TOI TE ORA
PUBLIC HEALTH
Bay of Plenty + Lakes Districts

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23 March 2018

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Submission to the Draft Bay of Plenty Regional Land Transport Plan 2018

Introduction

The Bay of Plenty District Health Board (BOPDHB) and the Lakes District Health Board (LDHB) are required by the Public Health and Disability Act 2000 to improve, promote, and protect the health of people and communities; to promote the inclusion and participation in society and independence of people with disabilities; and to reduce health disparities by improving health outcomes for Māori and other population groups.

Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (World Health Organization, 1946). Whilst health care services are important health interventions, their primary purpose is to manage disease, ill-health and trauma at an individual level. The health and wellbeing of a community is more strongly influenced by a wide range of factors beyond the health sector. These factors are referred to as the 'determinants of health'. Many determinants of health are directly influenced by the decisions and activities of councils.

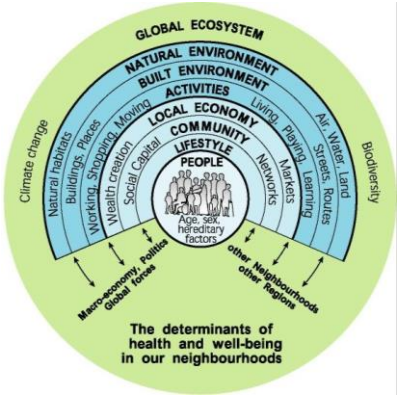

Figure 1: A model of the determinants of health (Barton & Grant, 2006)

For these reasons, the BOPDHB and LDHB are committed to working collaboratively with councils and welcome the opportunity to comment on the draft Bay of Plenty Regional Land Transport Plan 2018 (RLTP). This submission has been prepared by Toi Te Ora Public Health (Toi Te Ora) which is the public health unit for both BOPDHB and LDHB.

Feedback on the Draft Bay of Plenty Regional Land Transport Plan 2018

Transport is an important determinant of health. Multimodal transport systems that feature high levels of active and public transport are associated with the following health benefits:

- Reduced air pollution and carbon emissions
- Reduced road traffic crashes and associated injuries
- Reduced noise
- Increased physical activity and healthy weight
- Improved social connection
- Improved independent mobility, particularly for children and older people
- Improved health equity

Features of a healthy transport system are described in the World Health Organisation (2009) Healthy Transport Principles which is included in appendix 1. Our response is given with consideration of these principles. All recommendations are highlighted in bold.

What BOPRC has asked to receive views on	**DHBs response**
Do the vision and objectives in the Plan reflect what we want transport to be in our region?	The DHBs agree that the vision and objectives of the plan reflect what we want transport to be in our region. The DHBs support and commend the inclusion of 'healthy' in the transport vision. **The DHBs recommend an extension of the vision to "The best transport systems for a growing economy and a safe, healthy and vibrant lifestyle *for all*"** to better reflect healthy transport principle 1 (Vision of Social Equity - see appendix 1). The DHBs support that quality of life and improved safety make up a large majority of the benefits and objectives sought by the RLTP. It is not clear on what grounds the quality of life benefit is proportioned into its contributing objectives or how this practice shapes the subsequent plan components, as the strategic aspect of the plan appears to be somewhat similar to previous iterations. Hence the DHBs are not able to comment on the percentages assigned. In general, the DHBs propose that quality of life is the most important benefit by a substantial margin. The DHBs understand public health to be synonymous with the quality of life

	and safety benefits combined, and on that basis public health is a much more significant contributor than the five percent weighting given in the draft RLTP. With respect to the Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) established to monitor each objective, **the DHBs recommend more aspirational targets** that are better aligned with the proposed vision**.** It is noted that in the 13/14 report card, a one percent increase in the proportion of trips by sustainable modes was categorised as 'target met'. However, the DHBs assert that a much larger modal shift is required for health, sustainability and equity gains, and that this needs to happen in the near future.
Will the policies included in the Plan support these objectives?	It appears that the policies for the 2018 draft RLTP are similar to those of 2015. It is noted however, that the policy wording is stronger in the 2018 draft (for example, ensure instead of plan, require instead of encourage, proactively promote instead of promote and so forth) and that there is greater encouragement to work collaboratively to implement policy. The DHBs also note and support that the new policy recognises and provides for Maori land use and development aspirations. The DHBs believe that the policies will achieve the vision and objectives if they are implemented effectively and comprehensively. It is noted however that despite RLTP policies remaining fairly similar over the last two iterations, report cards have shown limited progress in modal shift toward sustainable transport. With this in mind, **the DHBs recommend that annual monitoring reports provide explanatory comment when targets are not achieved and identify corrective actions that could be taken.**
Are there transport issues and opportunities that haven't been identified or addressed in the plan?	Low levels of child independent mobility, indicated by low levels of active transport to school, is an issue that is missing analysis in the RLTP. The freedom of children and young people to get about in their local neighbourhood without adult supervision has been shown to be important to their wellbeing and development. Aside from greater levels of physical activity, studies show it leads to higher levels of sociability and improved mental wellbeing. There are many reasons to identify children and young people as a discrete and priority group in the RLTP, an important one being that 'growing a generation of sustainable transport users' is more effective as a population strategy than trying to change the habitual behaviours of adults (though adults too can be nudged by creating supportive sustainable transport environments).

	The DHBs therefore recommend that children and young people be identified as a special population group in the RLTP, worthy of distinct analysis and consideration, and that this view is embedded throughout the Plan. Another issue that would benefit from further attention in the RLTP is the numbers and trends relating to transport disadvantaged groups such as people with disabilities, older people, low income people and people without a driver's license (of which a greater proportion are female). There is strong emphasis on the impact of congestion on the transport system, but less about the impact of a car-based transport system on the community, and especially on non-drivers (ie social exclusion, or reduced access to opportunities). **The DHBs recommend that transport disadvantaged people be identified as a population group in the RLTP, worthy of distinct analysis and consideration. The DHBs recommend that this position is embedded throughout the Plan, starting with the recommended rewording of the vision statement above.** To support the statements above, **The DHBs recommend the following targets be adopted (or similar) :** • **Improved active travel to school mode share** • **Improved perceptions of safety and security while walking, cycling and using PT** (perception of safety is as important as actual safety for modifying behaviour); **and the following demand indicator (or similar):** • **Number/proportion of urban trips made of walkable and bikeable distance** (to understand the potential for walking and cycling for transport) • **Percentage of households with access to a motor vehicle** The DHBs suggest a number of other intervention opportunities: 1) Increasing the number and variety of 'participants' aware of and accountable for the RLTP by working more closely with major trip generating venues and events such as schools, community and sporting events/venues, large employers (including the DHBs), tertiary campuses and retail complexes. Entities such as these should all be accountable, or at least strongly encouraged and supported, to promote and enable sustainable transport choices. An example of this approach is

	the 'Bike to Soccer' initiative provided on page 12 of the Auckland Cycling Account. 2) Undertaking a sustainable transport community-based social marketing campaign. It is noted that there are a number of discrete projects such as the regional and local public transport plans, the Tauranga Cycle Action Plan, Rotorua Urban Cycling Strategic Plan, various school travel programmes and the Smart Travel app, all with their own inherent promotional activities. These should be coordinated under a multi-stakeholder campaign aimed at increasing the uptake of sustainable transport. 3) Improving integrated land use and transport planning by reviewing and implementing opportunities within city and district plans to promote active living, as was successfully done by Canberra in the Incorporating Active Living Principles into the Territory Plan draft variation project. 4) More emphasis should be given to improving walking infrastructure. Walking is a very viable means of everyday transport for many journeys.
Is there anything in the Plan that you think is great and would like to support?	The DHBs support the new KPI to 'reduce transport emissions in the region in line with the New Zealand's international climate change commitments', and **recommend that the RLTP sets a clear numeric target rather than the current 'below 2015/16 levels'**. The DHBs support the new KPI to 'reduce the social cost of deaths and serious injuries on the region's road network (below 2016 levels)' The DHBs support the description provided of the social model of health, including the descriptors of health protection and health promotion. The DHBs support the intervention hierarchy described for the optimised transport system, and consider the successful application of this hierarchy to be key to achieving the desired modal shifts. The DHBs support all projects that will contribute to an increase in walking, cycling and public transport and **recommend projects that promote active and public transport are given highest priority in the regional programme**.
Other general feedback about the Plan	
9.2 Ten year financial	The DHBs note that the comment "analysis of future regional

forecast (page 102)	travel demands found a 'business as usual' approach would result in levels of private vehicle use that would present significant challenges, especially in urban areas at peak times" was first made in the 2011 RLTP and is again featured in bold on a stand-alone page in the 2018 draft (page 46). The DHBs also note a substantial forecast increase in funding for walking and cycling improvements, a reasonable forecast increase in road safety promotion, but a forecast decrease in funding for public transport, when compared to the 2015 RLTP*. This is despite large population growth in the western Bay of Plenty and population ageing throughout the region. It is difficult to understand how reduced funding for public transport takes account of the warning provided in the quotation above, or how it will achieve the vision, objectives and policies outlined in this Plan. The DHBs support and commend the increase in funding for walking and cycling improvements and road safety promotion, **but strongly recommend greater investment in public transport throughout the region, especially in the western Bay of Plenty** where growth and ageing are combining to produce substantial pressure on the current car based transport network. If not addressed, this will also lead to increasing social exclusion for non-drivers, who are a substantial and growing proportion of our community, as well as other detrimental health impacts. *This comparison is based on an analysis of the seven year forecast provided in the 2015 RLTP and the ten year forecast provided in the 2018.

The DHBs do wish to be heard in support of this submission.

Yours sincerely

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Appendix 1: Healthy Transport Principles

The World Health Organization (2009) states that the goal of healthy and sustainable transport is to maximise access, personal mobility and healthy physical activity. Technical components of a healthy and sustainable transport network vary by locale, local needs and travel patterns. However, the following policy components are considered to be some of the most important.

- **Vision of social equity.** Urban transport systems should provide high quality mobility to all urban residents who need access to jobs, schools and commercial districts, regardless of whether they own a private vehicle. Such mobility should minimise health risks from pollution and injuries, and enhance opportunities for healthy physical activity and communal interactions across all sectors.
- **Transport demand management.** Rather than 'predicting and providing' more road capacity for economic development, demand management asks: "*what are the mobility needs of people and goods, and how might those be answered in the most healthy, efficient, equitable and environmentally sustainable manner?*"
- **Integrated transport.** Integrated systems optimise connectivity between, and comparative advantages of, different modes e.g. NMT (non-motorised transport) for dense urban areas; public transport for high-volume travel to high-demand destinations; and private transport for very low volume, point-to-point trips served inefficiently by other modes.
- **Prioritising non-polluting modes.** Public transport and NMT generate fewer health and environmental impacts per unit of travel. These can be prioritised in a demand management policy using both physical design and economic measures.
- **Separated NMT networks.** High quality pedestrian and cycling networks, separated from vehicular traffic, can help reduce injury risk and enhance the mobility of poor and vulnerable populations, such as children. Good NMT networks also provide additional incentives to use public transport since usually this is accessed by those modes.
- **Dedicated public transport corridors.** This is a key spatial design feature that can improve public transport service and efficiency in crowded urban areas. Dedicated public transport can include light rail or rapid bus transit (the latter may be less expensive and faster to implement); or a mix of rapid bus transit, light rail and metro services – as appropriate to local travel needs and volumes, needs for connectivity and mobility, and urban land-use patterns. When separation is impossible, traffic-calming measures should be used to slow motorized vehicle speeds so that the lives of pedestrians and cyclists are not endangered.
- **Active community environments.** Urban space should be allocated to community social and activity space (e.g. parks, squares and playgrounds, pocket gardens, pedestrian alleys and rights of way). These support mobility, physical activity and social interactions in a safe and non-polluted environment.
- **Managed, integrated land use.** Land-use policies that cluster and integrate new housing, services and activity centres around public transport/NMT networks can help to reduce

the excessive "trip generation" that often accompanies urban development, thereby enhancing sustainability and health.

- **Improved vehicle standards and technology.** Policies that support unleaded fuels, lower-sulphur fuel; alternatives to diesel, such as CNG; improved standards or retrofitting of older vehicle engines; and better vehicle maintenance and monitoring, can help to lower 25 pollution emissions, particularly from the most polluting vehicles Improved safety design of vehicle fronts, especially for cars and buses, can reduce pedestrian and cyclists' injuries significantly. Policies that encourage the phasing out of older vehicles can help to remove vehicles that are among the most polluting and at greater risk of break-downs which can, in turn, be a factor in traffic accidents and injuries.
- **Economic tools.** Economic tools such as fuel taxes, congestion charging or parking pricing may be used to generate revenues for less polluting modes and to raise the price of polluting modes to reflect health and environment "externalities" that the market typically does not capture. Also these tools may be used as incentives to phase out older vehicles.