



Auckland
Regional Council
TE RAUHITANGA TAIAO

Auckland Region Rural Transport Issues

January 2009

WP 2010/10

Auckland Regional Council
Regional Land Transport Strategy Working Report No.10
January 2009

This document supports the development of the Auckland Regional Land Transport Strategy 2010. It is the culmination of work developed by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to support the Auckland Regional Transport Committee. The TAC includes representatives from all local territorial authorities, Auckland Regional Transport Authority, Auckland District Public Health Board and other technical experts.

Reviewed by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Don Houghton', written in a cursive style.

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Auckland Regional Rural Transport Issues

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1 Purpose

This report has been prepared to assist the Auckland Regional Transport Committee with preparation of the Auckland Regional Transport Strategy 2010.

2 Introduction

This paper covers all rural areas in the Auckland region including the Hauraki Gulf Islands.

The paper starts with background information on the rural road networks followed by recent data on travel behaviour in rural areas of the region. It then raises and discusses a number of issues under a series of policy areas. Each section includes a recommendation or recommendations. The various recommendations are summarised in the table on pages 38-40.

One of the most difficult issues faced by the territorial authorities (TAs) in the region's rural areas is to achieve an appropriate balance between meeting development pressures and rising expectations. This must be achieved within the constraints imposed by limited budgets while retaining the qualities that attract people to the rural areas either to live, or for recreational purposes.

The low or very low density development that predominates in most rural areas and the associated high reliance on travel by car increases the difficulties inherent in encouraging walking, cycling and more use of public transport, and in reducing the environmental effects of the transport system.

Taken together, these issues have a significant effect on rural Auckland transport policies and actions.

This paper develops a series of recommendations on matters of regional significance to rural transport in the Auckland region. Issues are identified under a series of headings or topics, followed by a discussion and a recommendation or recommendations.

Where appropriate, recommendations will be developed into policies for inclusion in the 2009 Auckland Regional Land Transport Strategy.

In preparing the paper discussions were held with the appropriate officers of the Franklin District, Papakura District, Rodney District, Manukau City, Waitakere City and Auckland City councils, and the Auckland Regional Transport Authority. This was supplemented by information obtained from documents provided by various councils.

Information on Community Transport was obtained from Environment Waikato, Environment Canterbury and New Zealand Transport Agency officers and from the internet.

The people contacted in preparing this report are listed in Appendix 2. Their willingness to assist in providing information is greatly appreciated.

3 Background

Some background information on land use characteristics and land use development in rural parts of the region is given in Appendix 1.

3.1 Statistics

Network lengths

- Franklin District has 1600km of roads, of which about 250 km are unsealed. In 2003, about 66 per cent of the network carried less than 500 vpd.
- Rodney District has 1710 km of roads, of which 704 km (41 per cent) are unsealed.
- Papakura District has approximately 115 km rural roads out of a total road length of 285 km (approximately 40 per cent of the network). Only 2 km are unsealed.
- Manukau City has 256 km rural roads out of a total road length of 1268 km (20 per cent of the network). Unsealed roads total 18 km in length.
- Waitakere City has approximately 300 km rural roads, including 40 km unsealed.
- Waiheke Island has 84km sealed and 30 km unsealed roads, and Great Barrier Island has 32 km sealed (on Claris-Okiwi route) and 83km unsealed roads, giving a total road network length of 229 km including 113 km unsealed.

The above add up to a total road length of approximately 4210 km, including 1127 km unsealed roads. While some of the road network is within towns or villages and hence is 'urban' rather than 'rural', these figures give an indication of the importance of the rural road network to the Auckland region.

Financial assistance rates

The following table sets out the financial assistance rate (FAR) from the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) that applies to each territorial authority (TA) in the Auckland region.

Table 1: Financial assistance rates applying in the Auckland region

Territorial authority	FAR (%)	
	Maintenance	Improvements
Auckland City Council	43	53
North Shore City Council	43	53
Manukau City Council	43	53
Waitakere City Council	43	53
Papakura District Council	44	54
Rodney District Council	48	58
Franklin District Council	51	61

3.2 Rural travel characteristics

The following draws on the findings of two investigations which used the 2006 ART (Auckland Regional Transport) household travel survey data by John Davies¹ and Russell Jones². The survey was an approximately 1 per cent sample of households across the region. Everyone over five years old in the households surveyed was asked to complete a travel diary of all trips over a 24 hour period. Both investigations used the sample data uncorrected for possible sample bias and unexpanded.

The survey included 5458 households in the urban area (within the metropolitan urban limits) and 572 households outside the urban area.

3.2.1 Household travel data

John Davies' evidence used household travel data separated into countryside living zones and 'other', but these have been combined into a single "rural" category for current purposes. The results are summarised in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Household travel data

Category	Urban	Rural	Change (%)
No. Person trips/household/day	8.92	8.76	Not significant*
Average trip length (km)	6.68	10.17	+52
Average distance travelled/household/day (km)	59.6	89.1	+50
Proportion daily trips by private vehicles (%)	82.9	90.4	+9
Proportion walk trips (%)	11.1	5.4	-51

*a small difference which "may change on analysis of the final data set"

3.2.2 Resident travel data

Russell Jones based his analysis on residents, rather than households, to remove the potential effects of differences in household sizes among the categories (this explains the small differences in some characteristics between Tables 2 and 3). He classified the surveyed mesh blocks as urban, or one of four rural categories. The rural categories are listed below. Rural areas outside towns were classified as either "countryside living" or "rest of the rural area".

Rural categories

- Rural towns with employment (primarily Pukekohe with approx. 10 per cent from Kumeu).

¹ Evidence to the Joint Hearings Committee on the transport issues associated with countryside living by John Davies, Manager Transport Analysis, Auckland Regional Council

² Analysis of Rural Travel Patterns, prepared for Noel Reardon, Auckland Regional Council by Russell Jones, Prism Consulting Ltd, June 2008.

- Rural towns without employment (Beachlands & Maraetai, Waiwera including Hatfields Beach, and Piha).
- Countryside living.
- Rest of the rural area.

Countryside living areas included both areas with a countryside living zone and rural areas which inspection of 2006 aerial photographs revealed had settlement patterns and densities which looked like countryside living.

The report pointed out that the sample size (572 households) was relatively small. However, ".....the resulting data is the best data we have available on rural travel behaviour in the Auckland region and in many areas is adequate for our purposes".

Russell Jones produced tables for the five categories (urban + four rural) giving the following information:

- average daily trips per person and average daily travel distance,
- trip length distribution,
- proportion of households where vehicle running costs are subsidised,
- travel mode used,
- work arrangements (e.g. fixed hours, flexible hours, work from home),
- socio-economic group of workers,
- trip purpose.

Table 3 combines the rural data in the rural travel analysis report into a single rural category. Table 4 only includes the non-settlement rural categories, ie the countryside living and rest of the rural area categories. The results are also summarised in the subsequent bullet points.

Table 3: Resident travel data: urban & rural (all categories)

Category	Urban	All Rural	Change (%)
No. Trips/person/ day	3.22	3.12	minimal
Average travel distance/person/day (km)	21.1	34.4	+63
Proportion daily trips by private vehicles (%)	81.5	90.0	+10
Proportion walk trips (%)	11.8	5.3	-45
Proportion daily travel by bus, train, ferry (%)	4.0	1.4	-65
Proportion daily travel by school bus (%)	1.0	2.4	+140
Proportion working from home (%)	2.6	5.0	+92
Proportion travel over 5 km (%)	39.0	56.2	+44

Table 4: Resident travel data: urban & non-settlement rural

Category	Urban	Dispersed Rural	Change (%)
No. Trips/person/ day	3.22	3.32	minimal
Average travel distance/person/day (km)	21.1	36.0	+71
Proportion daily trips by private vehicles (%)	81.5	91.2	+12
Proportion walk trips (%)	11.8	3.3	-72
Proportion daily travel by bus, train, ferry (%)	4.0	1.5	-63
Proportion daily travel by school bus (%)	1.0	3.0	+200
Proportion working from home (%)	2.6	5.7	+119
Proportion travel over 5 km (%)	39.0	64.9	+66

A comparison of the urban and rural travel characteristics in the above tables highlights the following:

- Rural areas have a significantly higher reliance on private vehicle travel than urban areas.
- Rural areas have a much lower use of public transport reflecting the lack of services, but the countryside living and rest of the rural area categories have the highest use of school buses (at three per cent of daily trips).
- The proportion of walk trips is much lower in rural areas, particularly in those areas with a dispersed development pattern.
- The proportion working from home in rural areas is approximately double that in the urban area, and is highest in areas with dispersed development.
- Almost 40 per cent of trips in the urban area are over a distance of greater than five kilometres, but this increases to approximately 65 per cent in the dispersed rural development categories.
- Travel distances are substantially longer in rural areas than the urban area.
- Although people in rural areas are more likely to work from home, they still on average make as many trips and travel substantially further than people in the urban area.

4 Land Use and Transport Integration

Issue

By their nature, rural areas are very reliant on travel by car. Land uses are widely dispersed, settlements are generally small, and conventional public transport is typically expensive to provide and often of limited effectiveness. Actions can, however, be taken to better integrate decisions on land use development with policies aimed at reducing the dependence on car travel.

Discussion

Based on the coural rural mail delivery numbers³, there are 18,841 lifestyle dwelling units and 9045 farms in the Auckland region.

Very low density developments such as lifestyle blocks, countryside living or farm parks are highly car reliant by their nature. They cannot be efficiently or effectively served by conventional public transport. They typically consist of a group of separate households which do not in aggregate, form a true community of interest, and who generally see themselves as largely self-reliant.

Collective transport arrangements are much more likely to be feasible in villages or towns which have a separate identity and where there is a community willing to work together to address matters of common interest. In addition, towns and villages are far more likely to have footpaths, walkways and cycleways accessing community facilities. It follows that:

- Land use forms which cluster activities in towns or service centres assist in reducing dependence on car travel and the negative effects of such dependence.
- Most developments which are expected to generate large numbers of trips should be located within, or close to, existing towns or other service centres.
- Urban design in rural towns should include measures to encourage walking and cycling and the use of public transport, including the encouragement of land use development forms of a density, nature and size capable of supporting conventional public transport services.
- Local communities should be encouraged to work together to provide forms of community transport which meet their needs, including providing transport for those without access to a car or unable to drive.

³ (coural records whether the house is on a farm or a lifestyle block as stated by the occupier, according to whether they are productive farms or not)

Recommendation

Decisions on the design and location of land use developments in rural areas should aim to encourage and facilitate the use of alternatives to the car, while recognising the primary purpose of the development.

5 Road Maintenance and Renewal Costs

Issues

- Some rural TAs are finding it difficult to meet the renewals costs involved, although these are funded at a financial assistance rate which is 10 per cent higher than the base maintenance rate.
- Unsealed roads generate complaints over the dust nuisance and associated health issues. The incidence of these complaints can rise as people with higher expectations move from urban to rural areas for lifestyle reasons.
- Freight transport can result in high road maintenance costs and/or require pavement strengthening. Some activities generate a relatively consistent amount of freight traffic while others are seasonal or sporadic.
- Freight transport can generate complaints from residents on freight routes over noise and safety concerns.
- A particular issue for Rodney District is the cost of maintaining access roads to the nine regional parks in the district. The Tawharanui Regional Park access road (Takatu Road) includes 4.5 kms unsealed road at its eastern end with an annual average daily traffic (AADT) of 800 vpd, and much higher flows in summer. Other regional parks served by unsealed roads are Makurangi and Pakiri. The council has been seeking a contribution from the ARC towards these costs.

Discussion

Table 5: 2008/09 Funding requests for road maintenance & renewals (sealed and unsealed pavements)⁴

Territorial Authority	Expenditure (\$)
Auckland City Council	65,148,147
North Shore City Council	20,497,734
Manukau City Council	37,668,000
Waitakere City Council	20,037,000
Papakura District Council	5,819,581
Rodney District Council	27,990,000
Franklin District Council	16,299,000
TOTAL	193,459,462

Franklin and Rodney District councils both identified the costs of road maintenance and renewals as one of their main issues. Rodney District Council would like to put an additional \$1m a year into road maintenance and renewals.

⁴ Draft 2008/09 Auckland Land Transport Programme, ARTA, December 2007

About 85 per cent of Franklin’s roading expenditure is “to maintain, operating and preserve the existing network” with the remaining 15 per cent expended on improvements⁵. Many roads built in the late 1970s and early 1980s have relatively thin pavements. Due to the age of the pavements, and heavier loadings from increasing HCV traffic volumes, the council is having to spend a lot more on renewals and is finding it difficult to meet the costs involved.

Manukau City’s Transport Asset Management Plan⁶ states that the road network “has been developed from the old country road network, which was largely low strength/low volume roads. These roads have been progressively rehabilitated and sealed over the last 40 years. Many rural roads are suffering distress and deterioration due to heavy commercial vehicles associated with rural, forestry and quarrying activities, resulting in an increasing demand for reconstruction.”

The pavement condition on Waiheke Island has deteriorated as the roads’ pavement structure, which typically consists of approximately 50 mm road metal with a thin seal, is not designed for heavy vehicles. Auckland City has increased its renewals programme to catch up on the deficit. The cost of stormwater treatment on Waiheke Island can add considerably to the cost of pavement rehabilitation and seal extension projects.

Renewals

The underlying causes are primarily the initial low strength design of rural road pavements due to the low traffic volumes at the time of construction, and heavier loadings resulting from an increase in HCV volumes.

Franklin District Council is seeking to reduce its road costs through persuading the NZTA to declare the Glenbrook Road as a state highway, thus transferring all costs to the NZTA.

Altering the NZTA funding assistance ratio (FAR) for rural roads would require the approval of the Minister of Transport. It could potentially be achieved through:

- Increasing the funding assistance ratio (FAR) or provide a special FAR for rural road renewals – in effect prioritising rural road renewals over other capital expenditure.
- Providing a higher FAR for rural TAs over urban TAs – this would need evidence that the rural TAs’ “ability to pay” has reduced, compared to urban TAs.
- Giving regional arterial roads (which include some rural arterials) a FAR between local roads and state highways (which are fully funded by the NZTA) in recognition of their strategic and regional importance. This would be consistent with the aim of giving higher priority to expenditure on regional arterials.

⁵ Franklin District Council Asset Management Plan, November 2003

⁶ Transport Asset Management Plan 2007-2027, Manukau City Council, May 2008

It is understood that the NZTA's current position is that any proposal for an increase in the FAR should include the identification of where the FAR or funding should be reduced to compensate. This is in recognition that total expenditure is constrained, and increased expenditure in one category needs to be balanced against reduced expenditure elsewhere.

Pavement sealing

Rodney District has a large number of unsealed roads. Some unsealed roads in the district carry in excess of 400 vpd, which is regarded as quite high for this type of road surface. Unsealed roads generate complaints over the dust nuisance and associated health issues (dust on crops, in the air, and in water tanks via roofs).

Franklin District seals about 7-8 km metal roads a year. It finds it difficult to obtain NZTA subsidy for road sealing projects. Waitakere City cannot get subsidy from the NZTA for sealing roads. This is seen as a major issue for the city. Auckland City aims to seal about 300-400 m road a year on Waiheke and Great Barrier Islands combined. It also finds it difficult to obtain a sufficient benefit cost ratio (BCR) to obtain NZTA funding. The council is currently implementing a \$1.3m programme for extending the sealed length of the Claris to Okiwi road as a special project.

Papakura District has concerns over the lack of skilled grader operators for grading unsealed roads and unsealed shoulders. This appears to be a vanishing skill.

NZTA's allocation process determines the priority for funding of activities and projects. The difficulties in obtaining funding for road sealing, identified by the above TAs, may indicate a need to review the value placed on the benefits of road sealing projects in NZTA's economic evaluation manual, or the total funding envelope available nationally for pavement sealing.

Freight transport

Franklin District is one of the main sources of roading and building aggregates for the Auckland region. According to its asset management plan (AMP), there are at least 11 operating quarries in Franklin with a further two just north of the district in Papakura. These quarries produce in excess of 3 million tonnes of aggregate each year, of which about 20 per cent is used annually. Several make extensive use of the local roading network to transport their products. There are two large quarries in Papakura District at Drury and Hunua each generating over 1000 truck movements a day, plus two smaller quarries in Manukau whose vehicles use PDC roads. There are two major quarries in Manukau City at Clevedon and Brookby, and two other quarries at Whitford (medium volume) and Beachlands (low volume). There are seven quarries in the Rodney District Council area.

Forestry can place transport demands on the network as mature forests are felled. There are large pine plantations in both the north and south of the region (Hunua Ranges in Franklin District, and Woodhill, Riverhead, South Head, Ahoroa, Kaipara Hill, Pakiri, Te Arai and Dome Valley in Rodney District).

Horticulture packing sheds for the sorting, packing and distribution of horticultural goods generate truck traffic. The busy season is from October through to May. Horticulture is the predominant land use in the central part of the Franklin District, where more than one third of the nation's fresh vegetables are grown.

The Whitford landfill is a large operation taking a good proportion of Auckland's refuse.

Clean fill sites generate truck movements into Papakura District. These can create dust or mud, and noise. As clean fill sites require resource consents, the council can use the consenting process to charge for the damage to the roads.

Activities such as quarries and landfills which produce a relatively consistent amount of freight traffic, or activities with a consistent seasonal pattern, can be readily taken into account in asset management planning. Logging activities, however, can be more difficult to plan for and require good communication with forestry owners. This can be more difficult to achieve with smaller forestry holdings.

While road user charges should, in theory, ensure that heavy vehicles pay for the damage incurred by the road network; TAs must apply for a funding contribution from the NZTA and contribute towards the resulting maintenance and renewals costs from rates. Renewals funding issues are discussed above.

Complaints from residents over noise and safety concerns are likely to arise from sporadic activity such as logging or from a new activity. Realistically little can be done about noise in most cases, although the council has the ability to identify safety issues and take appropriate action. For new activities, the council can use the consent conditions to ensure potential effects are identified and that reasonable measures to ameliorate effects are implemented.

Recommendations

- That the NZTA be asked to consider allocating a higher FAR to capital projects on regional arterial roads in recognition of their importance to the region's transport system.
- That the NZTA be asked to review the benefits of road sealing projects used in the cost benefit analysis and their values to identify any appropriate potential changes.
- That rural councils and stakeholders ensure that adequate funding commitment for transport infrastructure is included in plan change and resource consent documentation.

6 Network Resilience

Issue

Land instability and flooding may result in the closure of the sole access to a rural area causing substantial inconvenience. On Waiheke Island, storms can result in foreshore damage to roads and the dunes that protect the roads. Bio-security emergency action may potentially close or severely restrict access to an area.

Discussion

Network resilience issues have been highlighted by the recent major slip at Kawakawa Bay and the suspected foot and mouth outbreak on Waiheke Island in 2005.

Land instability is a key issue for Rodney District where poor ground conditions increase construction and maintenance costs. The 2008 winter was accompanied by 10 major and over 100 minor slips. Waitakere City also had a major problem dealing with the numerous slips over the 2008 winter.

The TAs need to have the capability of responding quickly to an incident. This requires appropriate skills and knowledge in-house, plus access to a contractor or contractors who are able to respond quickly. Great Barrier Island has mountainous terrain and high rainfall resulting in several slips each year, but has limited resources and skills, to deal with them.

The NZTA work category 141 Emergency reinstatement “provides for unforeseen significant expenditure that arises from a defined, major, short duration, natural event”. Damage must be approved by the NZTA and ARTA. Repair of the damage usually consists of the immediate response (work necessary to re-open the road or minimise risk of further damage), followed later by permanent reinstatement. The TA is required to notify ARTA and the NZTA within one week of the occurrence. Emergency funding approval is only given following a site visit, which is arranged within the following 4 weeks. Generally, the NZTA is able to give an indication that funds (of up to \$1M) will be approved on the spot, although it can take a few weeks before the funds are available.

Decisions on the funding of permanent reinstatement works can involve discussions on the scope and whether they qualify for emergency funding.

The annual expenditure on emergency reinstatement may vary considerably, and the costs of incidents can be high. TAs can however programme preventative maintenance and make reasonable provision for emergency works in their LTCCPs, and are expected to do so.

The NZTA provides for a higher FAR for emergency reinstatement for those councils with a relatively low rating base. The FAR is varied according to the ratio between the expenditure involved and the council's total general rates.

The NZTA and ARTA consider that emergency funding approval response times are relatively good. However, TA engineers involved do not necessarily agree with this. That may, at least in part, be due to differences among TA staff in understanding the processes to be followed to obtain the necessary approvals quickly.

Providing an alternative access at acceptable cost is generally not realistic. However, there may be instances where the economic effects of a major road closure are sufficiently high to justify the cost of an alternative access.

Recommendations

- That the TAs ensure that the relevant staff are fully aware of the processes involved in obtaining NZTA funding for emergency reinstatement works quickly and efficiently and that, if necessary, the NZTA assist in providing training.
- That the NZTA and ARTA review the emergency reinstatement funding approvals process with a view to identifying the potential for reducing approval times.
- That the TAs identify the potential economic and non-monetary costs of road closures in investigating the upgrading of an existing access, or the provision of an alternative access to a significant area with network resilience issues, include these costs in an application for NZTA funding, and ensure they have local share provision in their programmes.

7 Road Design Standards

Issues

Many rural roads with a 100 km/h open road speed limit have design standards which are not adequate for vehicles travelling at that speed.

Many of the roads on Waiheke and Great Barrier Islands are steep and narrow with limited visibility. The speed limit is 80 km/h outside the built-up areas; however a number of roads are not designed for speeds of 80 km/h.

“Rural speed zoning” was introduced as part of the government’s road safety strategy to 2010 to encourage motorists to drive at speeds appropriate for the road conditions. A rural speed zone is defined as a designated stretch of road (usually not less than 10 km long) where the speed limit has been set for the operating conditions and physical characteristics of the road rather than the standard rural speed limit of 100 km/h. The concept is being trialled with the aim of determining its effectiveness and the appropriateness of the national criteria in the draft policy on rural speed zoning.

The combination of relatively high speeds and variable road design standards including sharp curves, limited sight distance and narrow sealed widths, increases the potential for serious crashes. Narrow roads leave little room for safe recovery in the event of loss of control and do not adequately cater for pedestrians and cyclists. Rural areas have a high incident of crashes at bends (49 per cent of all injury crashes in Rodney District and 46 per cent in Franklin District according to the NZTA June 2008 annual briefing notes).

There are a wide variety of destinations and recreational activities available in the region’s rural areas including the west coast and east coast beaches, bush and forest areas, wineries, restaurants, hot pools, regional parks and the Leigh Marine Reserve. Urban residents driving to and from these destinations in rural areas are not used to the driving conditions and this can result in crashes due to errors of judgement.

In Franklin and Rodney, the development of land into lifestyle blocks in parts of the district has resulted in increased expectations on road quality and widths. In Manukau City most rural residents are there for lifestyle reasons rather than farming. Lifestyle residents generally expect a higher level of service than “traditional” rural residents. Requests include footpaths/walkways and street lighting. However, footpaths can be difficult to justify due to the high cost relative to use. Footpaths can be particularly expensive to provide on narrow roads with open drainage ditches. Lifestylers may also find it difficult to accept that road run-off discharges into their property. Similar issues occur on Waiheke Island where service level expectations can be unrealistically high.

Discussion

Retrofitting existing rural arterial roads can be very expensive as it can essentially require their reconstruction. Generally, justifying the costs of safety engineering improvements can be more difficult in rural areas due both to the higher costs involved and the lower savings in crash costs generated when compared to urban arterials.

There are essentially two approaches to the situation. The first is to upgrade the road to design standards appropriate for a 100 km/h speed limit. This can be very expensive as it may in effect require their reconstruction. The second is to reduce the speed limit to better match the conditions. Councils have the ability to reduce the speed limit from 100 km/h to 80 km/h provided certain criteria are met and a consultation process has been followed. However, there are only a few roads where an 80 km/h is in place.

Where appropriate, a reduced speed limit should be accompanied by physical measures to encourage drivers to travel at the posted speed limit without the need to rely on enforcement measures. The messages given to drivers from the overall design of the road environment should result in a natural slowing down to the reduced speed limit. The costs involved may be significantly higher than doing nothing, but the road should be more compatible with the landscape and adjacent land use context. Also, a reduced speed limit is likely to be more acceptable under these circumstances and would require a less vigorous enforcement regime.

The effects of “visual clues” on driver behaviour is illustrated by an example in Northland where there was a sudden increase in crashes at a curve when a hedgerow was removed by a farmer.

Context sensitive design for roads in rural areas can include the following:

- a design that recognises and adapts to the key features and qualities of the landscape rather than being determined solely by a pre-determined design speed,
- the inclusion of dedicated cycle lanes where appropriate,
- a transition from a rural to an urban design as the road enters then passes through a town or village, for example, as the road enters the town, other modes are given a stronger priority and travel lanes are narrowed,
- minimising severance through a town or village through the provision of physical and visual connections across the road,
- fitting the road into the character of the town or village,
- techniques to reduce speeds and improve driver awareness past schools located outside towns or villages.

Finally, there is a need to manage expectations of rural lifestylers and other residents, not only in terms of recognising the implications of budget limitations, but in recognising that road design and quality should be in keeping with the rural context.

Recommendations

- That a region-wide investigation be done to identify rural roads or sections of rural roads where a speed limit less than 100 km/h may be appropriate, and any physical measures required to support the reduced speed limit.
- That a context sensitive road design approach be used to encourage drivers to travel at appropriate speeds and to produce a design in harmony with the rural landscape. The road design should provide cycle and pedestrian facilities where appropriate, and enhance, and support, the towns and villages it passes through.
- That a publication be prepared to provide information on rural roads for new residents (and visitors) including appropriate driving techniques, the likely lack of footpaths or dedicated facilities for cyclists, and the treatment of storm water run-off.

8 Limited Access Roads

Issue

The large majority of rural roads provide access to adjacent properties. Limiting and preventing direct property accesses onto a road improves vehicle flow and safety.

Discussion

Rodney District has two limited access rural roads, namely East Coast road and the Riverhead-Coatesville highway and the transport planning manager would like to see more.

Limited access roads, however, require the council to maintain good records identifying where accesses have been permitted and any associated conditions.

Recommendation

That council's look for opportunities to declare arterial roads, or sections of arterial roads, to be limited access roads, to protect the road from future development pressures.

9 Road Safety at Rural Schools

Issues

Many rural schools are located on 100 km/h roads with no footpaths. It can be difficult to slow traffic down in the vicinity of such schools, where there are typically no physical measures to reinforce a lower speed environment.

School buses are funded through contracts administered by the Ministry of Education. Children living within one kilometre of the school must pay to use school buses as they are expected to be able to walk to school. The lack of footpaths can, however, discourage this. Rural schools are often located some distance from a settlement, for example in Franklin rural schools are often 1.5 to 2 km outside a village. While footpaths are provided in the village, they do not extend to the school.

Discussion

The location of rural schools and a lack of walking and cycling opportunities increase reliance on the car for travel to school. In some areas this is exacerbated by a tendency for parents to enrol children in a school other than the nearest (primary) school.

The decision to walk or cycle to school is related to both distance and the availability of a safe route of acceptable quality. The Ministry of Education's stipulation that free school bus transport not be available for children living within one kilometre of a school should be revised to include the statement "and there is a safe, convenient and accessible walk route available for travel to and from the school".

Policies on the provision of footpaths should take into account the location of schools well outside the nearest village or settlement, as well as the need for footpaths in the immediate school vicinity. It appears that obtaining funding for footpaths in rural areas from the NZTA can be very difficult due to the relatively low use in relation to cost. There may be a case for the NZTA to review its funding allocation process relating to footpaths.

Recommendations

- That the Ministry of Education be asked to consider altering its policy on the availability of free school bus travel to school, to include children living within one kilometre of the school, where they do not have a safe and convenient walk route to the school available.
- That the NZTA be asked to review its funding allocation process with a view to giving higher priority to the provision of footpaths within one kilometre of a school and between the school and the nearby urban settlement.

10 Road Safety Funding and Expenditure

Issues

The Draft Auckland Road Safety Plan⁷ does not separate rural and urban issues, but deals with the region as a whole. It states that “The two leading causes of death on Auckland’s roads continue to be speed-related and alcohol-related crashes, while significant proportions of people are killed or injured as pedestrians, and at intersections. Bends and roadside objects are contributing factors in a high proportion of injury and fatal crashes”. The draft Plan includes “crash cost density” maps which are based on the cost per kilometre of road crashes. These provide useful indicators of routes with greater crash issues.

Land Transport NZ, now part of the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA), prepares annual briefing notes on road safety issues for each territorial authority. Each report includes statistics for the previous year and the previous five years, and maps identifying locations where injury crashes have occurred and their relative severity (fatal, serious, minor). Issues are identified including those where a particular type of crash appears over-represented. The June 2008 reports show a high incident of crashes at bends in Rodney District (49 per cent of all injury crashes) and Franklin District (46 per cent of all injury crashes). These districts are also over-represented in alcohol-related crashes, reflecting in part the lack of alternatives to the car in rural areas. They are, however, under-represented in terms of crashes involving pedestrians and cyclists due to the lower numbers of people walking or cycling.

The Draft Auckland Road Safety Plan includes regional and local road safety targets for 2010. The overall regional target is for a 27 per cent reduction in fatal and serious crashes from the 2006 baseline. The targets for individual territorial authorities include significant reductions for Franklin, Manukau, Papakura and Waitakere. The Franklin target, for example, is for a reduction from 34 to 20 fatal and serious crashes on local roads.

Franklin District is concerned at the potential safety engineering cost implications of the Regional Road Safety Plan, and considers that there is also a need for new education and enforcement initiatives⁸. Rodney District has also raised concerns over its ability to implement safety engineering schemes due to its limited rating base.

Discussion

Ongoing crash reduction studies and safety audits help identify potential road safety projects.

⁷ Draft Auckland Region Road Safety Plan 2008-2012, RoadSafe Auckland and ARTA, June 2008

⁸ Franklin District Council submission on the Draft Regional Road Safety Plan 2008-2012, dated 5 August 08

Smaller projects can be funded through the Minor Safety Projects budget, a block funding budget available to each TA. Road safety improvements on Waiheke Island, for example, are generally funded through the minor safety projects budget.

The Draft Auckland Road Safety Plan includes a diagram (Chart 3, page 25) which shows that the amounts spent on safety engineering in the region in 2007/08 were \$24m for state highways, which are 100 per cent government funded, and \$29m on urban and rural roads, of which about 50 per cent is from property rates. The draft plan also shows that a much greater reduction in fatal and serious crashes is required on local roads than state highways, indicating that a re-balancing in funding on safety improvements between state highways and local roads is desirable.

As pointed out under road design standards, reconstructing existing rural roads to meet the 100 km/h speed limit can be very expensive. Obtaining NZTA funding may be difficult as the benefits obtained may not justify the costs involved. This suggests that some rural TAs may have difficulty meeting their targets.

One possible means proposed for improving the situation is to increase the FAR for the rural TAs to 75 per cent. Another is to create a "mass action" budget for road projects with an FAR of 75 per cent, effectively prioritising safety projects over other projects.

Recommendation

That ARTA in conjunction with the relevant TAs and the NZTA identify means of re-balancing expenditure on road safety, to achieve a better allocation of funding to achieve the target crash reductions.

11 Recreational Cycling in Rural Areas

Issue

There is a lot of recreational cycling in weekends and holiday periods on the region's rural roads. This includes individuals, small groups of two or three cyclists or large groups. Cyclists vary from inexperienced cyclists travelling at low speeds to experienced riders travelling at speeds up to 50 km/h or higher downhill. Rural roads can vary considerably in their design and in the levels of traffic. In addition, motorists may not anticipate the presence of cyclists as numbers are generally low. Consequently, there is a need to provide safe facilities for recreational cyclists.

Discussion

A number of rural roads, particularly in Franklin and Waitakere have a narrow carriageway with narrow shoulders, although in Franklin these roads tend to have low traffic volumes. The Manukau coastal route is also narrow and popular with cyclists, but can also be busy with general traffic.

Sealing the shoulders can benefit cyclists provided the sealed width is adequate (ideally 3 m), although the shoulders need to be maintained and kept free of debris. Where cyclists use sealed shoulders, care must be taken to ensure that the continuity of cycling facilities is maintained and any narrowing of the shoulder does not put cyclists at risk. Parking on rural road shoulders in areas of tourist interest should generally be discouraged, and off-road parking provided to maintain safety for cyclists using the shoulder⁹.

On rural roads, wide shoulders rather than wide traffic lanes are the preferred treatment if cycle lanes cannot be provided.

Cycle lanes next to the road edge should be 2.0 m to 2.5 m wide where the adjacent motor traffic is moving at high speed. This assumes that the surface conditions for example (100 km/h) adjacent to the road edge are of a high standard.

It has been pointed out that it can be difficult to attract NZTA subsidy for projects aimed at recreational cycling due to the low travel time benefits of recreational travel.

Identifying routes that provide the best conditions for cycling would assist in improving the safety of cycling as a recreation activity in rural areas. The regional cycle network identifies "regionally significant routes" that "carry, or could carry, significant numbers of cyclists". However, there are very few such routes in rural areas. This suggests an alternative approach which classifies routes according to the conditions most relevant from a cycling perspective.

⁹ NZ Supplement to Austroads Guide to Traffic Engineering Practice Part 14 - Bicycles

Recommendation

That research is undertaken into the most appropriate means of catering for recreational cycling on rural roads. This could include:

- identifying routes for development as recreational cycle routes,
- appropriate measures for improving cyclists' safety on these routes,
- preparing of plans identifying the types of conditions cyclists can expect on the rural road network,
- identifying additional benefits in the evaluation process resulting from widening for cyclists, such as the ability to provide left turning pockets at intersections, making it easier for fatigued drivers to pull over and rest, and accommodating vehicle breakdowns.

12 Active Living, Footpaths, Walkways and Bridle Paths

Issues

The transport networks have a role in encouraging a healthier lifestyle through more walking and cycling. The lack of footpaths and walkways in rural areas can limit opportunities for rural dwellers to walk or cycle safely on roads close to their place of residence.

There are increasing demands for footpaths in rural areas, some of which arise from urban dwellers moving to rural areas for lifestyle reasons, then finding that safe opportunities may be limited. Footpath construction is predominantly located in towns and villages where pedestrian activity levels are higher.

Horse riding on roads can damage road shoulders, water tables and berms. While horse riding on road carriageways is legal, it requires skill, and the horse needs to be used to traffic conditions. The alternative is to use bridle paths, if available, or to transport the horse using a horse float.

It was pointed out that if horse riders are encouraged to use unformed roads on public land, there is a liability issue in case of injury.

Discussion

The lack of opportunities can result in rural residents driving to a place that is sufficiently safe for them and/or their families to exercise safely through walking or cycling. The issue indicates a need to consider providing footpaths and walking trails through rural areas.

Providing footpaths on roads in rural areas can, however, be difficult to justify due to the high cost relative to use.

Waitakere City Council finds that it cannot obtain subsidy from the NZTA for providing footpaths on its residential rural roads. Franklin District Council also finds it difficult to justify providing footpaths in rural area due to the relatively low usage related to the costs. Similar issues arise regarding providing street lighting.

The problems associated with riding horses on roads with increasing traffic and, possibly, high traffic speeds have added to pressures to provide separate bridle paths in Papakura and Rodney in particular.

Rodney District Council is introducing a revised bridle strategy. Waiheke Island is aiming to have a network of bridle paths physically separated from public roads and motorised traffic.

Recommendations

- That “active living” demands be included in quantifying the benefits of providing footpaths at or near schools and villages.
- That the potential safety improvements and road maintenance cost savings be identified and taken into account in decision making relating to bridle paths.
- That consideration be given to requiring the inclusion of bridle paths or walking trails in subdivisions for new very low density rural residential developments.
- That guidelines on the provision of bridle paths be developed by the TAs in conjunction with the ARC.

13 Rural public transport (excluding the Hauraki Gulf Islands)

Issue

Scheduled conventional public transport services to rural destinations can be difficult to justify due to the high public costs involved. This particularly applies to long bus routes (without intermediate activity centres).

Community transport, which is typically provided by a non-profit community-based organisation and run by volunteers, can be a cost effective means of providing transport for “transport disadvantaged” groups in areas which are difficult to service by other means. Community transport can also contribute to wider community capacity building objectives and can increase social connection within a community.

Discussion

Conventional public transport

Fixed route, scheduled public transport services can be difficult to justify in rural areas due to the high subsidies per passenger. ARTA funded a Waiuku-Pukekohe service for a year, but the service has been withdrawn because of lack of demand. The Beachlands Maraetai bus service requires a subsidy of \$19 per passenger and is one of the most expensive bus routes to fund in Auckland.

ARTA has identified the matters that need to be taken into account in a policy framework for transport in rural areas. These are:

- determining the rural communities access needs,
- establishing objectives for rural transport,
- engaging with local communities,
- identifying and evaluating options,
- identifying and addressing funding and institutional matters.

The reality is, that a rural town or village that is not a growth centre in the Regional Policy Statement and has a small population base, is unlikely to have an effective fixed route, scheduled bus service either now or in the foreseeable future. Alternatives are required, particularly for the “transport disadvantaged”, a term discussed below.

Community transport

There are community transport programmes in Australia, Great Britain and the USA. They are often established in areas without an existing public transport service or where the existing service is limited. Community engagement is essential and it is primarily the

communities themselves which identify their needs. Public funding may be through grants or contributions for capital purchases.

The Government of New South Wales defines the purpose of community transport as:

To meet the needs of specific transport disadvantaged groups in the community including isolated families, the frail aged, younger people with disabilities, and their carers. Community transport has given many transport disadvantaged people access to recreation, shopping, medical care, social services and social contact, where conventional public transport systems are not generally considered viable or appropriate.

The NSW Community Transport Programme facilitates efficient use of transport resources that exist within the community. Mobility, isolation and age-based criteria are used to define people as being transport disadvantaged. The isolation criteria include "...people who live in villages of less than 500 people that do not have access to conventional transport systems".

Environment Canterbury supports community transport schemes by assisting with vehicle capital funding and providing help in dealing with legal processes. The conditions are, that the trust must be non-profit and members must have a police clearance. The trust must prepare a business plan. The council provides financial assistance through a targeted rate for the particular area, typically in the \$5000-\$10,000 a year range.

There are three community transport schemes in Canterbury, namely in Waimate, Geraldine and North Canterbury, each organised by a "vehicle trust". The Waimate Trust has 50 volunteers and provides an on-call service around the town and to nearby hospitals for the elderly and those with some kind of disability who cannot drive themselves. The Geraldine Trust carries anybody. It transports people to Timaru and the hospital and contracts with local schools. The North Canterbury scheme is limited to people with a disability.

Users of the service pay a charge. One trust has a rental vehicle license. It provides a service during weekdays and hires the vehicles out over weekends for additional income.

Note: A passenger service vehicle requires the driver to have a P endorsement costing \$250 per year. That has been waived for the Canterbury non-profit schemes. The only requirement is that the driver's license must be appropriate for the vehicle being driven.

Environment Waikato's Regional Passenger Transport Plan 2007-2010 includes two proposed trials of community transport projects.

The NZTA may assist with funding, for example it is understood that the Waimate service is funded as a total mobility provider.

The NZTA is looking at developing guidelines on sustainable transport for rural communities, including community transport options, carpooling, bringing goods and services to communities, and replacing travel altogether.

Recommendation

That ARTA identify and, if appropriate, help develop, community transport projects in the north and south of the region which can be introduced and trialled for wider application in the rural parts of the region.

14 Hauraki Gulf Islands Public and Freight Transport

Issues

- Ensuring that access to the Hauraki Gulf islands is maintained at levels consistent with demand is a key transport challenge for the islands¹⁰. Access to the islands is by ferry and by air, and wharves and airfields are important transport assets.
- Ensuring that PT service provision on Waiheke Island is appropriate for the demands and the needs of the residents.
- Maintaining the road network and transport infrastructure at a level appropriate for a rural environment which retains its unique characteristics and is in keeping with the vision for the future.

Discussion

Auckland City Council places a strong emphasis on retaining the characteristics that make the islands unique. This recognises the wishes of the island communities and recognises that to a large extent the visitor and ecotourism markets are dependent on the protection (and enhancement) of the environmental, landscape and amenity values.

Central principles include maintaining the green, bush clad character of Waiheke, and maintaining and enhancing an active, attractive, accessible and safe pedestrian environment. Waiheke is to have a network of integrated bridle paths, walkways, cycleways and footpaths. Good public transport is encouraged, and the location and development of villages is intended to promote increased public transport options and a reduction in private vehicle use.

Ferries

Passenger ferry service to the Gulf islands is provided by Fullers, a subsidiary of NZ Bus Ltd. There is a frequent service to the Auckland CBD (Princes Wharf) and a service to Great Barrier which operates twice weekly over most of the year and almost daily in summer.

The ferry services are not subsidised and Fullers are keen to keep it that way. However, the recent increase in the cost of a monthly Waiheke ferry pass to \$344 has raised the issue of affordability and the possible need for a subsidy to reduce fare levels.

Vehicle ferries to Waiheke (Kennedy Point) are provided by Sealink and Waiheke Shipping. These services also carry bulk freight.

¹⁰ Draft Hauraki Gulf Islands Asset Management Plan 2009-2019

Waiheke bus services

The bus services operating on Waiheke are at present designed round the ferry services. There is a need for services that better meet internal travel needs¹¹.

Better interpeak services are planned along with better connections between villages on the island. The internal bus services on the island are subsidised and additional funding will be required to support the planned service improvements.

HGI road network

The strategic aims for Waiheke include an efficient transport system for the movement of people and goods, and ensuring that the location and scale of transport facilities protect, preserve or enhance the landscape, environmental and amenity values of the island. The environmental and social implications of roading and transport projects and their effects on the spatial land use patterns on the island are to be taken into account.

The Proposed HGI District Plan refers to a policy of using a low impact design approach for new roads as outlined in the ARC Technical Publication 124 Low Impact Design Manual for the Auckland Region 2000.

Airfields and wharves

Great Barrier has two airfields, an all weather airfield at Claris and a grass strip at Okiwi. The latter, on DoC land, is closed over winter and the council would like to see it brought up to an all-weather standard. Issues include the type and frequency of flights including the ability to use of helicopters.

Commercial flights operate out of western Waiheke. There has been an increase in the use of helicopters for travel to and around the island, and this has raised issues relating to noise in particular.

Wharves are located at Matiatia (passenger ferries) and Kennedy's Point (vehicle traffic and freight) on Waiheke, and at Tryphena and Port Fitzroy on Great Barrier.

The council has been looking at development needs at Matiatia, Kennedy Point and Tryphena to meet future demands (including peak season demands). For example, the Kennedy Point wharf is at capacity and reclamation is planned to improve access and parking.

Funding to date has come from the Wharf User Levy (45c per passenger per trip). Funding from the NZTA will be sought for future developments meeting NZTA financial assistance criteria.

¹¹ Essentially Waiheke: A Village and Rural Communities Strategy, Auckland City Planning Group, adopted October 2000 and updated February 2005

Park and Ride sites are being investigated to reduce commuter parking pressures at Matiatia.

Recommendations

- That ARTA continue to work with Auckland City Council developing a public transport service on Waiheke which meets the needs of the island community.
- That ARTA, in consultation with the NZTA and Auckland City, develop policy on the role of public subsidy for passenger ferry services to Waiheke which recognise:
 - the dependence of the island on ferry transport access,
 - the reality that transport costs associated with living on an island are inevitably higher than on the mainland,
 - how residents factor transport costs into lifestyle decisions?

15 Car Pooling and Van Pooling

Issue

Carpooling and vanpooling can be efficient and environmentally beneficial means of travel and should be encouraged.

Discussion

Carpools and vanpools are being encouraged and facilitated through workplace travel plans, as carpooling often works best for the trip to work.

Councils or other organisations can also assist by arranging schemes for matching drivers with potential passengers, who can then share the costs of transport. The Rodney District Council facilitates a carpooling scheme from the Warkworth area to the Hibiscus Coast (there are no public transport services to Warkworth serving these commuters). The scheme has been going for 8 months and has about 300 people registered. Some participants carpool to Silverdale then use the bus service to the North Shore and Auckland CBD as an informal park and ride.

Recommendations

- That the councils, assisted by ARTA, continue to encourage carpooling through Workplace Travel Plans.
- That the potential for further schemes such as the Warkworth area carpooling scheme be identified, and that, where realised, such schemes be included in the council's Annual plan and LTCCP.

16 Park and Ride

Issue

Park and ride can be an attractive option for rural residents, particularly for those working in the metropolitan area at locations such as the Auckland CBD which are relatively well served by public transport. ARTA's role includes the identification of park and ride locations of regional significance (generally at least 200 parking spaces), although ownership of the facilities is currently a TA function. TAs also have a role in developing smaller local park and ride facilities including identifying appropriate sites and undertaking minor capital improvements.

Discussion

Critical to its success include the availability of relatively fast, direct, frequent, good quality public transport services and the provision of secure, safe and conveniently located parking areas.

Park and ride is available at locations such as the Pukekohe, Papakura, Helensville, Waimauku and Huapai railway stations, and the Oteha Valley Road and Constellation Drive Northern Busway stations. Additional park and ride facilities are planned for Drury, Silverdale, Orewa, Whangaparaoa and Massey North.

Regional policy on park and ride is now under development. ARTA is consulting on its draft Park and Ride Strategy, and the ARC draft Regional Parking Strategy includes park and ride policies. The draft Park and Ride Strategy sets out a framework for prioritising key locations for regional facilities.

Recommendations

- That ARTA assist the TAs identifying potential locations for local park and ride facilities in addition to its role in assisting in their development.
- That the extension of the park and ride concept to support carpooling and vanpooling in areas poorly served by conventional public transport, be explored.

17 Vehicles on Beaches

Issue

There is a high and increasing demand for vehicle access to beach areas. However, vehicle use on beaches causes negative environmental effects including the direct impacts of compaction, soil and vegetation loss and associated erosion, and biodiversity loss and changes. Other effects include beach user conflicts, increased fire risk, and infrastructure costs¹².

Beaches have the status of a road and in rural areas in Franklin and Rodney can have a speed limit of 100 km/h.

Discussion

The ARC has raised particular issues relating to the Muriwai Beach, Te Oneone Rangitira and South Head recreation area regarded as “a precious, unique landscape and natural area”¹³. Visitor numbers to the area are high and growing. Recreational use putting pressure on the area includes walking, dog exercising, sunbathing, swimming, horse riding, mountain biking, fishing and motor sports, including trail bike riding. The range and nature of these activities means there is potential for conflict between different users and associated public health and safety risks.

The ARC Report¹² identifies a need for effective management responses to deal with:

- increased levels of public safety risks,
- alienation of responsible users, locals and general public,
- unsustainable damage of dune system, flora and fauna,
- reluctance or refusal of land owners to permit recreation activity,
- ongoing and significant infrastructure costs for the agencies involved.

Possible actions identified included a by-law review, increased signage and education and the drafting of a code of conduct for beach users which might include the following:

- Reckless driving is prohibited.
- The speed limit is XX km/h within 200 m of any other beach users or beach accessway, unless more restrictive bylaws apply.

It was stated that all TAs in the region have extended their district boundaries to enable bylaw control of beaches down to mean low water springs. In addition, Rodney District

¹² Vehicles on Beaches, Implications for Rodney District Council, Coastline Consultants, July 2007

¹³ Report to the 7 February 2008 meeting of the Parks and Heritage Committee of the ARC

Council is investigating establishing a working party to re-evaluate the recently approved by-laws, with the emphasis on ensuring public safety.

The report recommended that discussions be held with the relevant agencies involved in land management and/or the management of public activities on the issues and options and on the development of a heads of agreement.

Recommendation

That progress on the resolution of the safety issues relating to vehicle use of beaches be monitored.

18 Other Issues

18.1 Enforcement

Issues

The appropriate level of enforcement in rural areas.

Discussion

In its submission on the draft Road Safety Plan the Franklin District council states that

“.... consideration needs to be given to the appropriateness of a wider range of measures such as a higher level of enforcement to change poor driver behaviour, lower legal blood alcohol limits, higher vehicle standards, more stringent vehicle and driver testing regimes etc.”

Recommendation

That ARTA, in collaboration with RoadSafe Auckland and the police, consider the need for additional policing resources in rural areas in its annual recommendation to the NZTA for changes in policing activities through the Auckland Land Transport programme.

18.2 Vegetation & noxious weeds

Issues

In rural area berms are mown by the TA to maintain visibility and reduce fire risks. This adds to maintenance costs. As road controlling authorities, councils are responsible for noxious weeds in road reserves. The cost of dealing with noxious weeds can be significant, but is not typically separately accounted for.

Discussion

The above costs are not incurred in urban areas and add to the maintenance costs in rural areas.

Recommendation

That the costs involved in mowing berms and controlling noxious weeds on rural roads be identified and that the feasibility and implications of transferring these costs (back) to the adjacent landowners be investigated.

18.3 Litter on rural roads

Issue

There is a lack of information on littering of rural roads, particularly on the scale of the problem, the potential costs involved, and appropriate means of dealing with litter. The matter has, however, been noted in surveys by Tourism New Zealand as an issue of concern to tourists, who have noted it as something they like least about New Zealand.

Recommendations

- That research be undertaken into the scale of littering on rural roads and the costs involved in dealing with it.
- That alternative means of dealing with littering be reported on.

19 Summary of Recommendations

Item	Recommendations
Land Use/Transport Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decisions on the design and location of land use developments in rural areas should aim to encourage and facilitate the use of alternatives to the car, while recognising the primary purpose of the development.
Road Maintenance & Renewals Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the NZTA be asked to consider allocating a higher FAR to capital projects on regional arterial roads in recognition of their importance to the region's transport system. • That the NZTA be asked to review the benefits of road sealing projects used in the cost benefit analysis and their values to identify any appropriate potential changes. • That rural Councils and stakeholders ensure adequate funding commitment for transport infrastructure is included in plan changes and resource consent documentation.
Network Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the TAs ensure that the relevant staff are fully aware of the processes involved in obtaining NZTA funding for emergency works quickly and efficiently and that, if necessary, the NZTA assist in providing training. • That the NZTA and ARTA review the emergency reinstatement funding approvals process with a view to identifying the potential for reducing approval times • That the TAs identify the potential economic and non-monetary costs of road closures in investigating the upgrading of an existing access or the provision of an alternative access to a significant area with network resilience issues; include these costs in an application for NZTA funding; and ensure they have local share provisions in their programmes.
Road Design Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That a region-wide investigation be undertaken into identifying rural roads or sections of rural roads where a speed limit less than 100km/h may be appropriate, and any physical measures required to support the reduced speed limit. • That a context sensitive road design approach be used to encourage drivers to travel at appropriate speeds and to produce a design in harmony with the rural landscape, provides cycle and pedestrian facilities where appropriate, and enhances and supports the towns and villages it passes through. • That a publication be prepared to provide information on rural roads for new residents (and visitors) including appropriate driving techniques, the likely lack of footpaths or dedicated facilities for cyclists, and the treatment of storm water run-off.
Limited Access Roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That Councils look for opportunities to declare arterial roads, or sections of arterial roads, to be limited access roads to protect the road from future development pressures.
Road Safety at Rural Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Ministry of Education be asked to consider altering its policy on the availability of free school bus travel to school to include children living within 1km of the school where they do not have a safe and convenient walk route to the school available. • That the NZTA be asked to review its funding allocation process with a view to giving higher priority to the provision of footpaths

Item	Recommendations
	within 1km of a school and between the school and the nearby urban settlement.
Road Safety Funding & Expenditure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That ARTA in conjunction with the relevant TAs and the NZTA identify means of re-balancing expenditure on road safety to achieve a better allocation of funding to achieve the target crash reductions.
Recreational Cycling in Rural Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That research is undertaken into the most appropriate means of catering for recreational cycling on rural roads. This could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the identification of routes for development as recreational cycle routes • appropriate measures for improving cyclists' safety on these routes • the preparation of diagrams identifying the types of conditions cyclists can expect on the rural road network • identifying additional benefits in the evaluation process resulting from the additional sealed width created by widening for cyclists
Active Living, Footpaths, Walkways & Bridle Paths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That 'active living' pedestrian demands be included in quantifying the benefits of providing footpaths at, or near schools and villages • That the potential safety improvements and road maintenance cost savings be identified and taken into account in decision making relating to the provision of bridle paths • That consideration be given to requiring the inclusion of bridle paths or walking trails in subdivisions for new very low density rural residential developments. • That guidelines on the provision of bridle paths be developed by the TAs in conjunction with the ARC.
Rural Public Transport (excluding HGI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That ARTA identify and, if appropriate, help develop, community transport projects in the north and south of the region which can be introduced and trialled for wider application in the rural parts of the region.
Hauraki Gulf Islands Public & Freight Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That ARTA continue to work with Auckland City Council in developing a public transport service on Waiheke which meets the needs of the island community. • That ARTA, in consultation with the NZTA and Auckland City, develop policy on the role of public subsidy for passenger ferry services to Waiheke which recognise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the dependence of the island on ferry transport access • the reality that transport costs associated with living on an island are inevitably higher than on the mainland • how residents factor transport costs into lifestyle decisions.
Carpooling & Vanpooling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Councils, assisted by ARTA, continue to encourage carpooling through Workplace Travel Plans. • That the potential for further schemes such as the Warkworth area carpooling scheme be identified, and that, where realised, such schemes be included in the Council's annual plan/LTCCP

Item	Recommendations
Park and Ride	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That ARTA assist the TAs identifying potential locations for local Park and Ride facilities in addition to its role in assisting in their development. • That the extension of the Park and Ride concept to support carpooling/vanpooling in areas poorly served by conventional public transport be explored.
Vehicles on Beaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That progress on the resolution of the safety issues relating to vehicle use of beaches be monitored.
Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That ARTA in collaboration with RoadSafe Auckland and the Police consider the need for additional policing resources in rural areas in its annual recommendation to the NZTA for changes in policing activities through the Auckland Land Transport programme.
Vegetation & Noxious Weeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the costs involved in mowing berms and controlling noxious weeds on rural roads be identified and that the feasibility and implications of transferring these costs (back) to the adjacent landowners be investigated.
Litter on Rural Roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The research be undertaken into the scale of littering on rural roads and the costs involved in dealing with it. • That alternative means of dealing with littering be reported on.

20 Appendix 1: Land Use Characteristics and Development

The predominant land use in the central part of the Franklin District is horticulture. More than one third of the nation's fresh vegetables are grown in Franklin. The high quality volcanic soils extend from Bombay to Waiuku, north to Patumahoe and Karaka and south into Tuakau and Pukekawa. Pukekohe functions as a produce service centre with prepackaged produce supplied to supermarket chains throughout the region. Dairying is the main land use in Otua, Aka Aka and parts of the Awhitu Peninsula, while beef and sheep farming dominate the rest of the Awhitu Peninsula and the south of the district. There are extensive forestry plantations in the Hunua Ranges. The Glenbrook Steel Mill, situated approximately 5km from Waiuku, provides full time employment for 1200 workers. The steel sent to the South Island and overseas is transported by rail (approximately 7000 tonnes per week). On average 5000 tonnes per week is moved by road (about 125 laden trucks per week).

Almost half of Franklin's population of 56,480 in 2004 live in Pukekohe, Waiuke and Tuakau, 33 per cent in rural areas outside the towns, and villages and 21 per cent in villages and hamlets. Franklin's Growth Strategy accommodates a population of 108,000 by 2051. The council is seeking to accommodate most of the growth in existing centres, particularly Pukekohe through higher density development. "Opportunities for rural living are provided in villages and hamlets, in areas where there are already lifestyle blocks such as Hunua, and in a new countryside living zone at Paerata¹⁴."

The rural area of Manukau City is two-thirds of its total land area, but only 5 per cent of the population (13,000 people). The most common land use is agriculture, comprising 62 per cent of all land uses. Forestry comprises 16 per cent of the land area and native bush, native scrub and regenerating bush is a further 16 per cent. Approximately 50 per cent of the rural population live in the towns and settlements of Beachlands, Maraetai, Clevedon, Kawakawa Bay, Orere Point and Whitford village. The remainder live in farms or countryside living/rural lifestyle development. Countryside living is generally located in the Whitford catchment due to its proximity to the urban edge and the coast.

The rural settlements of Whitford, Beachlands and Maraetai are growing in population and generating increasing traffic flows on the primary road network. Manukau's plans for growth in the Beachlands and Maraetai area include a substantial increase in the population from 5400 to up to 13,000 or 17,000 people.

Waitakere's rural area consists largely of bush with low density residential development, the Waitakere ranges, and coastal townships such as Piha, Muriwai and Karekare.

¹⁴ Franklin District Growth Strategy 2051, August 2007.

Rodney District comprises 48 per cent of the region's land area. Some 89 per cent of the district is rural. The rural activities are dairying, agriculture, horticulture, forestry, viticulture and quarrying. Of all the rates collected, 25 per cent is allocated to roading and transport activities.

Waiheke Island has a population of about 7500 people increasing to around 25,000-30,000 during the summer holiday period. The western side of the island has become quite urbanised while the east side remains predominantly rural. The strategic focus is on retaining the island's unique lifestyle and on protecting and enhancing the landscape and environmental values regarded as unique to Waiheke. Intensive residential development is discouraged. Tourism is growing in importance, and eco-tourism or low-impact tourism is being encouraged.

Great Barrier Island has a small and declining permanent population of about 950 people. About two thirds of the island is controlled by DoC. Much of the island has a mountainous terrain with high rainfall. In the longer term, there is potential for the island to develop as an eco-tourism destination.

21 Appendix 2: Contacts

The following people were contacted in preparing this paper:

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