



## SUBMISSION

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Submission: Waikato Regional Land Transport Plan 2024-2054

To: Waikato Regional Council

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## **About Ia Ara Aotearoa Transporting New Zealand**

- 1 Ia Ara Aotearoa Transporting New Zealand is a national membership association representing the road freight transport industry. Our 1,100 members operate urban, rural and inter-regional commercial freight transport services throughout the country. Road freight transport accounts for approximately 93% of the total tonnage of freight moved in New Zealand.
- 2 As the peak body and authoritative voice of the road freight sector, Transporting New Zealand advocates for policies and investments that help our members operate efficiently, safely, and sustainably.

## **Submission on Waikato Regional Land Transport Plan 2024-2054**

- 3 Transporting New Zealand appreciates the opportunity to make a submission on the Waikato Regional Land Transport Plan 2024-2054 (**draft RLTP**).
- 4 Transporting New Zealand notes that the strategic policy framework for the draft RLTP was developed under the policy environment of the previous Labour government (as referenced at page 14 of the document).
- 5 Following the election of the Coalition Government, Transporting New Zealand requests that the formal consultation process be extended or paused, to allow for the draft RLTP to be updated, reflecting up-to-date key drivers. These will include the Coalition Government's Policy Statement on Land Transport (GPS24), and the Coalition Government's revised policy direction for freight and rail.
- 6 Notwithstanding this, Transporting New Zealand has provided concise responses to each of the consultation questions.

## Response to Waikato Regional Land Transport Plan 2024-2054 consultation questions

Question	Response
Do you agree with the high-level vision and objectives for land transport in the Waikato region?	<p>Transporting New Zealand broadly supports the vision and objectives for land transport. However, it does not expressly address our members' leading concern about long term underinvestment in road maintenance.</p> <p>Transporting New Zealand considers that an express reference to maintenance and renewal should be included, similar to how "maintaining and operating the system" was added as a sixth strategic priority in draft GPS 2024 (alongside resilience, emissions, safety, sustainable urban and regional development and integrated freight system).</p>
Have we adequately identified the most pressing transport issues the region is facing over the next 3-10 years?	<p>Transporting New Zealand broadly supports the key transport issues and challenges identified at 2.2 of the draft RLTP.</p> <p>However, Transporting New Zealand considers that increasing resilience of the roading network should be an overarching focus, sitting above the other issues and challenges.</p> <p>The COVID-19 pandemic and severe weather events of last year have highlighted the importance of ensuring the resilience of the transport system and supply chain. The primary purpose of the transport system is to move people and goods safely and reliably, making resilience a practical overarching consideration.</p> <p>Transporting is also concerned that the weighting allocated to "growth and economic development" does not reflect the relative importance of Waikato's position in the golden triangle, and the high levels of projected growth in the road freight task.</p>
Do we have our strategic land transport priorities right?	<p>Transporting New Zealand considers that greater priority should be placed on supporting the decarbonisation of road freight (including the development of a reliable battery electric and hydrogen charging network and renewing the heavy vehicle fleet) rather than focussing on resolving rail constraints and building capacity.</p>

	<p>Road is the country's dominant form of freight, with Ministry of Transport projecting that it will maintain its dominant share of the freight market, accounting for 95% of growth in tonnage between 2012/13 and 2042/43 (Transport Outlook: Future State pg. 62).</p> <p>Rail and coastal shipping play an important supplementary role in New Zealand's freight task, however our geography and population density prevent serious challenges to freight contestability. The risk is government wastes a lot of money, continues to clog choke points in the Waikato region, and forgo spending on other meaningful and significant infrastructure that drives our economy.</p>
Will the strategic policy templates in section 3 of the RLTP deliver on our vision and objectives?	Transporting New Zealand does not have feedback on the strategic policy templates.
Do our prioritised significant transport activities reflect our strategic transport priorities and outcomes we are seeking for land transport in the Waikato region?	Transporting New Zealand submits that the prioritised significant transport activities should reflect the Coalition Government's Policy Statement on Land Transport (GPS24), and the Coalition Government's revised policy direction for freight and rail.