



9.0 TRANSPORTATION

9.1 Introduction

Transport Systems

Transport systems and associated infrastructure are physical resources that need to be managed in a sustainable manner. These resources include state highways, roads, railways, airfields, and associated structures such as bridges and lighting.

Different options for transportation need to be allowed for and encouragement given to the most sustainable forms of transportation.

Environment Waikato is required to develop and maintain a Regional Land Transport Strategy under the Transit New Zealand Act 1989. This document must not be inconsistent with the Regional Policy Statement prepared under the Resource Management Act 1991. The Regional Land Transport Strategy therefore provides a policy framework which must be considered in the objectives, policies and methods employed in this District Plan.

Council has a responsibility to manage the effects of existing and future changes to transportation systems and networks. Where possible, adverse effects must be avoided, remedied, or mitigated.

The main resource management issues relating to transport systems are:

- (i) the effects on the natural environment including significant landscapes and indigenous vegetation of transport systems including noise, property effects, and the effects of vehicle emissions on the air quality and the ozone layer;
- (ii) the effects of land use activities on the safety and efficiency of transport systems;
- (iii) the unsustainable use of fossil fuels being a finite resource.

Roads

Roads within the District are controlled by Council, Transit New Zealand, and private operators including forestry companies.

Most of the major arterial roads in the District are State highways administered by Transit New Zealand. Transit New Zealand has produced a document entitled "*Planning for a safe and efficient State Highway Network under the Resource Management Act 1991*" which provides guidelines for District Councils when considering adjoining land use activities and access to the State highway network.



The District has a network of State highways providing strategic links throughout the North Island. State Highway 1 runs in a north-south direction and passes through the three main urban areas of Tirau, Putaruru, and Tokoroa. The other State highways in the District are State Highways 5, 27, 28, 30 and 32.

The maintenance and progressive improvement of the State Highway Network is undertaken by Transit New Zealand and a number of State Highway Strategy Studies have been prepared by Transit New Zealand relating to the most important highways within the District. The strategy studies provide a long term plan for the progressive improvement of the State Highway Network including early identification of major projects.

Many stock trucks currently discharge effluent onto the roads within the District. The disposal of untreated effluent in this manner is likely to have some adverse effect on the environment. Stock effluent dropped on the roads will detract from the "Clean Green" image the District wishes to promote. Allowing such disposal to occur will not enhance the tourist industry when, for example, a tourist's vehicle windscreen is covered in effluent.

In addition, there have been a number of fatal accidents in the country caused by a vehicle or motorcycle skidding on stock effluent on the road. Council has addressed these environmental and safety concerns by installing two pilot stock truck effluent disposal sites in the District and are monitoring their operation.

Most of the roads controlled by Council are well established and no new roads are currently proposed. Council will be involved in the ongoing maintenance and progressive improvement of roads for which it has responsibility.

There is a major off-highway system of private roads in the District owned and managed by Carter Holt Harvey Forests Ltd. The effect of this roading network is that large numbers of logging trucks are kept off State highways and district roads.

Railways

Railway lines run through the District as far south as Kinleith and there is a branch line from Putaruru to Rotorua. A significant volume of pulp and paper products manufactured at Kinleith are transported by rail to either the Port of Tauranga or the Ports of Auckland. It is not anticipated that there will be any expansion of the railway network within the District, however, any adverse effects on the environment resulting from the present level of operation and any future expansion of the network need to be addressed in the District Plan. An issue of particular concern is the safety of level crossings.



Air

There is one airfield in the District located at Tokoroa. It is proposed to maintain an Airport Protection Zone to ensure the continued operation and safety of that facility and also to reduce any potential effects of the airfield on residential areas.

Water

Transportation on water is generally restricted to recreational boating on the Waikato River and hydro lakes. A small number of commercial operators also use water for transport such as jet boat operators and fishing charters. Surface water activities are addressed in Section 25 (Reserve Zone).

Vehicle Access, Parking and Loading

The provision of adequate access, parking, and loading arrangements is an important part of maintaining the safety and efficiency of transport systems. Policies and rules are included in this section to control the location and design of access and loading points, number of parking spaces to be provided for, manoeuvring areas, and screening and landscaping where appropriate. Provisions are also included to cater for people with disabilities.

Energy Issues

There are currently no national or regional policy statements dealing with the major transport energy issues such as the use of fossil fuel resources and the effect of vehicle emissions on the ozone layer. It is considered appropriate for central government to take a lead on these issues in the form of a national policy statement. In the absence of such policy direction the South Waikato District Council has adopted the approach of thinking globally and acting locally with respect to such matters. Therefore policies relating to minimising the need for transportation and promoting energy efficiency have been included in the District Plan.

9.2

Objectives

- 9.2.1 Transport systems that avoid, remedy or mitigate any adverse effects on the environment.
- 9.2.2 The protection of transport systems from hazards, such as congestion and conflicts occurring when different types and speeds of traffic are integrated and other adverse effects, which compromise their safety and efficiency.



9.3 Policies

General

- 9.3.1 To ensure that the development of the District's transportation systems are consistent with the Regional Land Transport Strategy.
- 9.3.2 To encourage the use of the most appropriate transportation systems.
- 9.3.3 To protect the amenity and cultural values of adjacent environments and activities from the adverse effects of transportation systems (including road, rail, air, and water).
- 9.3.4 To make provision for the needs of public transportation systems.

Roads

- 9.3.5 To identify a hierarchy of roads within the District as a framework for investment, traffic management, and controls on activities affecting roads.
- 9.3.6 To maintain and improve the roading network to a standard appropriate to its function as part of the roading hierarchy.
- 9.3.7 To protect the safety and efficiency of the roading network from the adverse effects of other activities.
- 9.3.8 To ensure that all plantings near road boundaries do not adversely affect road safety or the physical condition of roads and State highways.
- 9.3.9 To require that new transport routes and up-grading of existing routes be designed in a manner that visually complements the landscape and visual amenity of the locality and constructed in a manner that does not adversely affect the natural values of ecosystems.
- 9.3.10 To require all entrance ways, provision for on-site parking, manoeuvring and loading to be constructed to appropriate and cost effective standards.
- 9.3.11 To endorse Transit New Zealand Standards for access onto State highways.
- 9.3.12 To encourage forest owners to continue to maintain and develop off-highway roads so that logs and forest produce can be transported with minimal adverse effects on the public roading network.



9.3.13 To work with Environment Waikato, Transit New Zealand, and transport operators to ensure the safe disposal of stock effluent.

9.3.14 To minimise any conflict between vehicular traffic, cyclists, and pedestrians.

9.3.15 To designate all Council roads in the District Plan.

Rail

9.3.16 To encourage the use of rail transport where this is the most efficient and effective mode of transport.

9.3.17 To ensure that level crossings are designed and maintained to a high standard so that public safety is not adversely affected.

Air

9.3.18 To ensure that the operation of the Tokoroa Airfield is not adversely affected by other activities.

Water

9.3.19 To ensure that any actual or potential adverse effects on the environment created by the use of boats and other vessels on the lakes and rivers of the District are avoided or mitigated, and conflicts between uses and users are minimised.

Vehicle Access, Parking and Loading

9.3.20 To require adequate vehicle access, parking and loading arrangements while not adversely affecting the safety and efficiency of transport systems.

9.3.21 To require where appropriate adequate parking spaces suitable for people with disabilities.

9.4 Methods to Achieve Objectives and Policies

The following identifies the methods that will be used to achieve the objectives and policies contained in this section of the District Plan:

9.4.1 General

9.4.1.1 Transport Systems

- (i) To ensure that the development of the District's transport systems is consistent with the Regional Land Transport Strategy (RLTS), Council will:



- a. review all physical works relating to transport programmed through Council's Annual Planning process to ensure that they are consistent with the RLTS; and
- b. liaise with transport related network utility operators in conjunction with Environment Waikato to ensure that proposed transportation developments are consistent with the RLTS.

Refer to Policy 9.3.1.

- (ii) Council will advocate improvements to transport systems within the District to enable people and communities to provide for their economic and cultural well-being.

See part C of the District Plan.

Refer to Policy 9.3.2.

- (iii) Land use provisions that avoid and/or mitigate the effects of noise from transport systems, e.g. transport routes generating significant levels of noise will be identified in the Hazards Register.

See Section 14 (Noise).

Refer to Policy 9.3.3.

- (iv) Design standards for transport infrastructure to maximise public safety and to avoid or mitigate adverse effects on the environment have been developed. These will be used by Council when developing and upgrading Council roads and will also be used for assessing resource consent applications and requirements for transportation projects.

Refer to policies 9.3.3 and 9.3.14.

- (v) Criteria (including the design standards mentioned above) are included in the District Plan for assessing requirements lodged by Requiring Authorities to ensure that any potential adverse effects on the environment are avoided, remedied, or mitigated.

See Section 10 (Public Works and Network Utilities), and Section 5 (Administration). Refer Policy 9.3.3.

- (vi) To enable public transport systems to operate within the District, provision has been made for such activities in the District Plan.

See Section 10 (Public Works and Network Utilities).

Refer to Policy 9.3.4.



Council will promote improvements to transport systems within the district in the interests of the economic well-being of the community and the nation.

9.4.1.2 **Roads**

- (i) The roading hierarchy will be maintained and monitored within the District (see Appendix A). The Hierarchy of Roads defines the primary function and characteristics of the roads within the District and will be referred to when considering a resource consent application for an activity that might have an adverse effect on roads.

Refer to Policy 9.3.5.

- (ii) Funds will be allocated through the Annual Plan process for roading maintenance and improvements.

Refer to Policy 9.3.6

- (iii) The location of traffic generating uses will be controlled through the zone rules to avoid adverse effects on the safety and efficiency of major transport routes. Activities which service the motoring public may be located on major transport routes subject to any significant adverse effects of the activities being avoided, remedied, or mitigated, so as to make the activities compatible with the function of the road.

See Part C of the District Plan.

Refer to Policy 9.3.7.

- (iv) Activities that could potentially have adverse effects on road safety such as signs and roadside planting are either controlled by statutory provisions (eg Section 355 of the Local Government Act 1974) and by rules or covered by the Council's design guidelines for transport infrastructure.

See Section 16 (Signs)

Refer to Policies 9.3.7 and 9.3.8

- (v) Maintenance and construction of roads is a Permitted Activity subject to performance standards.

See Section 10 (Public Works and Network Utilities).

Refer to Policy 9.3.15.

- (vi) Roadside stalls will be controlled by the zone rules.

Refer to Policy 9.3.7.



- (vii) Landscape planting will be permitted within road reserves in a manner which does not compromise traffic safety.

Refer to Policies 9.3.8 and 9.3.9.

- (viii) Private roads have been provided for as permitted activities in the District Plan as detailed in Section 10 (Public Works and Network Utilities).

Refer to Policy 9.3.12.

- (ix) The Council will be involved in on-going liaison with Environment Waikato, Transit New Zealand and transport operators to work towards ensuring all stock trucks within the District have holding tanks for stock effluent, and that adequate disposal facilities are available.

Refer to Policy 9.3.13.

- (x) Council may require a financial contribution or the upgrading of relevant roads prior to commencement of the activity (or that portion of the activity) generating the level of traffic movement as detailed in Section 18 Subdivision and Development.

- (xi) Specific rules within this section will be applied to ensure that the objectives and policies of this plan are achieved.

9.4.1.3 **Rail**

- (i) The Council will discuss appropriate methods of transportation with developers in conjunction with investigations into the establishment or expansion of major industries within the District.

Refer to Policy 9.3.16.

- (ii) A specific rule has been included in this section in relation to level crossings to ensure the objectives and policies of this plan are achieved.

9.4.1.4 **Air**

- (i) An Airport Protection Zone will be maintained to ensure land use activities do not impinge on the operational requirements of the airfield at Tokoroa.

*See Section 26 (Airport Protection Zone)
Refer Policy 9.3.18.*



9.4.1.5 Water

- (i) The rules in Section 25 (Reserve Zone) will be applied in relation to surface water activities.

Refer Policy 9.3.19.

Vehicle Access, Parking and Loading

- (i) Specific rules are provided in Section 18 of Volume 1 of the District Plan.

9.5 Principal Reasons

The sustainable management of the various transport systems within the District requires, that the safety and efficiency of transport systems is not compromised, and that any adverse effects of transport systems are avoided, remedied, or mitigated.

Changes to the transportation network within or through the District can have major benefits for the users of that network. However, these changes can have adverse effects on land owners and whole communities. These effects include noise, fumes, vibration, litter, loss of land, and loss of "catch trade" for local businesses.

The reasons for the objectives and policies relating to transportation being included in the District Plan are to maintain and enhance the safety and efficiency of transportation systems; to avoid, remedy, or mitigate any actual or potential effects on, or caused by, transport systems; and to allow for the progressive improvement and further development of transportation systems within the District.

9.6 Anticipated Environmental Results

It is anticipated that the objectives, policies, and methods outlined in this section will achieve the following environmental results:

- (i) Safe and efficient transport systems will be provided that maintain and enhance the economic viability of the District, are energy efficient, and have minimal adverse effects on the environment.
- (ii) The adverse effects of other activities on transport systems will be avoided, remedied or mitigated.