

Objective 5: Sustainability

To provide a land transport system that operates in a manner that recognises the needs of the community; avoids, remedies or mitigates adverse effects; uses resources in an efficient way; and supports an optimal demand for energy.

Policies

Under the Land Transport Act, all land transport projects must have regard to the effect the transport system is likely to have on the environment. The modelling process included sustainability as one of the criteria for developing the enhanced package. The following policies will be needed to implement this objective.

Theme 5.1: Minimise the impact of transport on the environment⁹

The continuing strong growth in demand for personal mobility within the Wellington Region, as in the rest of New Zealand, means that the impact of road transport on the

⁹ Regional Policy Statement, Built Environment and Transport Chapter. Policy 4. Method 4.

environment will continue to grow. The Regional Policy Statement also provides a policy framework for measuring the environmental impact of transportation.

These policies aim to mitigate the impact of transport on the environment through encouraging environmentally friendly transport technology, walking and cycling.

5.1.1 Promote environmentally benign transport mechanisms¹⁰

The transport industry accounts for 35 to 40% of New Zealand's carbon dioxide emissions. Transport activities also produce significant quantities of nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, volatile organic compounds, hydrocarbons, lead, carbon and particulate matter. These emissions will impact on local communities either in the form of airborne pollution or as contaminants in the storm water system.

The responsibility for carbon dioxide emissions is global and is a national level policy issue. Carbon monoxide, however, is an issue that can be addressed at a regional or local level.

There are several mechanisms available to address the issue of impact on the environment. They are as follows:

- encourage the use of efficient and environmentally friendly vehicle technology in our vehicle fleets, for example well tuned engines, small engine sizes, light weight vehicles, efficient aerodynamic designs and catalytic converters;
- encourage the use of environmentally friendly fuels, for example electric vehicles, dual fuel engines, hydrogen fuel cells, CNG and LPG;
- reduce congestion where it occurs – this reduces exhaust emissions from idling vehicles;
- ensure that private cars, where they are used, are used efficiently, for example carpooling; and
- encourage the use of public transport and slow mode, including walking and cycling.

The most successful result will be obtained if all mechanisms are used in combination, rather than just one.

5.1.2 Make cycling and walking more attractive

At a regional level walking and cycling can be encouraged by:

- ensuring that all roading plans include good quality walking and cycling provisions, though those may not necessarily be on the same route
- ensuring that plans for roads which link communities include provision for walking and cycling.

Territorial local authorities and Transit New Zealand will be encouraged to make cycling and walking attractive by providing and promoting cycle lanes, enhanced crossing and footway facilities, greater priority, secure cycle storage, and by increasing the pleasantness and safety of existing facilities and routes.

¹⁰ Regional Policy Statement, Energy Chapter. Policy 5. Method 4.

Cycling and walking are important modes, both in their own right and for access to and from public transport. Few options are available at the strategic level, but territorial authorities can enhance these modes in stages through a range of measures.

In many cases, separate facilities for pedestrians or cyclists are warranted.

5.1.3 Price at peak times on the road network to mitigate adverse impacts of road use

Congested road traffic causes more air pollution than free flowing road traffic. Some streets in Wellington City already have air pollution levels higher than the International



Guidelines. Predictions suggest other roads will also exceed these standards in the future as traffic flows increase. Influencing road congestion through pricing is one way of mitigating these problems.

Projects to 2004

As sustainability was one of the major factors used in the modelling process, all proposals in the selected packages are those which, on balance with the other four objectives, best meet the need to provide a land transport system which operates in a way that recognises the needs of the community, avoids, remedies or mitigates adverse