

2013

Plan Topics

Land Transport



Land Transport

Providing and managing the land transport system is a key issue facing regional and district councils as well as other providers of land transport. There is a need for strong relationships and integration between policies and strategies at both a strategic and plan level.

To this end this guidance note aims to:

- clarify the role that RMA regional policy statements and plans assume in achieving integrated land transport planning
- identify relevant legislation, strategies, policies and agencies
- outline how land transport planning can be more effectively incorporated into district plans.

To access the guidance note scroll down

Guidance note

Introduction

Related Legislation, Strategies, Policies and Agencies

Integrated Land Transport Planning – the Role of Regional Policy Statements and Plans

Land Transport – Developing Effective District Plan Provisions

District Plan Framework for Managing Issues

Expected Environmental Results and Monitoring

Dealing with Cross-Boundary Issues

To access the guidance note scroll down or click the link above.

Introduction

'Land transport' covers all land-based transportation systems that provide for the movement of people, goods and services, and includes the following:

- road networks from the state highways to local roads
- rail networks
- provisions for pedestrians and cyclists
- public transport networks (services and infrastructure).

The land transport system plays a vital role in linking communities within a district and linking those communities with other districts and regions. As a physical resource of strategic importance, the land transport system needs to be managed, and protected from adverse effects (that may arise from land uses) that could affect the provision of an integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable land transport. Similarly, adverse environmental effects on land use activities resulting from land transport systems also need to be managed.

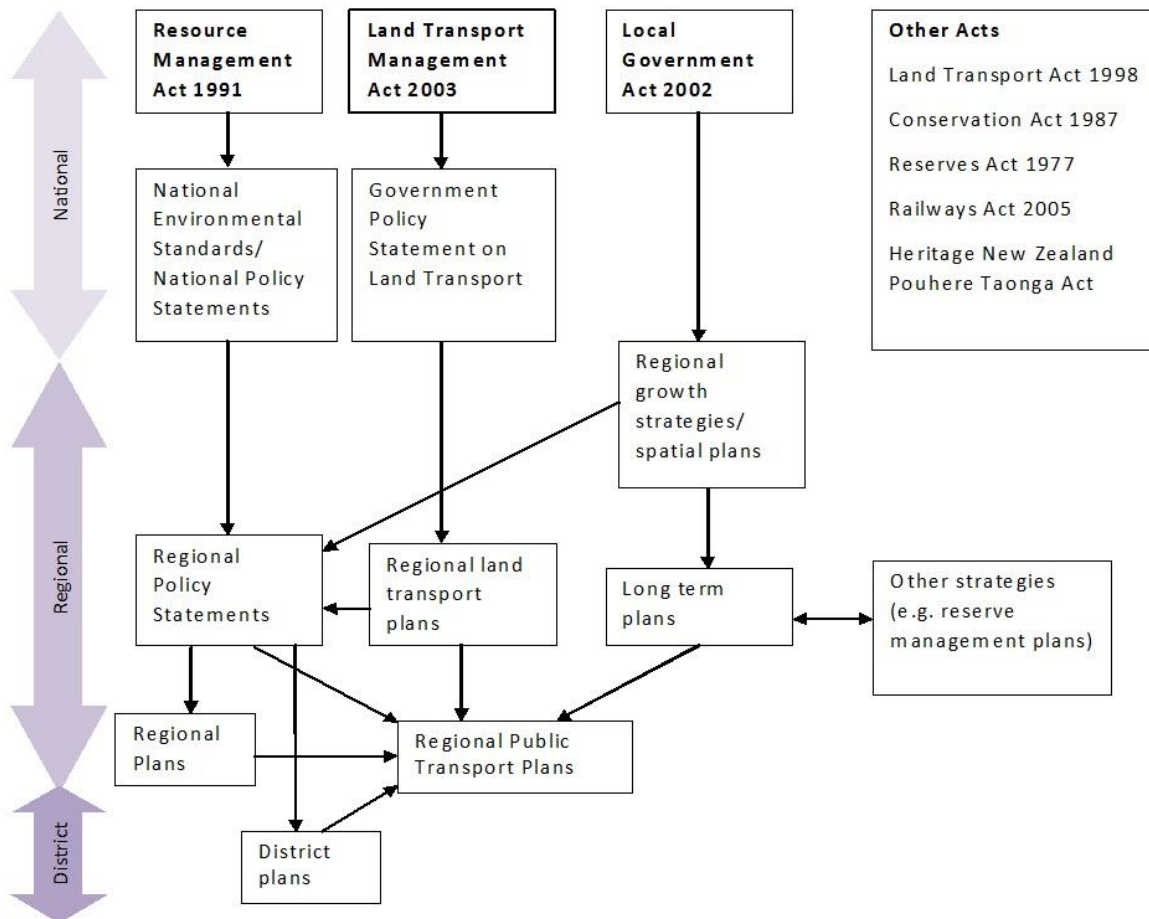
Specific concerns in relation to land transport include:

- increased reliance on single-occupant motor vehicle trips, and increased vehicle kilometres
- declining future car use for certain groups (e.g. younger drivers) and the need for flexibility to enable the system to respond
- growing congestion on the road network, and increased journey times
- reduced ability for travel needs to be met by public transport and walking and cycling
- reduced accessibility for older people and others in society who do not have a car or are unable to use one
- ribbon and other dispersed development along arterial routes, with vehicles moving into and out of these developments, impeding the free flow of traffic, increasing the probability of crashes, and creating pressures for bypasses
- incompatible land use and transport development (e.g. residents in new housing estates built alongside arterial routes opposing further development of the routes because of concerns about traffic noise and other environmental impacts).

Related Legislation, Strategies, Policies and Agencies

Legislation

The land transport framework in New Zealand is governed by a relatively complex set of legislative provisions.



The following have some influence over planning or resource management outcomes:

Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA)

There are several sections under the RMA that are directly or indirectly applicable to land transport. Regional councils, for instance, have a specific responsibility to strategically integrate infrastructure with land use through objectives, policies and methods (s30(1)(gb)). Regional and district plans have to give effect to RPSs (ss67(3)(c) and 75(3)(c)).



THE RMA QUALITY PLANNING RESOURCE

Land Transport Management Act 2003 (LTMA)

The LTMA came into force in November 2003 and was significantly amended in 2013. The purpose of the LTMA (s3) is to "contribute to an effective, efficient, and safe land transport system in the public interest."

To contribute to that purpose, the LTMA:

- requires social and environmental responsibility in land transport funding, planning and management
- improves long-term planning and investment in land transport, through streamlined decision making criteria (effective, efficient, and safe)
- requires the NZTA to ensure value for money
- streamlines consultation requirements
- enables new roads to be built on a tolled or concession agreement basis or on a basis involving a combination of those methods.
- enables the NZTA to borrow against National Land Transport Fund revenue to fund future projects
- embeds the Public Transport Operating Model into legislation

The Act amended the Local Government Act 1974, the Transit New Zealand Act 1989, and the Land Transport Act 1998, and repeals the Auckland Transport Board Act 1928. The 2013 amendments to the Act repealed the Public Transport Management Act 2008.

Land Transport Management Amendment Act 2008

Established the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) created by merging Transit New Zealand and Land Transport New Zealand.

Land Transport Act 1998 (LTA)

The LTA provides for the regulation of transport in New Zealand.

Government Rounding Powers Act 1989

This Act defines the functions and powers of the NZTA and local authorities in relation to motorways and state highways, including the ability to declare and manage access to limited access roads.

Local Government Act 2002 (LGA)

The LGA defines the purpose, roles and responsibilities of local government. It provides a framework and powers for local authorities to determine the activities they undertake and the manner in which they undertake them.

In relation to land transport relevant components include:

- the requirement that councils prepare a Long Term Plan including provisions for transport infrastructure and funding
- the ability to prepare urban growth strategies



THE RMA QUALITY PLANNING RESOURCE

- the ability to make bylaws
- the ability to require developer contributions as opposed to financial contributions under the RMA
- a process to stop legal roads under the 10th schedule of the LGA 1974.

Territorial authorities are also required to consult with the community about proposed programmes and projects.

Other related legislation

[Historic Places Act 1993](#) - Obtaining an authority from the New Zealand Historic Places Trust to destroy or modify archaeological sites is often necessary prior to the construction of new transport infrastructure.

[Reserves Act 1977](#) - Consents under the Reserve Act may also be necessary where land that is gazetted for a reserve is required for transport infrastructure purposes.

Strategies and policies

If land transport is to be addressed in an integrated way it is important to consider, in conjunction with other legislation, any relevant strategies or policies that have been developed by national agencies.

The Land Transport Management Amendment Act 2013 changed the planning framework for national and regional land transport plans, programmes and policies. The five former national and regional transport planning documents have been combined into three main documents:

- Government policy statement on land transport
- Regional transport plans
- National land transport programme.

At a national level:

- the [Government Policy Statement on Land Transport](#) will set out central government's outcomes, objectives and impacts for the land transport sector for at least 10 years
- the Statement is to be issued by the Minister of Transport at least once every six years. It will contain the Crown's Land Transport Investment Strategy, which will be reviewed at least once every three years
- the [national land transport programme](#) contains all the land transport activities, such as public transport services and infrastructure and road construction and maintenance, expected to receive funding from the NZTA. NZTA is responsible for allocating funding to land transport.

At a regional level:

- the Regional Land Transport Plan will set objectives, policies and interventions for at least 10 years
- the plan will be issued every six years, and reviewed every three years.



THE RMA QUALITY PLANNING RESOURCE

These arrangements are intended to allow transport planning to better integrate higher-level strategic planning with lower-level tactical planning, and will reduce the amount of time regions spend in consultation over minor activities. The changes also enable Regional Land Transport Plans to have an outlook for a timeframe suited to their region. For more information on the changes see the [Ministry of Transport](#) website.

Regional Land Transport Plans (RLTPs) are developed by regional councils and Auckland Transport, and must contribute to the purpose of the LTMA, and be consistent with the Government Policy Statement. RLTPs combine elements of the former land transport strategies and land transport programmes, reducing consultation requirements and aiding engagement with stakeholders and the public. RLTPs must look forward 10 years, encouraging a strategic approach. Auckland Transport has prepared an [Integrated Transport Programme](#) which goes some way to combining the strategic and programme components that have come together in the 'new' RLTPs.

Regional growth strategies (RGS) are non-statutory documents that are generally developed at the regional or sub-regional level. They can strongly influence land use, development and transport planning but only have statutory effect if their strategic direction is incorporated into a RPS and any associated plans. The LGA 2002 also provides opportunities for integrated transport and land use planning through the development of Long Term Plans.

A number of regions have prepared, or are preparing, growth strategies that set in place a strategic vision for the region, and their value as a tool to inform transport and land use planning should not be underestimated. Growth strategies are tailored to the particular circumstances of a region and consider such factors as population and employment growth, existing and projected land use activities and the adequacy of existing infrastructure.

[Auckland Spatial Plan](#) - The [Local Government \(Auckland Council\) Amendment Act 2010](#) requires the Auckland Council to prepare a spatial plan to contribute to Auckland's social, economic, environmental, and cultural wellbeing through a comprehensive and effective long-term (20 to 30 year) strategy. Transport and land use are critical 'city shapers', integral to the long-term growth strategy for Auckland region. By articulating a clear approach to the location, timing and sequencing of growth in Auckland, the spatial plan will facilitate more efficient and cost effective delivery of infrastructure. It will also help ensure that future growth does not compromise the function of existing transport networks. The plan was approved by Auckland Council in March 2012.

The [National Rail Strategy](#) sets out the Government's rail policy objectives and priorities for action to 2015. It outlines key initiatives intended to achieve the outcomes sought, including increasing the amount of freight and commuters using rail.

Land Transport Agencies

Several agencies have a role in land transport, particularly in relation to resource management matters. These include:

- Ministry of Transport
- NZTA
- Kiwirail



THE RMA QUALITY PLANNING RESOURCE

- Regional councils
- City/district councils
- Auckland Transport

The [Ministry of Transport](#) (MoT) is responsible for developing national transport policy and related legislation. MoT acts as the Minister of Transport's agent for managing the interface with the other government transport entities the NZTA, Maritime New Zealand, Civil Aviation Authority, KiwiRail, the Aviation Security Service, the Road Safety Trust and the Transport Accident Investigation Commission.

The MoT provides policy advice to the government to help it meet its objectives for transport including advice on legislation and policy, funding levels and priorities, and Crown agency governance, performance and accountability.

[The NZ Transport Agency](#) is a Crown entity tasked with promoting safe and functional transport by land, including managing the state highway network, managing the allocation of funding to land transport, and the responsibility for driver and vehicle licensing. It was created in 2008 by the Land Transport Management Amendment Act and merged Transit NZ with Land Transport NZ.

[KiwiRail](#) is the trading name for the New Zealand Railways Corporation. KiwiRail is a statutory corporation operating with several business units. One of those business units is KiwiRail Infrastructure (formerly ONTRACK) which maintains and improves the rail network and controls the operation of trains on the network. KiwiRail also provides rail freight services, provides locomotives for passenger services, operates the Cook Strait Ferry, operates long distance passenger train services, and provides urban passenger services in Wellington (under contract to the Greater Wellington Regional Council).

Regional and unitary councils are responsible for preparing regional policy statements and plans and, through regional land transport committees, preparing regional land transport strategies. They are also responsible for administering public transport funding within their areas, and for preparing passenger transport plans.

Apart from being responsible for preparing and administering district plans, **cities and district councils** also maintain and develop local roads and walking and cycling facilities, prepare travel demand management programmes (e.g. parking) and initiate strategic transport-related land purchases and development. City and district councils (along with their regional and unitary equivalents) have an important role in identifying community outcomes, including those with transport implications, and gaining stakeholder input into planning town centres and corridors.

Other organisations involved in transportation need to be considered when developing transportation provisions for resource management policies and plans. These include:

- [Auckland Transport](#)
- [Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority](#) (EECA)
- Road user groups (including NZ Road Transport Associations and [NZ Automobile Association](#))
- Road and rail transport operators (including the [Bus and Coach Association of New Zealand](#)).



Integrated land transport planning - the role of regional policy statements and plans

The importance of applying a co-ordinated and integrated approach to the management of land transport by local authorities is recognised in the following RMA provisions:

- a function for regional councils: the strategic integration of infrastructure with land use through objectives, policies and methods (s30(1)(gb))
- a definition of infrastructure that includes 'structures for transport on land by cycleways, rail, roads, walkways, or any other means' (s2(g))
- a requirement that the triennial agreement entered into by local authorities under s15(1) of the Local Government Act has to include an agreement on the consultation process to be used to prepare, vary, change or review a policy statement (cl3A of Schedule 1).

These provisions clarify the role of regional councils in overseeing the integrated management of infrastructure and land use to achieve good resource management outcomes. The provisions recognise the close relationship between infrastructure (in its broadest sense) and land use. This creates a flow-on effect in terms of integrated planning for services and managing demand for new infrastructure particularly as a number of RPSs focus on the environmental effects of transport.

Regional policy statements

Land transport is a complex issue that is managed by several different agencies operating under various statutes. Under the RMA, regional policy statements (RPSs) play a key strategic role in land transport planning. As regional and district plans are required to 'give effect to' RPSs (refer ss67(3) and 75(3) of the RMA), their specific high-level objectives and policies will have a strong influence on the policy framework within these plans.

The role of RPSs in land transport is a rapidly evolving area and a number of regional councils are investigating the application of a more directive policy approach in these statements. This, in turn, will have a bearing on how land transport planning is integrated into regional and district plans.

Regional plans

The purpose of regional plans is to assist regional councils to fulfil their functions and achieve the purpose of the Act. Some regional plans may have little relevance to transport planning whereas others will contain provisions that impact on resource consents for land transport projects (e.g. such as those regional plans dealing with erosion and sediment control).

District plans

District plans establish a policy and regulatory framework for land use, subdivision and associated environmental effects. Land use planning decisions can assist (or frustrate) the implementation of strategic transportation measures.



THE RMA QUALITY PLANNING RESOURCE

In broad terms, land transport provisions in district plans should:

- integrate land use and transport planning
- allow for the development and management of integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable transportation systems
- give effect to the land transport provisions included in the relevant RPS
- not be inconsistent with any relevant regional plan provisions
- have regard to national and regional transport policies and plans prepared under the Land Transport Management Act
- seek to address the environmental effects of land transport on land use and the effects of land use on land transport.
- manage the effects of reverse sensitivity on the land transport network.



Land Transport - Developing Effective District Plan Provisions

Developing land transport provisions for district plans involves the following stages:

- gathering information
- identifying and assessing transportation issues in the district including the influence of land use and growth expectations
- developing objectives, policies, and rules to address these issues and any additional optional methods;
- drafting plan provisions that will achieve these objectives and policies.

Throughout this process, consideration should also be given to the nature and extent of consultation required.

Gather the information

Gathering relevant information involves obtaining a clear understanding of the overall land transport environment in a district or region, including roads, railways, public transport networks (services and infrastructure), pedestrian areas, and cycle routes. Identifying key land uses, future trends, transport demands and growth areas is also important.

The transport network is interconnected, and a change in one part of the system may often have unforeseen operational and land use consequences (e.g. extra train services at peak times may cause traffic delays at road crossings down the track, provision of bus lanes on existing arterials may displace existing retail parking). Equally, land use decisions may also have an unintended effect on the operation of the transport network and system.

Consultation is critical to understanding what the community likes and dislikes about a district's land transport system. Consultation needs to be wide, inclusive of transport providers and key agencies, and provide relevant information. Specific information relevant to the development of policy and consultation on land transport includes:

- copies of the existing district plan, the RPS, the Regional Transport Plan and other strategic documents.
- guidelines such as [the Transport Agency's Planning Policy Manual](#); there is no equivalent guidance for rail, but overseas rail and land use planning standards may be useful.
- national and international transport, and urban form policy documents can help inform appropriate local policies such as The Transport Agency 's guidance notes and overseas good practice examples such as [UK Planning Policy Guidance 13: Transportation](#)
- new data and existing research regarding transportation issues in the district and/or region. This may include any corridor studies, plans or strategies
- any Regional Public Transport Plan, or walking and cycling strategy developed by a region or city/district.



THE RMA QUALITY PLANNING RESOURCE

Where information gaps are identified, it may be appropriate to consider commissioning studies and reports on transportation 'hot spots' in the district/region to fill any gaps in current knowledge.

The outcomes of consultation and submissions on earlier RMA plans or other council plans (e.g. Long Term Plan, Annual Plan), the RLTP or the Transport Agency's National Land Transport Programme are other useful sources of information that provide insight into community views and can help inform an integrated approach.

Identify and assess the issues

Although there is no statutory requirement that district and regional plans contain issues, councils should consider including them as issues help clarify what the associated objectives and policies are trying to achieve. Issues typically form a key component of the structure and focus of RMA plans.

Land transport issues fall into two broad categories:

- the effects of transportation on the environment
- the effects of the development and use of land on land transport.

The land transport system, particularly road and rail, may have potential adverse effects on the environment such as:

- degradation of visual amenity values
- negative social effects, including community severance
- land take, including loss of productive land
- high levels of noise and vibration
- disruption or destruction of plant and wildlife habitats (e.g. putting a road or rail corridor through a habitat can lead to fragmentation, and create corridors for pests and weeds to spread)
- modification or destruction of historic heritage
- pollution of water resources (e.g. stormwater quality and quantity, increased siltation of water bodies due to road construction, disruption of water bodies through the use of culverts and piping which can affect fish migration)
- discharges into air of dust, exhausts and other contaminants
- effects on pedestrian and cyclist safety and amenity including availability and safety of walkways, footpaths, cycle lanes, tracks, level and impacts of weather protection (including shade).

Land use activity can impact on aspects of the district's transport system. In particular, land uses can have adverse effects on safety, responsiveness, integration and sustainability of the transport system. This includes:

- generation of traffic/increased volumes
- parking, loading and turning impacts
- light and glare
- effects on vehicle visibility and safe sightlines
- implications for accessways and crossings
- location of hazardous substance storage facilities in relation to the network



THE RMA QUALITY PLANNING RESOURCE

- effects on traffic safety from signage and distractions at intersections
- reverse sensitivity effects from locating residential activities or other sensitive land uses close to busy transport routes
- impacts on the sustainability of through routes (e.g. increased pressure to lower speed limits, impacts on travel time, congestion).

In assessing transport issues, the following actions are important:

- Focus on potential effects including cumulative effects, not just existing effects. Always ask what the future effect will be of a land transport or land use proposal.
- Consider strategic issues (e.g. congestion, social effects, land transport noise, air quality). Be aware of broader environmental matters such as climate change and the relationship of these to land transport.
- Consider the role of the district plan in supporting a broader transport plan or strategy (e.g. the content of any regional or district growth strategy).
- Be aware of changing public attitudes, expectations and perceptions concerning acceptable effects and levels of service in relation to land transport. This is particularly important in relation to effective utilisation of alternatives to private motor vehicles (e.g. public transport).

Responding to issues

Councils need to decide how to best address identified issues through their district plan. Matters that should be considered include:

- the development of land transport objectives and policies in parallel with other related matters in the plan (e.g. recognition of the relationship that exists between residential and/or business development policies and policies on land transport, given the potential for adverse effects resulting from traffic noise)
- the relationship between different transport-related policy areas (e.g. utilities, residential amenity and density, transport mode), and other over-arching policy documents such as the RPS and RGS should be clearly evident in the plan.



District Plan Framework for Managing Issues

Under s75 of the RMA, district plans are required to include objectives, policies to achieve the objectives, and rules (if any) to implement the policies. To achieve the objectives and policies in its District Plan, a council can rely on a mix of regulatory (e.g. rules) and non-regulatory methods.

District plan provisions

District plans can promote greater integration between land use and transport, by incorporating provisions that provide for both strategic and detailed site-specific assessment. This includes:

- objectives and policies relating to the effects of transportation on the environment and the effects of land use on the transportation system
- establishing a regional/district roading network or hierarchy that links to supporting rules or other methods
- policies and rules that link to particular transport modes
- using designations or specific zonings to cover existing and new transport routes (e.g. for upgrades to the state highway system/rail network, or for busways)
- development, subdivision and zoning-related controls
- structure plans to ensure that roading networks and land use are integrated.

A district plan can also include methods (including rules) to manage the specific environmental effects of activities such as:

- the location and design of vehicle accessways
- facilities for pedestrians and cyclists
- facilities for public transport requirements
- parking
- roadside sales
- signs
- noise and vibration controls
- sightline requirements at railway crossings, intersections and vehicle accessways
- earthworks/stormwater
- street trees and landscaping
- associated activities on roads (e.g. public utilities, bus stops)
- noise-sensitive land uses located close to arterial road or rail corridors.

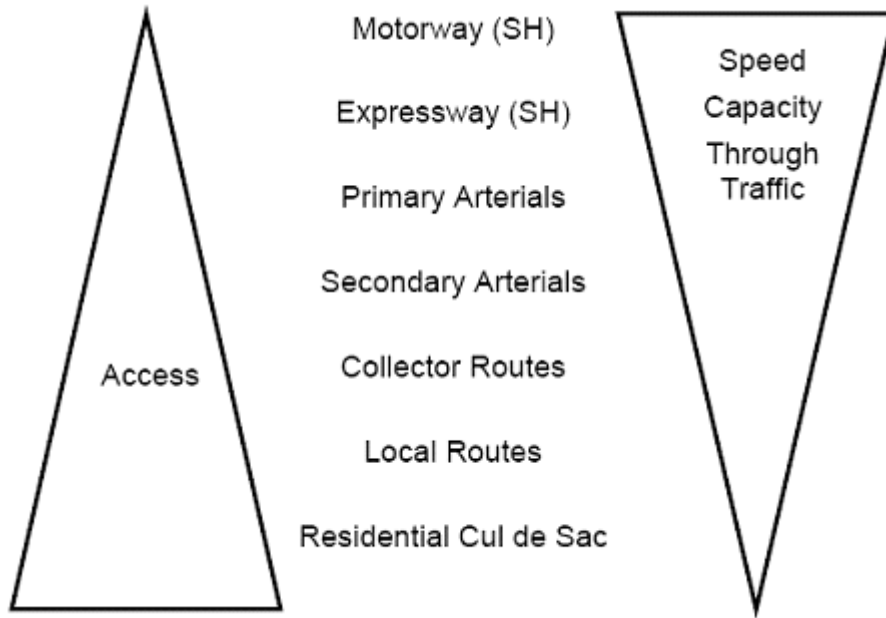
District plans are primarily a means of regulating activities to facilitate or control land transport (but see section below on other [methods that can be included in RMA plans](#)). Territorial authorities are also able, under the LGA 2002, to:

- identify and fund relevant programmes through the Long Term Plan process
- undertake necessary roadworks
- require development contributions to recover some of the capital costs that they incur when building or expanding infrastructure required to serve new development
- close or stop roads temporarily or permanently
- construct and remove crossings between land and an adjoining road
- make bylaws concerning roads and cycle tracks and their use

- make bylaws concerning road and traffic signs.

Road hierarchies

Road hierarchies classify types of roads in the region/district, and their priority in terms of function. The highest class relates to arterial roads such as motorways and state highways, while the lowest includes local roads and cul-de-sacs. Each classification assigns preferential use to either through traffic or local access.



There is an argument for moving away from a hierarchical road system to one that is:

- interconnected
- provides amenity, and
- applies a multi-modal approach that limits the capacity for single occupant vehicle traffic.

Nevertheless, the current convention is to rely on road hierarchies for planning purposes.

Road hierarchies are a means of managing the district transport infrastructure (and more particularly to control access to the highest levels of the road hierarchy). They can be useful in achieving a balance between movement and place making and as an environmental management tool to assist in controlling effects (e.g. noise and amenity protection). A graduated hierarchy can usefully help establish policies and rules relating to:

- access location, standard of formation and appropriateness
- preferred land use, density of development and subdivision rights
- traffic volumes and speeds
- road construction and geometry standard
- traffic generation rates



THE RMA QUALITY PLANNING RESOURCE

- access and parking effects of adjacent land use activities
- design and amenity standards
- provision for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport within the hierarchy.

Transport corridors

A designation is a planning mechanism for district plans that enables existing or future infrastructure to be efficiently managed and allows land requirements associated with future infrastructure to be signalled in plans. A designation can provide a useful means to deal with lineal transport networks such as roads or railways.

Where a designation is provided in a plan, any provisions that might normally apply - including zoning and land use controls - do not extend to works or projects undertaken by the requiring authority. This can include routine maintenance and minor upgrading.

A designation:

- informs the community about the route and operation of existing and future transportation networks
- allows the designating authority to do anything that is in accordance with the designation (without the need for other resource consents under the district plan)
- protects future routes from inappropriate development and can assist in strategic planning
- allows land to be purchased for transportation purposes
- needs to be implemented within a specific time frame
- may be 'rolled over' by the requiring authority into a new plan

In general, designations are an effective tool for major new transport developments such as arterial roadways. However, zoning provisions can also be used in conjunction with or instead of designations to provide for transport corridors and networks. In such cases, the district plan generally permits activities like the construction, operation, and maintenance of roads, although certain thresholds and performance standards may apply. Other non-riding activities may still require resource consent, such as the location of bus shelters and removal of protected trees.

There are several issues to consider when deciding whether to use zoning or a designation. These include:

- Zoning may avoid the need to designate existing networks. However, a plan change would generally be required for any new routes or additions to existing routes not already included in the zone.
- The merits of using zoning instead of a designation need to be carefully considered. For example, if transport corridors are zoned, a plan change would be required to widen the corridor (or extend the zone boundary). An alteration to a designation may create more certainty in such circumstances.
- Land that is designated usually has an underlying zoning that applies to non-designated activities (e.g. residential) and would revert to this if the designation is removed. Usually the zoning is consistent with the zones adjoining the designation. However, if a special zone is created for the transport corridor, a plan change would be required to allow the land to be used for another purpose.



THE RMA QUALITY PLANNING RESOURCE

- Any activity proposed within a designation that was not part of the designation requires the agreement of the designating authority before proceeding. Depending on the district plan provisions, such an activity would be assessed in terms of the underlying zoning or, if applicable, the 'transport' zone.

Councils, Ministers of the Crown (e.g. government departments), and approved network utility operators (e.g. NZTA) are requiring authorities and can lodge a Notice of Requirement to designate their transportation networks in district plans. NZTA uses designations to manage the State highway network. The national rail network is also designated.

Future lineal transport infrastructure routes such as road, rail, pedestrian, cycle and rapid transit corridors may also be identified in district plans (particularly for future growth). Commonly these would be provided for by either designation or by indicative routes where insufficient detail is available on the exact location or configuration of the route. There are, however, location and timing issues associated with this latter approach. Potential noise, visual and air quality effects would also need to be recognised.

As a way of reconciling strategic land use and private development goals, local authorities sometimes use indicative roads as a means to negotiate the location of transport routes at the time that a subdivision is proposed. Structure plans are another way of achieving such outcomes, but have the long-term roading pattern often embedded into a district plan to direct future development.

Managing development

Unplanned or uncoordinated land use decisions can affect the safety or level of service of the transport system. Consequently, the impacts of land use on transport interests should be considered prior to land being identified for growth, subdivided or developed.

When preparing a plan, consideration should be given to including objectives, policies and possibly rules that cover such matters as:

- restricting the maximum or minimum number of lots that can be created in specific areas (Note: medium-high density development is more efficient than low density in terms of land use and public transport provision). Access restrictions and the maintenance of a lower density of development are sometimes required to maintain the efficiency of important routes in specific areas
- encouraging development within close proximity to transport corridors and nodes
- reverse sensitivity (i.e. where new transport sensitive activities are introduced/encroach on transport networks leading to conflict between activities)
- promoting higher public transport use near transport nodes (e.g. allow medium-high density within 400-800 m of a railway station or along a bus corridor; reduce carparking requirements near public transport nodes). The same should also be applied near shopping areas to encourage people to walk, cycle and to use public transport
- minimum access requirements for properties (Note: there are some innovative subdivisions that want to restrict vehicle access; rules should not be so restrictive as to prevent this from occurring)
- minimum roading and access standards (Note: note that some standards (particularly mandatory parking standards) can act as disincentives to achieving



THE RMA QUALITY PLANNING RESOURCE

other planning objectives, such as increased diversity of housing stock, redevelopment of existing buildings, and urban intensification)

- the status of the access connection in respect of the road hierarchy
- the impact that development may have on the existing transport infrastructure and how these will be managed, including a statement that NZTA be considered an affected party in relation to state highways and that NZTA approval is required before any consent can be granted along any limited access road that it administers
- creating transport hubs at strategic locations in the rail and passenger transport network to act as major receivers and distributors and to provide important linkages. This can assist in promoting high-quality and intensive urban environments that support public transport modes. There is also potential for a scaled-down hub to serve rural communities.
- support community resilience by ensuring subdivision patterns and transport layouts that enable a range of transport options and transport modes

Methods for specific effects (standards and controls)

Generally all existing district plans contain transport-related standards or controls (e.g. access, parking). When carrying out a review, careful consideration should be given to these provisions as some may no longer be effective or desirable. Council officers (e.g. roading engineers, consent planners) who regularly work with these standards should be consulted about the effectiveness of existing provisions. It may also be helpful to survey the views of the plan from external users (e.g. roading consultants, the NZTA, consultant planners).

Long Term Plans under the LGA can also play an influential role in transport-related decisions as they outline the levels of service to be provided by a territorial authority (e.g. travel speeds and times on roads).

Vehicle accessways

Use vehicle accessway specifications to state the number, location, and design of vehicle accessways along a road.

Vehicle accessway specifications should be tailored to the particular situation, but in general they should:

- ensure that visibility is good enough to allow vehicles to move into the accessway safely
- consider pedestrian and cyclist movements
- ensure that vehicles are not forced to queue, to reverse into the road, or to swing into the path of vehicles in opposing lanes
- ensure that vehicle crossings are designed to operate safely, have good visibility and achieve efficient traffic flow
- ensure that on-site loading facilities do not adversely affect road or pedestrian safety
- ensure that where access is to, from or in close proximity to a state highway, that district plan provisions are not inconsistent with [the NZTA's Planning Policy Manual](#).



Parking standards and controls

Parking controls can be used to:

- establish the maximum and minimum number or parking spaces required
- manage the design, and capacity of carparks
- set standards for things like access, aisle width, manoeuvring room, carparks for disabled persons, stacked parking, traffic screens, loading areas and landscaping
- manage transport demand. For instance, many councils want to reduce the number of vehicles entering their city centres. This outcome is often associated with policies to minimise the amount of space given over to parking and to improve efficiency (by reducing congestion). It may also coincide with policies to promote intensification of residential development and to encourage public transport use.

Parking controls can be difficult to determine and administer as parking needs vary greatly for different activities. As provisions may need to be adjusted in response to land use changes, it is important to ensure that any changes are closely monitored (e.g. rules may need to address supplementary provision where 'vehicle generating' activities are proposed).

For instance, it may be more efficient for a council to provide bulk parking in one location instead of multiple small parking lots through a centre. Consideration could also be given to allowing 'shared' parking between activities where possible (e.g. multi-unit shopping centres). Such policies should be developed through an integrated planning exercise. Other policy issues to take into account include management of potential adverse effects.

To address adverse effects, parking controls need to:

- consider whether parking supply is appropriate, based on such factors as: land use goals, travel patterns, whether alternative modes are available, the catchment for the land use and specific needs to deliver goods or services by vehicle
- ensure each activity provides adequate numbers to accommodate staff, customers, residents, and delivery people
- avoid creating an oversupply of parking as this is a waste of resources and induces additional traffic
- avoid traffic congestion
- avoid impacts of parking on visual amenity (e.g. use of landscaping)
- accommodate parking requirements for different activities on the same site, and varying parking demands during the day
- ensure there is sufficient access and safety in each parking area.

Road and traffic signs

Road and traffic signs are critical to road safety and should be considered as a permitted activity in district plans. Alternatively, councils can consider the use of bylaws to provide for road and traffic signage.



THE RMA QUALITY PLANNING RESOURCE

The NZTA is responsible for traffic control signs within state highway road reserves. The industry-recognised [Manual of Traffic Signs and Markings \(MOTSAM\)](#) is a useful source for definitions of road and traffic signs. Note this manual is being progressively updated with the [Traffic Control Devices Manual](#).

Noise and vibration controls

District plans commonly establish noise standards for land use activities. With existing transportation networks, it is also relevant to consider how 'reverse sensitivity' might be addressed (e.g. where a noise-sensitive activity such as housing establishes near an existing noisy environment like a motorway). Refer to the [Land Transport Noise QP Guidance Note](#) for more detailed information on options to manage land transport noise.

Air quality

Air quality is a particular issue for communities affected by transport networks experiencing congestion and in areas where existing air quality is poor. Generally free-flowing traffic produces fewer emissions than congested traffic. Although transport emissions are usually assessed on a national basis, location-specific effects have been considered in certain circumstances.

Sightline requirements for railway level crossings

Consideration should be given to applying controls such as separation and sight distances near railway level crossings to ensure road users have a safe line of sight.

The document [Traffic Control Devices manual \(TCD Manual\)](#) produced by the NZTA provides useful guidance for those involved in drafting sightline standards for district plans.

Earthworks and stormwater controls

Although earthworks and stormwater discharges are generally managed through regional plans, they are also addressed in some district plans. As these activities have the potential to adversely affect the development of the transportation system, unnecessary duplication of controls in regional and district plans should be avoided.

Financial contributions

Where specified in a plan, financial contributions can be imposed to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects on, or the effects of, land transport modes. Contributions can be in the form of cash, land or a combination of cash and land. They can be used to recover the costs of providing upgraded or additional public transport infrastructure associated with new development.

The NZTA may also seek to enter into cost sharing arrangements for state highway improvements directly related to development (refer [NZTA Cost Sharing Policy](#)). These may include contributions of land, works or money from developers, councils and other relevant parties (if appropriate) to mitigate the adverse effects of new development on the state highway network.

Other activities on roads

Other activities on roads include car races, cycle races or parades. Although these activities are generally temporary in nature, they can occur on a reasonably regular basis and can affect both the transportation system and activities on nearby sites. They are often regulated through by-laws or are treated as temporary activities (with allied controls) in plans. Transport Agency approval also needs to be sought if access to a state highway is required.

Provision for associated roading-related structures such as bus shelters and utility infrastructure should also be considered.

Other methods (associated with the district plan)

Consideration should be given to the use of other regulatory or non-regulatory methods to implement district plan transport policies, provided they align with and support transport provisions in the plan.

Other methods include:

- design guides
- strategic documents that provide for cycleways and pedestrian routes (e.g. cycle strategies, reserve management plans)
- structure plans
- transportation standards
- advocacy and education programmes promoted by councils.

Other methods (non-RMA)

Other methods to achieve councils' objectives outside the district plan include:

- Long Term Plans - these are important planning documents that help inform council activities and decision-making. For example, Long Term Plan can set out planned works and services that a council wants to undertake to provide bus transfer stations, bus lanes and cycle lanes, and how it proposes to acquire, develop and manage car-parking areas.
- bylaws - these can be developed under the LGA 2002 to address matters like the transportation of hazardous substances, parking, advertising and traffic signs and roadside selling
- NZ Standards - for example, '[NZS 6803:1999 New Zealand Standard Acoustics - Construction Noise](#)' is a useful standard to apply during road construction and maintenance (Note: rules that refer to NZ Standards should include a specific reference to the standard and the date).



Expected environmental results and monitoring

District plans can include the environmental results expected from the policies and methods but this is not a mandatory requirement. Where expected environmental results are included, plans should identify specific measurable outcomes that are being worked towards. This is important as monitoring the success or otherwise of plan provisions is a requirement under s35 of the RMA. They can also provide a useful basis to determine whether existing provisions need to be adjusted.

Monitoring can be used to:

- establish how well the plan provisions are working - monitoring ideally needs to be measurable and real outcomes are important (e.g. reduced travel times, reductions in the number and intensity of accidents)
- learn how land use is affecting transportation, and how transportation is affecting land use. It may be useful to seek input from other agencies affected by land use such as the NZTA and rail providers
- provide input into RLTS monitoring requirements, particularly in relation to land use activities
- assess the impact of cumulative effects on transportation infrastructure.

Dealing with cross-boundary issues

Transportation systems often have associated issues and effects that extend beyond one district or region. Regional councils and territorial authorities affected by cross-boundary transport issues need to develop a clear process for dealing with these issues. The RLTP provides a good way to achieve this and can be cross-referenced in a district plan.

