

Auckland Council Submission: Draft Government Policy Statement on Land Transport 2018/19-2027/28



Date: 2 May 2018

*He mihi ki te kaahui tūpuna,
te taura-here mō tātou te muka tāngata,
ki ngā mana ātua, kia tau te mauri.*

*He kura tangihia, he maimai aroha,
rātou kua whetūrangitia ki a rātou
tātou te hunga mata-rerehua ki a tātou*

*E ngā mana, e ngā reo, e ngā karangatanga maha,
tēnā rā koutou katoa.*

1. Overview

This is Auckland Council's submission in response to the draft Government Policy Statement on Land Transport 2018/19-2027/28.

The address for service is Auckland Council, Private Bag 92300, Victoria Street West, Auckland 1142. Please direct any enquiries to Phil Haizelden, Team Leader Transport Strategy, Auckland Council.

This submission has been approved by the Planning Committee of Auckland Council.

2. Introduction and Summary

Thank you for the opportunity to submit on the draft Government Policy Statement on Land Transport 2018/19 – 2027/28 (GPS 2018).

Since 2010 Auckland's population has increased by over 250,000 to around 1.7 million. In recent years, annual growth has spiked to more than 40,000 people per year, one of the fastest growth rates in the developed world. While this very high rate of growth may tail off over time, Stats NZ projections suggest that over the next 30 years, up to a million more people may call Auckland home. Over the next decade, around 55% of New Zealand's population growth is expected to occur in Auckland.

Ongoing growth brings great opportunities and much progress has been made over the past 10-15 years to support Auckland's evolution into a modern, world-class city. This includes a

sustained increase in investment for transport and a willingness of Aucklanders to change the way they live and travel. Use of public transport has tripled since the mid-1990s, the city centre is New Zealand's fastest growing residential neighbourhood and, most recently, Aucklanders are rapidly taking up cycling where quality infrastructure is provided.

However, a combination of the sheer scale and pace of growth, a longer history of under-investment and insufficient levels of housing construction means that despite this progress Auckland faces significant transport and housing challenges.

Our transport challenge is not just one of congestion, but also:

- Poor travel choice beyond private vehicles, especially in lower income areas
- A near doubling of deaths and serious injuries on our roads since 2012
- Growing recognition of the need to reduce the transport system's environmental impact
- Enabling and supporting a rapid acceleration in the rate of housing construction
- The need for our streets to play a growing role in creating vibrant and inclusive places.

Through this Government Policy Statement on land transport and the Auckland Plan, the Government and Auckland Council have both recognised the critical role of transport in delivering a successful Auckland.

To unlock the benefits of this growth, Auckland needs a transport system that provides safe, reliable and sustainable access. This means:

- Easily connecting people, goods and services to where they need to go
- Providing high quality and affordable travel choices for people of all ages and abilities
- Seeking to eliminate harm to people and the environment
- Supporting and shaping Auckland's growth
- Creating a prosperous, vibrant and inclusive city.

The role of transport in enabling, supporting and shaping the way Auckland grows is also critical to addressing our housing challenges.

The Auckland Transport Alignment Project (ATAP)

Over the past three years, Auckland Council and the Government have worked together to develop an aligned strategic approach to the development of Auckland's transport system over the next 30 years. In 2016 a recommended strategic approach was agreed, based on three integrated components:

- Making better use of existing networks
- Targeting new investment to the most significant challenges
- Maximising new opportunities to influence travel demand.

In late 2017 the new Government requested an update to the ATAP indicative package. Around the same time Auckland Council approved the draft Auckland Plan, which reflects

the long-term strategic approach of the original ATAP, but with a greater and earlier focus on improving travel choices and reducing harm to people and the environment.

The latest ATAP update will ensure transport investment priorities reflect the increasingly aligned transport vision of both the Government and Auckland Council and this consistency of approach is reflected in this submission on the GPS.

Our key submission points are:

- **Support** for the GPS's strategic direction, particularly the stronger focus on:
 - the safety of people
 - providing travel choices
 - enabling and supporting growth
 - the key role of streets in creating high quality public spaces
 - environmental outcomes
 - value for money
- **Support** for the Governments increased investment priority given to safety and demand management, public transport, walking and cycling, and local road improvements and local road maintenance, especially how this should translate into full co-funding for the AT renewals programme.
- **Support** for the new activity class framework - especially the creation of a mass transit activity class and the commitment to a more sustainable funding source for rail (GPS stage 2) - and its flexibility to enable delivery of the ATAP indicative package
- **Support** the mode neutral approach to transport planning and investment decisions
- **Request** the GPS enables Auckland to receive an appropriate share of the National Land Transport Fund
- **Request** incremental implementation of road safety improvements
- **Support** for "Road policing" being funded from a specific dedicated/'ring-fenced' fund
- **Request** an appropriate level of government funding of RTN/Strategic Public Transport
- **Suggest** minor wording changes

These main submission points are expanded upon below.

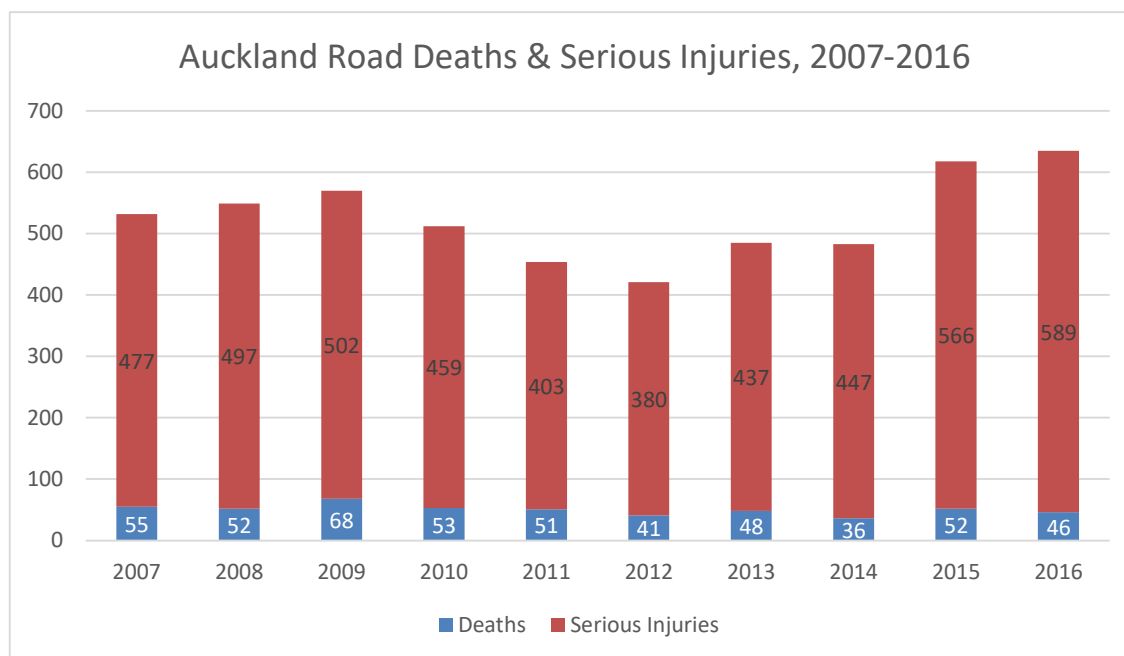
3. Strategic directions and priorities

Council supports the GPS's strategic direction and its closer alignment with the Auckland Plan, particularly the stronger focus on:

a. the safety of people

Council strongly supports the top-priority given to requiring a transport system that considers people's safety and the greater focus on investment in safety improvements, particularly in improving the safety of vulnerable road users like people walking and cycling, and effective enforcement in promoting safe behavior by road users.

As recognised in the draft GPS, there is an urgent need to improve road safety outcomes and reverse the increase in deaths and serious injuries that has occurred in recent years. In Auckland the number of deaths and serious injuries has increased by 48% over the past four years, from a low of 421 in 2012 to 635 in 2016.



Because of Auckland’s highly urbanised environment and the intense use of its transport networks by different users, vulnerable road users (pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists) make up a higher proportion of deaths and serious injuries in Auckland (43%) than in the rest of New Zealand (33%). This suggests a need to tailor approaches to safety for large urban areas like Auckland. For example, lower speeds in urban areas dramatically reduce pedestrian harm if collisions occur.

Reversing recent safety trends will require new approaches and interventions, particularly in Auckland. We support the proposed increase in investment in road safety promotion and road policing and the tilt in the balance towards safety when trade-offs are being made against travel-time.

b. travel choices

Council supports priority given to improving access to opportunities (particularly for people living in the western and southern parts of Auckland) and supporting investment in measures that incentivise increased mode shift from private vehicle travel to walking, cycling and public transport.

ATAP identified the decline in access to opportunities as a key transport challenge for Auckland, particularly for people living in the west and south. ATAP also identified the limited opportunity to create additional capacity on the road network to accommodate growth and the need for more people to walk, cycle or travel by public transport to reduce pressure on our roads and free up room for freight and commercial travel.

Aucklanders’ have demonstrated and expressed a desire and willingness to walk, cycle and use public transport for more journeys if it is efficient, reliable, safe, and attractive. Currently

many Aucklanders lack travel choice, particularly for lower income households in western and southern parts of Auckland and in rural areas. This creates more pressure on household budgets due to the high cost of car dependency and means that travel in Auckland is often long and unreliable, with Aucklanders unable to avoid congestion that wastes precious time and reduces life quality.

c. enabling and supporting growth

Council supports prioritising the role of transport investment in enabling and supporting growth – supporting investment in modes such as public transport and walking and cycling in opening access to existing and new housing developments.

Transport infrastructure and services are important for enabling and supporting population and housing growth in new and existing urban areas, while the location of growth affects how well the transport system performs. Stronger integration between transport and land use decisions is required so that housing, business and employment growth occurs in areas with better travel options. Council supports prioritising investment in areas that supports intensification in the existing urban area, and supports growth in new urban areas and improves connections between these newly developing areas and the rest of Auckland.

d. creating high quality public spaces

Council strongly supports the recognition of streets playing a key role in creating high quality public spaces – supporting investments that make streets more inviting places for people and promotes equitable access.

Roads and streets exert an immense influence upon Aucklanders' lifestyle and travel behaviour. How we use and design our roads and streets directly influences place identity, accessibility, public health, social equity, inclusivity and local and regional economies, amongst other factors. Council, including our Local Boards have an expectation that Auckland's roads and streets need to deliver a wider range of benefits across the four well-beings (social, cultural, economic and environment) than has historically been provided for.

The scale and pace of growth in Auckland is placing increased pressure on an already constrained road and street network, resulting in a greater need to make conscious investments that balance the sometimes-competing demands of movement and place values. The recognition given to place making in the draft GPS is welcomed and will assist in the funding and delivery in regional and local projects of all scales.

e. environmental outcomes

Council supports the priority given to reducing the harm from transport, supporting reducing transport's negative effects on global climate, the local environment and public health.

Auckland's future growth will bring greater levels of investment. Transport and stormwater investments will be some of the largest ever made in Auckland. Council supports ensuring these investments not only perform their technical function but to protect or enhance the overall health of the environment and ecosystems.

Council is a signatory to the C40 Fossil Fuel Streets Declaration, which commits to transforming our streets into greener, healthier, and more prosperous places to live. Our streets must be safe and accessible for everybody and our air must be clean and free from harmful emissions.

f. value for money

Council supports the increased emphasis on delivering the right infrastructure and services to the right level, at the best cost.

ATAP has identified a significant funding gap for transport investment in Auckland. Council needs to meet its fair share of this and is investigating new funding mechanisms. However, Council already spends approximately half of its revenue on transport, and therefore supports a strong focus on value for money for both local and centrally funded transport investments.

4. Investment priorities

Council supports the Government's increased investment priority given to safety and demand management, public transport, walking and cycling, and local road improvements and local road maintenance, especially how this should translate into full co-funding for the AT renewals programme.

5. Activity class framework

Council supports the new activity class framework - especially the creation of a mass transit activity class and the commitment to a more sustainable funding source for rail (GPS stage 2) - and its flexibility to enable delivery of the ATAP indicative package.

Rapid transit forms the backbone of Auckland's public transport network, providing fast, frequent, high capacity services operating along corridors separated from general traffic and unaffected by road congestion. Rapid transit can also have a particularly significant impact on shaping urban form and development. The speed and reliability of rapid transit delivers a long-lasting step-change in the accessibility of an area.

Auckland's rapid transit network barely existed a decade ago, but sustained effort and investment has increased annual boardings on the Northern Busway and the rail network from 6.8 million in 2008 to 26 million today. However, major parts of Auckland are still not served by the rapid transit network, while existing parts of the network need substantial capacity improvements to meet current and future demand.

Through ATAP, Auckland has undertaken a comprehensive planning process with Government to agree the main transport challenges and to develop a strategic approach for addressing these challenges. This provides both parties with a higher level of assurance that investment will focus on the biggest transport challenges facing Auckland.

Because of this alignment, there are significant benefits from ensuring funds available for transport investment can be directed towards the area of highest priority. Council supports the GPS activity class structure having broader funding bands that enable greater flexibility to direct funding to the most important investments.

6. Mode neutral approach

Council supports the mode neutral approach to transport planning and investment decisions.

7. Appropriate funding allocation for Auckland

Council requests the GPS enables Auckland to receive an appropriate share of the National Land Transport Fund.

As noted earlier, over half of New Zealand's population growth is expected to occur in Auckland over the next decade. Growth is a key driver of the need for many transport improvements, particularly those relating to network improvements (as opposed to maintenance, operations and renewals).

In ATAP an assumption has been made around the amount of NLTF funding Auckland may receive over the next 10 years (noting that funding is ultimately allocated on merit). Realising this level of funding may require changes to current funding approaches, particularly greater flexibility across activity classes and in relation to funding assistance rates.

While the detail of these changes will largely rest with the NZ Transport Agency, it will be helpful for the GPS to clearly articulate two points:

- Auckland's high share of the country's population growth and the implications of this for transport investment.
- The likely need for more flexible approaches to funding arrangements to enable delivery of ATAP.

8. Incremental safety funding

Council supports the development of a new road safety strategy and action plan but request incremental implementation (rather than waiting 18 months to its competition) to address current pressing road safety issues.

Strong growth and changing travel patterns have exposed safety gaps on Auckland's transport network. On average one person that is walking gets hit by a motor vehicle every day in Auckland and every third day that person dies or is seriously injured, resulting in \$1.14 billion/year in social costs¹. Council has a strong understanding of our most significant road safety risks; immediate funding would allow these risks to be addressed within the timeframe of the Road Safety Strategy being prepared.

9. Road policing funding allocation

Council supports "Road policing" being funded from a specific dedicated/'ring-fenced' fund rather than from a general fund.

In the past funding for road policing has been directed towards other transport activities. The work of the Howard Commission has shown the need to increase road policing funding to reverse the recent increase in road deaths and injuries.

10. Funding for RTN/Strategic Public Transport

Council supports the inclusion of a new rapid transit category in the GPS and looks forward to further clarification regarding how rapid transit is to be funded on a more sustainable basis.

In an urban context rapid transit serves a similarly strategic role to motorways and as such should be funded in a similar way. The acceleration of Auckland's rapid transit network is a core priority of both the Government and Auckland Council, and the ATAP indicative package allocates substantial investment into rail, light rail and busways over the first decade.

¹ AT RoadSafe Strategy 2018-2023

Providing certainty of funding for these investments is critical to their delivery in a timely and effective manner.

As such, Council welcomes the inclusion of a new rapid transit category in the GPS. We see this as a first step in fulfilling the Government’s intention to place RTN funding on a more sustainable footing than has been possible in the past, given previous ad hoc arrangements for major projects. We look forward to further clarification in this regard through subsequent iterations of the GPS and other policy announcements. In the meantime, the Council reiterates its desire to continue working with the Government on options to close the funding gap for Auckland’s transport needs.

11. Minor Wording Changes

In addition to these high-level points, we have identified several minor changes that we would like to see in the final version of the GPS 2018. These changes are outlined below:

Section/Paragraph	Suggested Amendment
Environment in GPS 2018 Page 8	Inclusion of a bullet point acknowledging the localised negative impacts of transport infrastructure and transport activities – particularly air/water pollution and quality of life impacts (noise, light, vibration, severance, etc).
Section 2.2 – Safety Page 9	Inclusion of a clearer message regarding trade-offs– e.g. that historically we’ve traded vehicle delay against safety outcomes. Also, should give direction on how to better address these trade-offs – for example; safety improvement projects should have lower consideration of vehicle delay that may result.
Page 9 Para 25	Insert new paragraph between para25 and 26 that discusses issues around motorcycle safety.
Page 10 Para 35	Inclusion of additional sub-bullet point to the second bullet point that specifically identifies motorcycle travel as an area of high-risk and an area for increased investment in primary safe system treatments to reduce the risk of motorcycle crashes.
Page 13 Para 62	Needs to include point regarding transport investment to support re-development, regeneration areas. Currently this para is weighted towards opening new serviced land for housing.
Page 13 Para 66	Include reference to the key transport priorities, updated to reflect the ATAP update.
Page 13 Para 74	Remove “at-peak travelling hours” from the sentence. The first sentence over emphasises PT as a peak hour service.
Page 14 Para 76	Replace “off peak public transport” with “all day public transport”. Bullet point 3 should also cover regeneration/redevelopment areas.
Page 14 Para 80	Rephrase bullet point one to be about matching capacity to demand rather than providing extra capacity. As an example, reallocation of existing road space to more efficient transport modes should be

Section/Paragraph	Suggested Amendment
	considered ahead of providing extra capacity through road widening.
Page 15 Section 2.3.2	<p>Section 2.3.2 talks about transport choice and para 93 refers to walking and cycling but nothing related to PT. There needs to be a similar paragraph to cover off GPS investment in PT.</p> <p>Needs also to discuss reallocation of existing capacity to support more efficient transport modes (including freight) i.e. using what we have more efficiently.</p>
Section 2.5 Value for money	Needs to discuss the value created by transport investment and how this can benefit others. For example, there is a case for supporting suboptimal transport investment where it supports other govt investments (such as housing developments) and provides better value overall.
Page 20 Para 129.	Should include route protection and cover funding consequential OPEX particularly when PT is a lead investment in growth areas.
Page 26 Safety	<p>Add short term result of addressing key safety issues this year (not waiting for the new road safety strategy and action plan in the next 12-18 months).</p> <p>Add stronger wording regarding reducing speed limits in urban areas and rolling this out faster.</p> <p>Add specific reference to making motorcycling safer.</p>
Page 27 Access:	Should include a bullet point about the number of people who have access to frequent all day public transport.
Page 36 Para 192	Needs to include that NZTA investment supports and respects local authority land use planning and growth strategies.
Page 38 Para 196	NZTA need to not just shape urban form, they need to support it (Auckland's growth strategies) as well.
Page 38 Para 197	Replace reference to greenfield areas with "Auckland Council growth strategies". Section should be amended to reflect updated ATAP priorities.