

AGENDA ITEM 17   BOARD DECISION PAPER	
<b>To:</b>	Board
<b>From:</b>	Jenny Chetwynd, EGM Planning and Investment
<b>Reviewed</b>	Dean Kimpton, Chief Executive Officer
<b>Date:</b>	28/11/2023
<b>Title:</b>	Revised Regional Public Transport Plan 2023-2031

### Aronga / Purpose

1. Seek approval of the updated Regional Public Transport Plan (RPTP, Attachment 1), so it can be released to guide decision-making for public transport in Auckland.

### Tuku mana / Delegation

2. The Land Transport Management Act 2003 (LTMA) allocates responsibility for approving the RPTP to the board.

### Ngā tūhonga / Recommendations

That the Auckland Transport Board (board):

- a) Approve the Regional Public Transport Plan, apart from the service change initiatives.
- b) Note the changes made to the Regional Public Transport Plan following feedback from public consultation.
- c) Note that the proposed service changes contained within the Regional Public Transport Plan will be revised and confirmed once the funding decisions on the Long-Term Plan are complete, and re-presented to the board for its endorsement.

### Te whakarāpopototanga matua / Executive summary

3. The RPTP sets out our planned service changes over the coming years, the policy framework behind our public transport (PT) operation services (including our contracting approach), and the overall narrative on our approach to PT in Auckland. The RPTP is a requirement of LTMA.
4. AT consulted with the public on a draft RPTP from 17 July to 17 August 2023, and received a record number of submissions (3,196, the highest of any RPTP we have ever consulted on). There was strong public and local board support for the vision, goals, actions, policies, and service improvements proposed in the draft RPTP. The one exception was opposition to the proposed replacement of the Gulf Harbour ferry with the NX2 (together with improvements to local bus services) from 2028. We have committed to looking into this issue in more detail and will confirm a way forward in the planned 2025 update to the RPTP.
5. The RPTP needs to be a fundable plan and endorsed as such. There is, however, considerable uncertainty about the future operational and capital funding for PT and this will not be resolved until Council's Long Term Plan (LTP) process is complete in 2024. We recommend therefore endorsing most of the RPTP, outlining the policy framework and contracting units, to ensure it can guide ongoing day-to-day decisions around the PT system, but only note the service plan, which will be presented as requiring reinterrogation post the LTP and RLTP process – where funding levels will be confirmed, and endorsed as part of the next RPTP in 2025 (in keeping with the LTMA).

### Ngā tuinga ō mua / Previous deliberations

Date	Report Title	Key Outcomes
November 2023 Design and Delivery Committee	Revised Regional Public Transport Plan	Directors enquired why having an external assessment is proposed and received advice that this is necessary to address local board and councillor concerns. Clarification was sought and received on the financial impacts of the Plan and the endorsement sought, given the LTP process.

Date	Report Title	Key Outcomes
June 2023 Board	Draft 2023 Regional Public Transport Plan	The board approved the release of the RPTP for public consultation, following changes the TIC requested to place greater emphasis on innovation, particularly On-Demand services earlier in the plan and to clarify our aims related to working with private providers of micro-mobility services to integrate with the PT network. These were incorporated.
April 2023 Transport and Infrastructure Committee (TIC)	2023 Regional Public Transport Plan – Strategic Direction	The TIC endorsed the strategic direction for the RPTP, including a short-term focus on recovery, a medium-term focus on leveraging service changes related to infrastructure investment, our long-term vision and goals, and a balanced approach to service improvements.

## Te horopaki / Background

- The RPTP, required by the LTMA, is Auckland’s main plan that sets out PT services and the key policies that guide public transport planning, including the ‘Units’ that support the contracting approach.
- AT must prepare the RPTP in parallel to, or as soon as practicable after, the Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP). This update of the RPTP is to align with the 2021-2031 RLTP and has had a delayed development, meaning it has been five years since the last RPTP was adopted.
- This RPTP covers the period 2024 to 2031. It contains: our overall vision and goals for PT (and aligns with the Statement of Intent (Sol)); our revised policy framework for PT; forthcoming planned changes to the network; and upcoming contractual changes. It also aligns to the August 2023 changes to the LTMA, which require details on the forthcoming infrastructure changes to PT and alignment to the ‘principles’ of New Zealand’s new contracting mode, the Sustainable Public Transport Framework.
- Under the LTMA, the responsibility for adopting the RPTP sits with the board. TIC will be briefed on the feedback we heard during consultation, and the

changes we are making in response, at its November meeting, prior to the board endorsing the RPTP at the end of November.

- Public consultation on a draft version of this RPTP ran from 17 July to 17 August 2023. We received a total of 3,241 submissions (including those from organisations). This is more than any previous RPTP we consulted on (including the 2018 RPTP, which received 462).

## Te hononga ki te “Statement of Intent 2023 - 2026”/ Alignment to Statement of Intent 2023 - 2026

- The RPTP shows how we will deliver on the Sol. The high-level targets in the RPTP (such as boardings, emissions reduction, service performance and farebox recovery) are aligned with the targets in the Sol. The RPTP also includes detailed targets for the performance of individual bus routes, which we report monthly on our website. These targets form the basis for assessing if routes need changes to address under-performance.
- Engagement on the RPTP has helped provide us a deep understanding of Aucklanders’ views on PT and the improvements that the system needs. The high rate of responses to the RPTP’s consultation shows that we are improving the way we engage with Aucklanders, and the high levels of support we heard for most elements of the plan shows that we are effectively listening to what Aucklanders want, as the draft RPTP was based on what we heard in earlier phases of engagement.

## Me mōhio koe / What you need to know

### Responding to public feedback

- There was a high level of support overall for the RPTP from the public. Most feedback provided was that we are on the right track or only need minor change. There was a subset of feedback asking for us to deliver our plans faster. A summary of feedback is included in the consultation report at Attachment 2
- This high rate of submissions shows the success of our engagement approach and the extensive use of multiple platforms to reach Aucklanders, supported by a multi-media marketing campaign. We also asked questions differently, including taking customers directly to topics in the survey that they engaged

with (via QR codes) and presenting information on our proposals to ensure people could make informed responses.

15. Because of the high rate of support, we are not proposing significant changes to the RPTP. Most changes are minor corrections or clarifications, or changes to bring the plan up to date (such as to comply with the changes to the LTMA).
16. The single highest issue we received feedback on was the proposed removal of the Gulf Harbour ferry after 2028, following the extension of the Northern Express 2 (NX2) to Whangaparāoa and changes to the local bus network (including a new frequent route to Gulf Harbour). This received 1,111 submissions against its removal and 35 submissions in support. In parallel there was also a view that AT had allowed the ferry service to be run down and was now seeking to cancel it. To address these concerns, we have now committed to an independent study of the transport needs of the Whangaparāoa peninsula and propose to confirm the way forward for the Gulf Harbour ferry in 2025, rather than in the 2023 RPTP.

*Proceeding with the 2023 RPTP given funding uncertainty*

17. Recent forecasts have identified that the costs of public transport services are likely to be significantly higher than anticipated and will place Auckland Council’s budget under significant pressure. This raises the prospect that some planned service improvements may not be able to be delivered and the overall service plan may need to be revised.
18. The LTMA requires that the RPTP is a ‘fundable plan.’ By proceeding to endorse the current draft of the RPTP, AT may risk presenting an overly optimistic service plan that cannot be funded. This might suggest delaying the plan’s endorsement.
19. However, the RPTP has two other important functions: it establishes a range of policy and Unit structure updates that AT needs to have in place to continue to run and update the public transport network; and it supports the service improvements proposals that we have submitted to both Council and Waka Kotahi for operational funding, including as part of the LTP and Continuous Funding Bid processes. The RPTP itself is also not the direct financial commitment for services; this occurs through the operator contracting process.
20. In addition, the LTMA requires that the RPTP is completed as soon as possible after the RLTP. The current RPTP was completed in 2018 and is now well out of date. Accordingly, we propose that the board endorses all parts, apart from

the service change initiatives, and note that this will enable endorsement of those parts of the RPTP that are required to support the daily operation of the PT system to proceed as planned.

**Ngā ritenga-ā-pūtea me ngā rauemi / Financial and resource impacts**

21. As noted, there are expectations arising from the service plan component of the RPTP which cannot be confirmed until the LTP process is complete. We are therefore excluding that component from this endorsement, allowing endorsement only of the components for which there are not financial impacts. This will be clearly communicated to customers so they are aware that the service improvements are subject to ongoing processes and will be confirmed in 2025.

**Ka whaiwhakaaro ki te Tiakanga Taiao / Climate change and sustainability considerations**

22. Increased use of PT services is a core way in which we will meet our emissions reduction targets. Climate change and environmental outcomes are a core part of the Goals in the updated RPTP, which were strongly supported by the public during consultation.
23. In response to submissions, we have also added more information about the gap between the targets in the RPTP and in Council’s Transport Emissions Reduction Pathway (TERP) for PT boardings. Drawing on the on-going Vehicle Kilometres Travelled Reduction work, we have outlined potential sets of interventions that would be required, beyond those in the RPTP, to make further progress towards the TERP target, noting that these are not achievable based on current funding.

**Ngā whakaaweawe atu anō / Other impacts**

Relationship	Consulted Y/N	Views and Perspectives Received
Māori	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/>	Through hui during the RPTP’s consultation, mana whenua requested changes to the Māori outcomes section (3.7) of the plan to highlight






Relationship	Consulted Y/N	Views and Perspectives Received
		<p>their priorities and distinguish them from other Māori (mataawaka). These changes were made.</p> <p>We had 89 respondents to the RPTP who identified as Māori. Their views were generally aligned with the wider public. The top three areas Māori responded to were 'cheaper fares', where they were supportive of the weekly fare cap and other initiatives to reduce the cost of PT, 'frequent services' where they strongly supported the proposed improvements in the plan, and to the environmental goal where they encouraged us to strike a balance between electrifying the PT fleet with other aspects of the plan.</p>
Elected members	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/>	All local boards were provided with the views of residents of their area, following consultation, to inform the boards' formal feedback on the RPTP. These will be included as an attachment for the board (but are not yet included as we have not received all of them at time of writing). Generally, the boards are supportive of the overall direction of the RPTP.
Council Controlled Organisations	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/>	We worked with officers from Council and Eke Panuku on the details of the RPTP, to ensure alignment regarding the planning and provision of PT services.

26. An update to the RPTP will be prepared and released in 2025 in response to the 2024 LTP and RLTP.

### Ngā whakapiringa / Attachments

Attachment #	Description
1.	DRAFT final RPTP 2023-2031
2.	DRAFT Community Feedback Report – RPTP 2023-2031

### Te pou whenua tuinga / Document ownership

Submitted by	Recommended by	Approved for submission
Luke Elliott <b>Principal Planner Rapid Transit Network (Author)</b>	Jenny Chetwynd <b>Executive General Manager, Planning, and Investment</b>	Dean Kimpton <b>Chief Executive</b>
		

### Ā muri ake nei / Next steps

24. The TIC will be briefed at its November 2023 meeting on the feedback from consultation and the changes being made to the RPTP as a result.
25. If approved by the board, we will publish the RPTP and Community Feedback Report on our website in early December 2023.