

Informal Workshop Notes

Commencing: Wednesday 16 February 2022, at 9.35 am

Venue: via Zoom (Audio Visual meeting)

Chairperson: Cr Andrew von Dadelszen

Deputy Chairperson: Cr Lyall Thurston

Members:

Bay of Plenty Regional Council:

Cr Paula Thompson

Cr Jane Nees

Cr Norm Bruning

Chairman Doug Leeder (ex-officio)

Rotorua Lakes Council/ Lakes Community Board

Phill Thomass

Whakatāne District Council

Mayor Judy Turner

Tauranga City Council

Commissioner Stephen Selwood – Tauranga City Council,

Waka Kotahi – NZTA (non-voting)

Jess Andrew

Michelle Te Wharau (Alternate)

In Attendance:

Bay of Plenty Regional Council: Cr Matemoana McDonald – Bay of Plenty Regional Council, Namouta Poutasi – General Manager, Strategy and Science, Jessica Easton – Legal and Commercial Manager, James Llewellyn – Transport and Urban Planning Manager, Bron Healey – Principal Advisor, Regional Development, Amanda Namana – Committee Advisor

Apologies:

Mayor Garry Webber – Western Bay Plenty District Council,
Cr Stacey Rose – Bay of Plenty Regional Council

This Workshop was recorded and can be accessed on Council's YouTube channel:

[Public Transport Committee Workshop - 16 February 2022](#)

1. Introduction

Members' Opening Comments:

- Achieving mode shift in the region continued to be a significant challenge that required a collaborative approach
- The Regional Public Transport Plan (RPTP) needed to recognise the severity of all the challenges being faced across the region and have a stronger emphasis on the extent of these challenges. For Tauranga City, there was significant growth and development occurring, it's important to be aspirational but realistic.

- Even achieving all mode shift aspirations would not do enough to reduce carbon emissions. Road pricing was potentially the most significant tool to have impact on all of the goals including carbon reduction, mode shift and the best long term transport land use scenario, this needed to be made clear in the RPTP
- Design for the future for when using public transport became a reality – planning past the impacts of Covid-19
- The target market for the RPTP still needed to be more clearly identified – noted that ‘transport’ included light commercial fleets and heavy freight etc, which could not be moved to public transport and contributed to emissions
- Important to recognise that the RPTP was for public transport across the entire Bay of Plenty region
- Commended staff efforts across the three RPTP workshops held to date and the responsiveness to direction provided.

Workshop Purpose:

To continue reviewing the emerging draft Regional Public Transport Plan (RPTP) with a specific focus on remaining key policy topics.

Guidance Sought:

Input and feedback on the following:

- 1) Brief recap on the RPTP strategic framework (challenges and opportunities, vision, objectives, focus areas) - revised following feedback at the previous workshop.
- 2) Future strategy – Tauranga and the Western Bay of Plenty (draft content).
- 3) New or revised policy proposals and associated actions covering the following objective areas:
 - i. Mode shift and carbon reduction;
 - ii. Service planning and design;
 - iii. Service and infrastructure delivery;
 - iv. Public transport and land use integration;
 - v. Customer experience and information; and
 - vi. Fares and pricing.

2. Regional Public Transport Plan Review

2.1 RPTP Strategic Framework Recap

Presentation: Regional Public Transport Plan Review: Objective ID A4042196

Presented By: Bron Healey – Principal Advisor, Regional Development and James Llewellyn – Transport and Urban Planning Manager.

Key Points:

- Provided background and process update
- Recapped the amended RPTP strategic framework
- A significant change was two further opportunities identified:
 - Public transport marketing, branding and promotion
 - Innovation and technology
- New Objective – public transport and land use integration, noted that the KPI associated with this came from UFTI.

Members’ Comments/ Guidance Provided:

- Marketing
 - Identification of potential customers, also needed to be a key focus area
 - Targeting of commuter customers and schools
 - Taking a sub-regional approach

- Provide definition of urban transformation and link to an aspiration towards the National Policy Statement for Urban Development's (NPS-UD) liveable cities
- Request for greater context around issues ahead and opportunities, including a tool such as road pricing
- As the RPTP changed in its various forms, it was important to fully engage with the community to refine objectives
- Emphasise broad support from both regional and public transport committees around the benefits of road pricing
- Expressed support for the vision
- Queried whether the carbon reduction and mode shift targets were ambitious enough - needed to be achievable but also meaningful
- Having the support of the public was essential to achieving mode shift
- A different approach and design was needed for isolated and rural communities as they had different needs. The RPTP needed to have an across the region focus
- Clarify data by identifying school children in two ways - those that use the school bus and those that use the public buses.

In Response to Questions:

- Market research for potential customers and triggers to use public transport could be highlighted through identifying actions to implement the high level strategy and supported aspirations
- Community engagement had been undertaken in the early phases, for input on key topics. There had subsequently been targeted engagement with stakeholders through workshops - this input fed into the draft content prepared to date
- The basis for the target on public transport and land use integration was quantitative and evidence based
- Finding a balance between a focus on the public transport system and highlighting the demand management tools to support mode shift was about getting the focus and the language right
- There was a key challenge and opportunity around providing access needs for the wider region in innovative ways.

2.2 Future Strategy

Presented By: Bron Healey - Principal Advisor, Regional Development

Key Points:

- Outlined draft content of the future strategy section for Tauranga and Western Bay of Plenty
- Rotorua and Eastern Bay sections were still a work in progress.

Members' Comments/ Guidance Provided:

- Agreed with the need to address Tauriko West in a future-proof way, with forward planning critical. Include on network maps?
- The average daily traffic count on State Highway 29 had increased 28% in the past three years, therefore a sound strategic corridor was necessary and getting a head start with public transport was key
- Connection between origins and destinations was fundamental to the transport system and identifying commercial areas where connectivity could be achieved was vital
- Focus on liveable communities as an outcome.

In Response to Questions:

- The ten hectare measure in the policy was a minimum threshold for a new development to trigger public transport provision.

10.39 am - The Workshop **adjourned.**

10.50 am - The Workshop **reconvened.**

2.3 New or revised policy proposals and associated actions

Presented By: Bron Healey - Principal Advisor, Regional Development and James Llewellyn - Transport and Urban Planning Manager.

Key Points

- Policy discussion on key objective headings in the Plan:
 - Mode shift and carbon reduction
 - Service planning and design
 - Service and infrastructure delivery
 - Public transport and land use integration
 - Customer experience and information
 - Fares and pricing
- Awaiting final results from the analysis of school bus services.

Members' Comments/ Guidance Provided:

Mode shift and carbon reduction

- Include road pricing in the wording of the policy
- Consider smaller vehicles in areas not suited to large buses
- The best way to achieve zero emissions was through mode shift, and the best way to achieve that was road pricing
- For Policy 1.5 amend wording to 'proactively explore and implement'
- Explore options for converting existing buses to hydrogen
- Include implementation of mobility as a service
- Considered that there may be more potential for commuter rail than Inter-regional passenger rail
- Highlighted a critical need to communicate with communities the UFTI vision and strategic direction

Service Planning and design

- Consider inclusion of right sized buses and health aspects linked to greater outcomes
- Consider some of the exempt services such as ferries and how they may be accommodated within the policies
- Ferries/ bus integration and providing infrastructure for this
- Ensure intra-community travel opportunities were included Policy 2.6.

Service and Infrastructure delivery

- Look at the timing of infrastructure and incorporate into policy 3.4 to ensure it was in the right place at the right time and highlighted the importance of accessibility
- Suggested that efforts should be channelled into areas near the existing rail network for a long term strategy

Public transport and land use integration

- Consider E-bikes, luggage and scooters in the design profile as well as considering mobility requirements
- Supported this policy topic, highlights need to be integrated between Regional Council and TLAs
- Policy 4.5 park and ride:
 - Needed to take into account customers' needs and expectations
 - Needed to be at a convenient location for users
 - Reconsider the wording of the Clause 1 to make it clearer and more widely applicable, ; soften wording i.e. 'only'
 - Should distinguish between rural and urban requirements for park and ride facilities

Fares and pricing

- Highlighted the total cost of movement, needed to understand the total cost of ownership and driving to the user
- Questioned whether parking policy applicable to Rotorua context?
- Policy 7.5. School students – more discussion required on how to work through the financial sustainability matter and how to apply it
- Suggested linking SuperGold card holders with government fare policies
- Considered that public transport fares were already low and commuters were not paying enough for car use
- Supported the wider cost benefit and trade-off scenario applied to free fares for children.

In Response to Questions:

Mode shift and carbon reduction

- Although the Public Transport Operating Model (PTOM) revision was not finalised, there was nothing preventing setting policy around size and weight of vehicles, as long as they were compliant with requirements for urban buses and demonstrated to be safe and operable in service
- Noted that zero emission buses potential exemption from road user charges would make a more financially compelling case
- The bus decarbonisation feasibility study would look closely at different ownership models as well as impacts of EVs on infrastructure assets
- Likely to be a greater demand for movement across the region as well as inter-regional, an express bus service was a sensible and realistic option. Inter-regional passenger rail was a longer term investment strategy

Service Planning and design

- Policy intention of 2.10 - ferry services was to endorse the existing service to Matakana Island

Public Transport and land use integration

- Service dogs were allowed on buses
- The intent of Policy 4.5, Clause 6 was keeping availability of long term land use plans
- More detailed analysis was required for Te Maunga/ Bayfair park and ride location and the wording of the policy could be reviewed to not exclude suitable options

Fares and pricing

- Identifying markets that were willing and able to pay versus those who needed reduced fares could be a way of achieving financial sustainability.

General

Data/further information was requested to be provided on current electric buses and costs, affordability and performance. Staff noted this would be included in the bus decarbonisation project.

12.33 pm - The workshop **closed**.