes under the performance indicator ‘maintain journey to work mode share’.

- 2.4 The Green Party submitted that zero traffic growth should be a clear goal. Another submitter suggested that the Strategy targets in relation to greenhouse gas and fuel use do not go far enough and that the aim should be to eliminate urban use of private cars.

Comment

The current policy setting for the proposed RLTS is to reduce the rate of traffic growth rather than achieve zero growth which would require a major policy change. It is noted that such a goal is unlikely to be achievable without road pricing measures which are still being investigated as part of this strategy.

- 2.5 An individual submitter felt that the measures in the Strategy would not contribute to achieving any of the targets and much more drastic measures would be required to do so.

Comment

Both pricing and non-pricing TDM measures have a role to play in influencing travel behaviour. If ‘hard’ measures such as road pricing are introduced in the region, these will need to be supported by ‘soft’ measures which improve people’s choices and ensure alternative transport modes are available. Experience from overseas and within New Zealand suggests there is significant benefit to be gained from the levels of TDM investment proposed by this strategy.

3. Passenger transport

- 3.1 Most submitters felt that a high quality, frequent, reliable, cost-effective passenger transport system is best way to cope with demand for transport and support travel demand management initiatives. Many submitters highlighted the need for adequate funding of PT to ensure infrastructure is in place for modal shift created by travel demand management.

Comment

Agreed. This message is consistent with the feedback in relation to Strategic Options and the Wellington Regional Strategy (WRS) Growth Framework consultation processes. This matter is being considered by the RLTS review Strategic Options process.

- 3.2 Many submitters also noted a need to focus on integration between PT and other modes. This included comments relating to park and ride and cycle storage at rail and bus stations, carriage of cycles on trains, and bicycle hire in the Central Business District (CBD) to complete a journey.

Comment

Agreed. Integration of PT with other modes is recognised as an important issue and is currently addressed in the Regional Cycling and Pedestrian Strategies, and should be progressed further under the Regional PT Plan.

- 3.3 Strong support was indicated in the submissions for bus lanes and High Occupancy Toll (HOT)/High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes. Many submitters felt these were a particularly effective way of improving the attractiveness of PT and the value of road corridors for direct bus services.

Comment

Agreed. This is to be progressed under the Integrated Network Management Plan initiative in the Strategy's action programme and through the development of a Wellington CBD corridor plan.

- 3.4 Several submitters noted that the potential for electrification of new and existing PT in Wellington as a good way to reduce vehicle emissions.

Comment

This issues is most appropriately dealt with by the Greater Wellington's support for replacement of the trolley bus fleet is also noted.

- 3.5 Regional Public Health (RPH) noted that the PT needs of elderly, disabled, and people in lower socio-economic areas should be taken into consideration and that the RLTC needs to actively promote PT use.

Comment

These issues are most appropriately dealt with by the RPTP and the RLTS review process.

- 3.6 Victoria University of Wellington (VUW) and VUW Students Association called for more frequent, extended services and subsidised fares for students travelling by PT between campuses and to/from the University.

Comment

The detailed comment from Victoria University of Wellington is most appropriately dealt with under the RPTP currently under development and will be referred to this process. The potential for Victoria University of Wellington to be involved in development of a travel plan under this strategy's Travel Plan Programme should also be considered.

4. Walking and cycling

- 4.1 Many submitters supported the promotion of walking and cycling in the Strategy as alternative sustainable and healthy modes.
- 4.2 Many submitters noted that enhanced pedestrian and cycling facilities, along with improved safety for pedestrians and cyclists will be necessary to aid the increased use of active modes.
- 4.3 Several submitters noted that effective cycle ways, isolated from the main stream of traffic, are needed in many places to ensure cyclist safety. These should be designed to enable longer distances to be travelled and constant speeds maintained.
- 4.4 CAW noted the need to raise the profile of cycling which is often seen as unsafe and cyclists labelled a nuisance.

Comment

The Regional Pedestrian and Cycling Strategy's are complimentary to this Strategy and include an integrated package of actions to address these types of issues. However it is noted that the successful provision of walking and cycling facilities and programmes relies on a commitment from the relevant territorial and road controlling authorities.

5. Health and wellbeing

- 5.1 Several submitters noted that travel demand management can have important benefits to the health and wellbeing of the population. Regional Public Health (RPH) noted that obesity and lack of physical activity are strongly related to the physical environment, urban design, and convenience of motorised transport. RPH noted the Regional Land Transport Committee (RLTC) have an important role in ensuring healthy travel choices are easy.

Comment

The Regional TDM Strategy recognises the potential health benefits of initiatives which promote active modes and PT use, reduce car use for short and medium length trips, and support integrated land use planning all of which will contribute to addressing these issues.

- 5.2 RPH recommend the RLTC adopt the Strategy, substantially increase allocated funding for travel demand management, and increase their role in promoting active modes and public transport.

Comment

Consideration is being given to increasing investment in TDM, PT, walking and cycling initiatives through the Strategic Options RLTS review process.

6. Freight

- 6.1 Several submitters noted the importance of shifting freight from road to rail to achieve a reduction in vehicles volumes on the roads and associated impacts.

Comment

Agreed. The potential to reduce road congestion and emissions by shifting long distance freight from road to rail is recognised. This will be progressed further through the development of a Regional Freight Strategy.

7. Integrated land use and transportation

- 7.1 The majority of submitters indicated strong support for the initiative to support integrated land use planning which reduces traffic demand. Several submitters noted that the Strategy should take a stronger stance on this issue.

Comment

Land use decision making processes fall outside the TDM and RLTS processes, therefore Greater Wellington (GW) is limited to a support and advocacy role in relation to these issues.

- 7.2 A number of submitters suggested that integrated land use planning be extended to:
- Promote cohesive urban design;
 - Actively facilitate commercial developments which will decrease the propensity for car use;
 - Expand the issue to recognise that poorly designed and located transport infrastructure can have a detrimental impact on travel decisions;
 - Encourage businesses to locate in areas where the workforce is located;
 - Require new suburban developments are accessible by bus;
 - Require developers of new subdivisions to carry the cost of analysis and mitigation of associated traffic flows.

Comment

Further explanation of this issue has been added to the Strategy to incorporate relevant comments from submitters.

- 7.3 WCC expressed a wish to see this initiative called ‘Integrated Land Use and Transportation Planning’ to reflect the fact that travel can be directly influenced by land use development.

Comment

The Strategy text has been amended to ‘Integrated Land Use & Transportation’ throughout the document.

8. Travel behaviour change and travel plans

- 8.1 Travel behaviour change and travel planning initiatives were supported by the majority of submitters.
- 8.2 The potential for school travel plans to contribute to reducing traffic and health benefits was recognised and strongly supported by many submitters. Support for workplace travel plans was also noted.

Comment

Development of a detailed travel plan programme is to be progressed under the Strategy’s action programme and is likely to involve coordination and development of school travel plans.

- 8.3 Stagecoach NZ suggested the Strategy should formally investigate pro’s and con’s of varying school hours to stagger peak flows resulting from journey to work and school.

Comment

Research of this nature may be more appropriately carried out at the national level. However there is potential for the idea to be progressed through individual school travel plans.

9. Traffic management measures

- 9.1 Several submitters commented on these initiatives, noting support for the range of tools proposed.
- 9.2 Transit noted the recent installation of an Advanced Traffic Management System (ATMS) in Ngauranga Gorge and planned future implementation for other parts of SH1 and SH2. Transit also supported the proposal for coordination of traffic signals to improve traffic flow and noted they believe a review of the SCATS system (Sydney Coordinated Area Traffic System) through Wellington is required.

Comment

These issues are to be progressed through the Strategy action involving development and implementation of an integrated network management plan. Transit is the lead agency under this action with territorial authorities and GWRC having a secondary role.

- 9.3 Many submitters supported the provision of HOV lanes, as mentioned previously under passenger transport issues. An individual submitter suggested that ‘traffic calming’ be added under traffic management tools.

Comment

The strategy has been amended to make reference to traffic calming as a traffic management tool which can influence travel behaviour.

10. Road pricing

- 10.1 Road pricing was generally supported by a majority of submitters. Several submitters believe hard measures to be crucial if any real change in travel behaviour is to be achieved.
- 10.2 Other submitters were supportive with various condition's as set out below:
- Road pricing needs to be supported by prior enhancement of the PT system so it is reliable, attractive and affordable, and can accommodate displaced car journeys;
 - Road pricing be supported by extension of rail south through the Wellington CBD and ultimately to the international airport;
 - Income from road pricing should be used to subsidise PT or invest in new infrastructure;
 - Road pricing must be carefully applied with full consideration given to the social and economic impacts;
 - Road pricing should only be applied at congestion points to encourage a balanced network;
 - Use of cordon charges at screenlines should be carefully designed to minimise adverse impacts on local traffic, local road network, and adjoining communities;
 - General public acceptance of the scheme should be achieved prior to introduction.
- 10.3 Transit recognise road pricing as a potential TDM method and wish to be involved in future investigation of road pricing options. Transit also noted that road pricing should be all encompassing and include price and supply of car parking.
- 10.4 WCC support the need for further investigation of road pricing before it can be introduced to determine – need, expense, risk, and economic impacts.
- 10.5 One submitter stated they do not believe congestion is bad enough to warrant road pricing, however road pricing may be useful to fund region's roading or transport needs in addition to tolling new roads.

Comment

Agree that it is important to ensure people have a viable alternative and that the PT system has extra capacity to cope with additional patronage. Enhancement of the PT system is being considered as part of the RLTS review process and development of the RPTP. This will be important to support any future implementation of road pricing measures.

Car parking has not been included in the current road pricing investigations as the majority of all day parking in Wellington's CBD is privately owned and has been subject to significant price rises in recent times.

Agree that the full details and impacts of road pricing require careful consideration. This will be progressed through the next stage of road pricing investigations signalled by the Strategy. The submitter's comments in relation to road pricing will be referred to the road pricing study.

11. Peak oil and rising petrol prices

- 11.1 Several submitters raised the issue of rising oil prices in relation to the Strategy. Some submitters noted that rising oil prices may assist TDM initiatives. Other submitters noted that sustainable transport alternatives were vital to future proof our region's transport system and economy against rising oil prices.
- 11.2 A private submitter stated that increasing fuel prices are already inhibiting travel and this trend is likely to continue. They noted that a public communication strategy regarding resource constraints on mobility should be a first priority prior to practical attempts to change facilities or behaviour.

Comment

It is recognised that rising oil prices are likely to have an impact on the demand for travel, however there are many uncertainties associated with this issue, particularly with regards to the timing of the peak and decline in production beyond. Responses being investigated at the national level include measures to reduce private transport use, improve transport efficiency, and develop other forms of energy for transport. TDM will have an important role in relation to the first two responses by promoting and enhancing a range of efficient travel choices to ensure access and mobility is maintained in our region.

A new section has been added to the Strategy regarding the potential impact of peak oil and relevance to travel demand management in the strategy text.

12. Strategy funding

- 12.1 Land Transport NZ noted concern at the funding assessment in relation to the extent of Land Transport NZ funding, funding sources, and local share requirements. They note that as the proposed special case for increased financial assistance has not been considered by the board, no qualified feedback is available at this stage. Land Transport NZ recommends preparation of a business case for funding shares as detailed in the Strategy, for consideration by the Board.

Comment

The Strategy text notes that the financial assistance rates (FAR) shown in the action tables represent Greater Wellington's expectations and will require special consideration by the Land Transport NZ board. A business case will support funding applications for projects developed under travel planning and awareness campaign actions where a higher FAR is signalled.

- 12.2 WCC noted their support for the proposed \$30m funding for the Strategy over 10 years. However, they are unclear as to the role of local authorities and how funding will be allocated to partner agencies. Ask that the exact amount available for walking and cycling initiatives is clarified.

Comment

The \$30m over 10 years of crown funding for TDM, walking and cycling will be allocated through development of a policy criteria with involvement of the RLTC technical working group, on which TA's are represented and then agreed by the RLTC. Actual annual allocations should also be referred first to the technical working group and processed within the annual prioritisation exercise. It is noted that the Strategy signals that around \$2,525,000 per year to be utilised for TDM initiatives, leaving around \$475,000 per year for specific walking and cycling programmes through this funding stream.

- 12.3 Several submitters noted that even greater investment in TDM was required. Another stated that TDM should be treated as a cheap investment rather than a cost.

13. Other comments

- 13.1 Many submitters noted their strong support for the Regional TDM Strategy in general. Several stated it was a much needed initiative and should be implemented as soon as possible. The following additional comments were noted by submitters:

- 13.1.1 Congestion is not the only problem and more emphasis needed on the environmental and social issues.

Comment

The Strategy's outcomes and targets cover a range of issues in addition to congestion, including environmental issues.

- 13.1.2 TDM will require considerable effort from a range of agencies. It should not only focus on corridors and peak demand, but have a wider focus.

Comment

Agreed. Some initiatives within the Strategy focus on peak flows to and from the CBD, while others (such as travel planning, awareness campaigns, and integrated land use planning) can be applied throughout the region to promote efficient travel and enhanced transport options. It is acknowledged that travel demand management also has an important role to play in the development and sustainability of rural areas.

- 13.1.3 TDM initiatives should only be implemented if efficiency of the transport infrastructure is increased.

Comment

It is noted that an objective of the Strategy is to ensure the most efficient use of existing transport infrastructure and services.