



greater WELLINGTON  
REGIONAL COUNCIL

# **Alignment between the Wellington Regional Policy Statement and the Regional Land Transport Strategy review**

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**Unpublished technical paper**

## **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this paper is to assess the alignment between the Regional Land Transport Strategy (RLTS) review and the relevant policies and methods of the Regional Policy Statement (RPS).

## **2. The RLTS review**

The current RLTS was adopted as a whole on 15 September 1999. This was updated by the Western Corridor Implementation Plan in June 2000. The RLTS has been under review since August 2003 and updates include:

- a Hutt Corridor Plan (December 2003)
- a Wairarapa Corridor Plan (December 2003)
- a Regional Cycling Strategy (May 2004)
- a Regional Pedestrian Strategy (May 2004)
- a Regional Road Safety Strategy (September 2004);
- a Regional Travel Demand Management Strategy (December 2005), and;
- draft vision and draft objectives for the RLTS review (December 2004).

Other ongoing updates include:

- development of outcomes and strategic options for the RLTS review
- development of a Western Corridor Plan
- early stages of developing a CBD Corridor Plan, a Road Pricing Strategy, and a Freight Strategy
- development of a Passenger Transport Plan that is integrated with all the above activities.

The above plans and strategies will all be included as chapters in the draft RLTS to be released for public consultation in early 2006.

## **3. The Regional Policy Statement**

The purpose of the Regional Policy Statement is to achieve "sustainable management" (being the purpose of the Resource Management Act) by providing:

- An overview of the resource management issues of the region; and
- Policies and methods to achieve integrated management of natural and physical resources of the whole region.

The Resource Management Act requires that a full review be undertaken to a Regional Policy Statement 10 years after it becomes operative. The Regional Policy Statement was made operative in May 1995. Greater Wellington's review process commenced with a State of the Environment Report in December 2005. The report measures progress against the objectives in the policy

statement. The next phase of the review will occur in May 2006 with a “Discussion Document”. This document will suggest where changes may be required to the current issues, objectives, policies and methods. A draft policy statement will then be prepared in February 2007 and a proposed document in September 2007.

The following current RPS policies and methods are identified as relevant to the RLTS review:

**Air Policy 9**

Method 12

**Energy Policy 5**

Method 4

**Built Environment and Transportation Policy 3 and Policy 4**

Method 3

Method 4

Method 5

**4. Alignment between the Regional Land Transport Strategy review and the Regional Policy Statement**

This section identifies the RPS policies and methods relevant to the RLTS and describes the alignment between these and the draft RLTS.

**4.1 RPS Air Chapter**

<i><b>Air Policy 9:</b></i>	<i><b>Addressed through the RLTS:</b></i>
<i>To promote measures that achieve a net reduction in the emission of greenhouse gases and ozone depleting substances.</i>	✓
<i><b>Method 12:</b></i>	
<i>Through the Regional Land Transport Strategy, encourage energy efficiency, changes to fuels that contribute less emissions of greenhouse gases and the utilisation of public transport systems in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.</i>	✓

The RLTS objective ‘ensure environmental sustainability’ has a direct fit with this policy. The Regional Passenger Transport (PT) Plan includes improvement to the passenger transport (PT) network, which should result in increased patronage by making PT easier to use, more reliable, comfortable, and efficient. The Regional Cycling and Pedestrian Strategies include initiatives to improve the integration between modes, which will contribute to making PT more accessible.

A key outcome identified in the RLTS review under travel demand management (TDM) is the need to reduce the region’s land transport contribution to greenhouse gas emissions. The Regional TDM Strategy includes policies and initiatives to shift trips from private car to PT.

The RLTS review also includes the following draft policies which encourage this change in relation to public transport:

- Support trolley buses in Wellington City and their continual upgrade
- Continuously improve bus emission standards

Encouraging changes to fuels that contribute to greenhouse gases in relation to private vehicles is most appropriately addressed at a national level. Therefore the draft RLTS includes the following policy:

- Support government investigations into alternative fuel options and eco-efficient vehicles.

The above policy and method are generally well covered by the draft RLTS objectives, policies and sub-strategies, particularly in relation to utilisation of passenger transport.

#### 4.2 RPS Energy Chapter

<b><i>Energy Policy 5:</i></b>	<b><i>Addressed through the RLTS:</i></b>
<i>To promote a movement away from the use of non-renewable fossil fuels as the primary source of motive power for transport in the Region.</i>	✓
<b><i>Method 4:</i></b>	
<i>The Wellington Regional Council, through its Regional Land Transport Strategy, will:</i>	
<i>(1) Promote existing modes of sustainable transport and their associated infrastructure;</i>	✓
<i>(2) Promote, in the short-term, more efficient use of fossil fuels in transport; and</i>	✓
<i>(3) Promote, where appropriate, in the medium to longer-term, the progressive development and use of cost effective transport modes that are propelled by motive power derived from renewable energy sources.</i>	✓

The RLTS review includes policies, outcomes and strategies which promote existing sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling and passenger transport.

The Regional TDM Strategy promotes more efficient use of fossil fuels through initiatives which reduce need to travel, improve travel efficiency, and encourage a shift to more energy efficient transport modes. The RLTS review also includes policies to support trolley bus replacement in

Wellington, and to support government investigations into alternative fuel options and eco-efficient vehicles in the medium to long term.

### 4.3 RPS Built Environment and Transport Chapter

<b><i>Built Environment and Transport Policy 3:</i></b>	<b><i>Addressed through the RLTS:</i></b>
<i>To promote the development of transportation systems in the Region that:</i>	
<i>(1) Meet community needs for accessibility;</i>	✓
<i>(2) Use modes of transport that are powered by renewable energy fuels;</i>	✓
<i>(3) Use energy efficiently;</i>	✓
<i>(4) Discourage dispersed development; and</i>	✓
<i>(5) Avoid or reduce adverse effects on human health, public amenity and water, soil and air and ecosystems.</i>	✓

The RLTS review includes objectives, policies and outcomes which seek to improve the accessibility and travel choices of the community, supports energy efficient and sustainable transport modes such as walking, cycling and passenger transport, supports retention of trolley buses and electric units, encourages land use and development decisions which improve travel efficiency, and support best practice in design, construction and maintenance of transport projects to avoid, remedy or mitigate impacts on the environment and public health.

<b><i>Built Environment and Transport Policy 4:</i></b>	<b><i>Addressed through the RLTS:</i></b>
<i>To provide for the accessibility needs of the region by protecting existing transport corridors.</i>	✓

The RLTS review includes draft policies and outcomes which seek to optimise the performance of the existing network, encourage integrated land use and transportation, and recognise the critical role of SH1 and SH2 in providing for national accessibility through the region. The RLTS includes corridor plans which seek to protect and improve existing transport corridors.

<b>Method 3:</b>	<b>Addressed through the RLTS:</b>
<i>The Wellington Regional Council will prepare and review the Regional Land Transport Strategy and through the Strategy and its other transport responsibilities:</i>	
<i>(1) Promote public awareness about the full social, economic and environmental costs of using different modes of transport;</i>	✓
<i>(2) Promote the use of urban transport modes, which use renewable energy resources and that are efficient in the use of energy generally;</i>	✓
<i>(3) Promote policies that encourage the provision and use of alternatives to individual vehicles, as a means of meeting needs for accessibility;</i>	✓
<i>(4) Promote fuel efficient driving practices; and</i>	x
<i>(5) Provide, where appropriate, funding for the investigation, planning and provision of public transport services.</i>	✓
<i>(6) Prepare the annual Regional Land Transport Programme ensuring that it is consistent with the Regional Land Transport Strategy.</i>	✓

The RLTS review includes a Regional TDM Strategy which sets out initiatives such as awareness campaigns and other measures to increase public awareness about the costs and benefits of different modes of transport.

The RLTS review includes maintaining electric trolley buses and electric trains as part of Greater Wellington's public transport network, both modes which use renewable energy resources.

Policies and strategies relating to TDM, pedestrians and cycling are included in the RLTS review and promote alternatives to single occupant vehicle use.

The RLTS does not specifically address fuel efficient driving practices, as this is more appropriately dealt with by other central government agencies, however TDM initiatives promote more efficient travel through combining trip purposes or ride sharing.

A Regional PT Plan forms part of the RLTS review and provides for the planning and provision of passenger transport services.

The annual prioritisation exercise to develop the Regional Land Transport Programme is carried out in consideration of the objectives and policies of the RLTS.

<b>Method 4:</b>	<b>Addressed through the RLTS:</b>
<i>To achieve integrated management, other means, which could be used to implement Built Environment and Transportation Policies 3-6 include:</i>	
<i>(1) Encouraging the introduction, monitoring and enforcement of emissions' standards for all land transport vehicles;</i>	<b>X</b>
<i>(2) Encouraging relevant authorities, in their plans and decisions, to make adequate and appropriate provision for the development, maintenance and upgrading of network utility operations and infrastructure, and for the protection of existing transportation corridors;</i>	✓
<i>(3) Encouraging the owners and operators of existing infrastructure to ensure that such infrastructure, where practicable and reasonable, is used to capacity before additional infrastructure is programmed and provided; and</i>	✓
<i>(4) Ensuring that all infrastructure is developed and used in ways that reduce, as far as practicable, any adverse environmental effects.</i>	✓

A programme involving the introduction, monitoring and enforcement of emissions standards for all land transport vehicles has been developed by the Ministry of Transport (MoT) and is currently being considered by Central Government. The RLTS review includes targets to reduce vehicle emissions and Greater Wellington has developed various measures to monitoring vehicle emissions which informs the RLTS on an ongoing basis. The RLTS review also includes draft policies to 'support government investigations into alternative fuel options and eco-efficient vehicles' and 'continuously improve bus emission standards'.

The Regional PT Plan and various corridor plans under the RLTS review seek to improve and enhance the existing transport infrastructure and corridors, with new infrastructure normally only considered where the existing network can not provide for the capacity demand or specific access needs of the region.

The draft RLTS objective 'ensure environmental sustainability' seeks to avoid, remedy or mitigate the negative impacts of transport on the environment, including high quality project and new development design. The RLTS review also includes a policy to 'support best practice in design, construction and maintenance of transport projects to avoid, remedy or mitigate impacts on the environment'. However, there tends to be limited 'proactive assessment' of cumulative effects from the development of infrastructure at a strategic level. These assessments currently tend to be left to the Resource Management Act consent processes.

<b>Method 5</b>	<b>Addressed through RLTS:</b>
<i>The Wellington Regional Council will:</i>	
<i>(1) Carry out a review to determine how the integrated management of the Region's urban areas can best be achieved;</i>	✓
<i>(2) Promote the assessment, where appropriate, of regionally significant effects, including transportation effects, of proposals for significant public and commercial developments and facilities;</i>	✓
<i>(3) Liaise with territorial authorities, Government departments and agencies, and other relevant organisations on issues of infrastructure and urban development that are of regional significance;</i>	✓
<i>(4) Consider the preparation of a regional urban development strategy as a means of providing guidance and direction for matters relating to infrastructure, urban areas and urban development that are of regional significance.</i>	✓

The RLTS takes an integrated look at requirements for transport infrastructure and services throughout the region, including funding priorities.

Submissions made on significant development proposals consider transportation effects and promote the objectives and policies of the RLTS.

The RLTS is a strategic document which sets out the blueprint for land transport for the region. The strategy represents a balanced vision for land transport that is shared by organisations represented on the Regional Land Transport Committee (RLTC) including Greater Wellington, the territorial authorities of the region, government agencies such as Transit and Land Transport NZ, and other stakeholders representing the objectives of the NZTS.

The Wellington Regional Strategy (WRS) is a joint project between Greater Wellington, the territorial authorities of the region and Positively Wellington Business. This project is a regional urban development strategy which will provide a framework and strategy for guiding urban development in the region and ensuring integration between land use and transportation. The RLTS review informs and is informed by the WRS process.



## **5. Conclusion**

The Regional Land Transport Strategy review is generally consistent with the relevant policies of the Regional Policy Statement.

An issue for further consideration prior to finalisation of a draft RLTS for public consultation is the inclusion of policies to address the early consideration of adverse effects on the environment in relation to new transport infrastructure in terms of location, scale and design. The undertaking of a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the draft RLTS will also help inform whether the environmental sustainability objective is being adequately covered in the review.

## **6. References**

- Wellington Regional Council (May 1995) *Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington Region*. Wellington.
- WRS Combined Council Working Party (June 2005) *Environmental, Natural Values and Hazard Constraints on Development. Working Paper 2.14. Wellington Regional Strategy*. Wellington.