3 Strategy for Otago Southland land transport

3.1 Introduction

In updating the RLTPs, the Otago and Southland RTCs have refined their strategy and clarified the long-term results they expect from the investment that approved organisations make in Otago and Southland's transport system.

This section of the plans explains the strategy. Measurement of progress is covered in the appendix.

3.2 Long-term goal and results

The long-term goal is a transport system in Otago and Southland that provides adequately for mobility, economic activity and productivity while minimising road trauma.

Intended long-term results

The RTCs have also identified the long-term results they seek from local authority and NLTF investment in the land transport systems of Otago and Southland:

- The network is reliable and resilient.
- Major externalities are reduced (including road risk and the resultant trauma, and carbon emissions).
- Exporting is supported.
- Tourism is enabled and supported.
- Growth is enabled.
- Non-traditional economic sectors are enabled.
- There is an increased choice in travel modes.
- Community resilience has been enhanced (including climate change adaptation).
- Decision-making is timely and relevant.
- There is sufficient support and choice of funding to realise the strategy outlined in these plans.

These intended long-term results are important because, collectively, they will enable our regions to achieve the goal, by ensuring the following three factors that are critical to success in achieving the goal are realised:

- Transport enables and supports economic activity and growth.
- The transport system adequately meets social needs.
- Transport helps to positively shape the future of Otago and Southland.

3.3 Benefits sought from the next three to ten years' RLTP investment

Focus on realising benefits from improving the transport system

As the first steps towards achieving these long-term results, the RTCs seeks to focus the investment that approved organisations (AOs) make in Otago Southland land transport on activities that realise the following benefits over the next three to 10 years (i.e. the remaining period of these RLTPs and the years immediately afterwards).

Main benefits

1. Improvement in the performance and capability of the transport network, and network resilience.
2. Improved safety and reduction in the social impact of fatalities and injuries.
3. Regional improvements, economic development, productivity and connectivity.

Enabling benefits

4. Increased customer voice, connectivity, accessibility and modality shifts.
5. Enhanced value for money of transport investments.
6. Optimisation of systems: communication, technology, innovation.

To help achieve this focus on realising specific benefits over the next 3-10 years, the RTCs:

- have influenced AOs as they develop activities and projects in the months leading up the development of the RLTPs
- are using potential contribution to these benefits as a key factor when assessing the priority of each proposed project (as shown document).

Moreover, to help investment in the land transport system to realise these benefits, the RTCs have set the following desired outcomes, which are expected to contribute as stepping stones towards the intended long-term results. The RTCs will be measuring progress towards these outcomes.

Outcomes associated with each main benefit

1. Improvement in the performance and capability of the transport network, and network resilience:
   - Maintain current network(s).
   - Enhance network performance and capability (where needed e.g. as shown by the ONRC analysis).

2. Improved safety and reduction in the social impact of fatalities and injuries:
   - Improve safety.

3. Regional improvements, economic development, productivity and connectivity:
   - Increase economic growth and productivity (the focus areas for this are Queenstown, Dunedin, and key routes – for the latter see Figure 2 and section 2.1).

Outcomes associated with each enabling benefit:

4. Increased customer voice, connectivity, accessibility and modality shifts:
   - Enhance community resilience and cohesion.
   - Increase health, wellbeing and environmental management.
   - Improve support of customer groups.

5. Enhanced value for money of transport investments:
   - Enhance system performance, and cost.

6. Optimisation of systems: communication, technology, innovation:
   - Increase partnership and adaptive management.
   - Increase communication and technology solutions.

Examples of the factors pertinent to each desired outcome are listed in the appendix. So too is an explanation of how customers' voices and needs have been considered in the compilation of these RLTP variations.

Delivery of this strategy

The strategy will be delivered through:

- a programme of proposed activities for the next three years, which collectively focus on achieving a safe and sustainable transport system in Otago and Southland, that supports and enables regional development (Section 4)
- four key opportunities the RTCs intend to pursue over the next few years (section 3.4)
- supporting policies (section 3.5)
- an advocacy programme to be undertaken by the RTCs (section 3.6).

How success will be measured

In future, the RTCs will measure progress towards these long-term results and the intended outcomes. The appendix explains this further. As part of this, the outcomes will be made into SMART ones, so progress can be monitored.

3.4 Opportunities the RTCs intend to pursue

In addition to influencing the projects the AOs put forward for inclusion in the RLTP, and prioritising those projects put forward (in Section 4), the RTCs have identified four opportunities they wish to pursue to move towards the intended long-term results. Each is described below.

The opportunity to take a South Island-wide approach

Freight and visitor journeys do not begin or end at our northern boundaries with Canterbury and the West Coast. There is an opportunity to take a South Island perspective on transport journeys, to better meet customers' needs.

As discussed in the foreword, the chairs of the seven Regional Transport Committees in the South Island have recognised the opportunity to help drive our economy and better serve our communities, through collaboration and integration. The Chairs' Group has three key priorities:

1. Identify and facilitate integrated freight and visitor journey improvements across the South Island.
2. Advocate for an enabling funding approach which supports both innovative multi-modal (road, rail, air, sea) solutions to transport problems, and small communities with a low ratepayer base to maintain and enhance their local transport network.
3. Identify and assess options for improving the resilience and security of the transport network across the South Island, as well as vital linkages to the North Island.

The group has committed to working collaboratively to planning work across the South Island in these key areas (including resilience, the importance of which has been highlighted in the aftermath of the recent Kaikoura earthquake).

It is likely there will be some projects in this space that will progress over the next three years (2018-2021). Both ES and ORC have made funding provision for this work, as part of their

transport planning activities. There is limited information available for inclusion in this iteration of the RLTP, however, as they are currently going through a scoping stage.

The opportunity for mode integration and mode shift

There is potential to better integrate rail and coastal shipping into the transport network. The South Island RTCs Chairs' Group has been advocating for this. The projected 68 per cent increase in freight volumes by 2042 is one of the key challenges facing the South Island[46]. Most freight in the South Island is moved by road (over 90 per cent), and only a small percentage by rail, coastal shipping or air. The freight modes that perform this task today are forecast to largely perform similar roles in the future, with a slight increase anticipated in the proportion of freight shifted by road.

This reliance on road freight raises questions given that:

- the South Island has been significantly impacted by network disruption caused by seismic events and other natural disasters, and there is a present and ongoing risk to supply chains
- the potential effects of a significant increase in road freight, including road condition and maintenance costs, travel time reliability, road safety, and visitor experience
- the increasing demand for more sustainable, low CO_2 supply chains.

The availability of effective transport alternatives is a core component of a resilient, multi-modal transport system for the South Island including wider consideration of the role that rail and coastal shipping should play, or at more local scale. Other ways of increasing resilience at a local scale include:

- good quality walkways and footpaths and cycling infrastructure that enable connectivity (particularly considering the aging population)
- reliable and efficient public transport services that reduce dependency on single occupancy vehicles.

The Otago and Southland RTCs will continue to seek much better integration among the modes of transport. This includes planning to achieve this in a way that best suits community and commercial interests. Many of the projects proposed in this RLTPs update are for walking, cycling and public transport.

Such alternatives to road transport also support emission reductions in the transport sector. New Zealand has one of the highest rates of car ownership among members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and a relatively old vehicle fleet, with most freight being transported by emission-intensive trucks rather than by train or coastal shipping[47].

The opportunity for regional dispersal of tourism benefits

There is scope to increase the contribution of tourism to the economies of much of Otago and Southland. On the one hand, tourism provides an opportunity for growth, not just in the growing areas of Queenstown Lakes and Central Otago, but also districts like Southland, Clutha and Waitaki. On the other hand, the road environment along tourist routes provides a poor journey experience for visitors in several parts of Otago and Southland (e.g. in Queenstown Lakes and Clutha districts). This is of concern, as more and more tourist chose to self-drive.

[46] South Island Draft Freight Plan (2015) http://www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/resources/draft-south-island-freight-plan/docs/draft-south-island-freight-plan.pdf .

[47] Ministry for the Environment (2016), New Zealand's Greenhouse Gas Inventory 1990-2014.

To fully reap the benefits of the projected tourism growth – including the benefits to smaller communities from dispersing visitors throughout Southern New Zealand – requires both a good understanding of visitors' expectations and a well-managed response.

There is an opportunity to improve the journey experience for visitors, to ensure the sustainability of growth in visitor numbers. A well-managed approach is particularly needed on those key journeys that are characterised by long travelling distances with limited amenities and unfamiliar and challenging road conditions[48]. Many of the tourism journeys in southern New Zealand fall into this category including: Christchurch to Queenstown over the Lindis Pass, Queenstown to Te Anau and Milford Sound, SH6 connecting Nelson and the West Coast with the Southern Lakes area, via Haast Pass, the Southern Scenic Route via the Catlins, SH1, and even large parts of SH1, from the Waitaki River to Bluff.

There is an opportunity to recreate the Southern Scenic Route as a tourist loop. At present, this corridor, along SH6 and SH99, is positioned as a one-way journey, typically from Queenstown to Dunedin. A loop route would utilise SH85, SH87 and parts of the adjoining corridors (Queenstown to Rangitata; Frankton to Te Anau). To make this work, the loop route would need to be upgraded to provide a consistent level of service along the entire loop, particularly in terms of journey information, safety and road conditions[49].

The state highway corridor between Frankton and Milford Sound is unique in that its predominant demand comes from tourism. Increasing tourist numbers and the increasing demand for the road to remain open are creating increased pressure on this corridor. The strong year-round tourism market is largely driving the increasing demand for the road to remain open with minimal disruption. As self-driving increases – the tourism sector has been actively promoting this experience – the increasing conflict between slower sightseeing journeys and the time-constrained through journeys to Milford Sound and back in one day needs to be managed. More safe stopping areas and slow vehicle bays are likely to be needed to accommodate this mixed purpose use, and to ensure safe, reliable journeys. The predicted growth will also place pressure on assets already at capacity, such as the Homer Tunnel, or those nearing capacity[50].

The nature of journeys between Queenstown and Milford Sound could be reshaped to better integrate Te Anau into them. And the airport at Te Anau could be upgraded to enable visitors to use it as an access point for travel to the southern South Island (e.g. with connections to Auckland and Christchurch). These both present opportunities for Te Anau to increase its share of the visitor market.

There is also potential in the future to use Alexandra airport as an access point for southern New Zealand. Use of this district council-owned airport, owned by the district council has increased to the point that the first stage of a development plan has started with construction of a hangar/accommodation precinct with space for 22 lessees, plus a private hangar[51]

Local roads could also cater better for their tourist customers, especially local roads tourists use to access either tourist attractions along the road or at the road end, or to access the back country. The Southland Regional Development Strategy (SORDS) Action Plan identifies the need to improve signage across roads in Southland and the Catlins, to cater better for

[48] Queenstown to Rangitata Corridor Management Plan. NZTA 2017.
[49] Southern Arterial & Primary Collection Cluster Corridor Management Plan 2018-2028. NZTA 2017.
[50] Frankton to Milford Sound Corridor Management Plan 2018-2028. NZTA 2017.
[51] See http://www.codc.govt.nz/your-council/project-updates/alexairport/Pages/default.aspx, accessed 6 November 2017.

international tourists. The SORDS action plan also highlights the need to seal local roads that access key tourist sites[52].

Some districts have proposed low cost / low risk projects that are intended to support the tourism industry through such matters as tourist car parks and upgrades to tourist routes such as Danseys Pass in Waitaki district.

The opportunity to create a network of cycle rides

The Otago and Southland RTCs have two objectives for cycling: to expand cycle tourism, and to see much larger numbers of people travelling by cycle in urban and peri-urban areas. They seek two key results:

- The number of people choosing to cycle is sufficient to make a positive contribution towards ensuring a sustainable and accessible transport network.
- The number of people using cycle trails boosts the economy of Otago and Southland.

The Committees see the potential to expand Otago Southland's network of off-road cycle trails and Heartland Rides (e.g. by using secondary roads for the latter). Growing the trail network has the potential to draw an increasing number of visitors, both domestic and international.

The Committees support the long-term objective of connecting the Great Rides with the rest of New Zealand through the creation of a nationwide cycling network, an objective shared with the Transport Agency and The New Zealand Cycle Trail.

Initial priorities for expanding the cycle network in Otago Southland are:

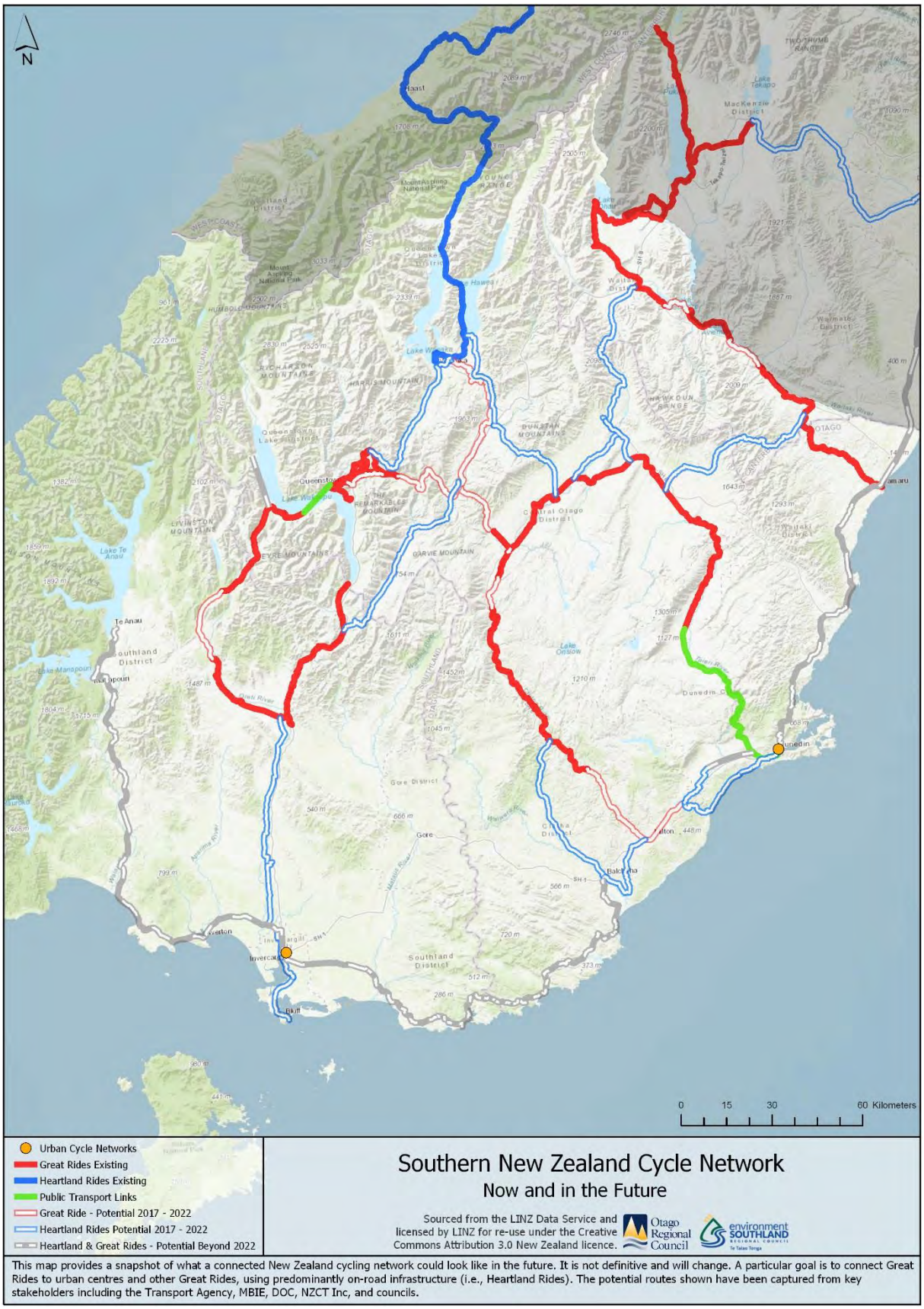
- connecting Queenstown and Dunedin with a cycle trail by completing the missing sections
- new trails connecting Queenstown, Wanaka and Cromwell with the Central Otago trails network at Clyde
- connecting the Queenstown Trails with commuter cycling routes in the Wakatipu Basin
- completing Dunedin's cycle network for use by visitors as well as locals.

The growing network of cycle rides and trails in Otago Southland is summarised in Section 2 and mapped on Figure 5 below. This figure shows existing Great Rides and Heartland Rides. Note there are further cycle trails not shown on the map e.g. the Lake2Lake Trail in Te Anau, and mountain biking trails around Dunedin.

There are opportunities to further expand the cycle network by creating several more Heartland Rides. Suggestions are shown on Figure 5, and the committees welcome feedback on these ideas. +

[52] The Southland Regional Economic Development Strategy (SORDS) Action Plan.

Figure 5: Southern New Zealand cycle network: existing and potential.



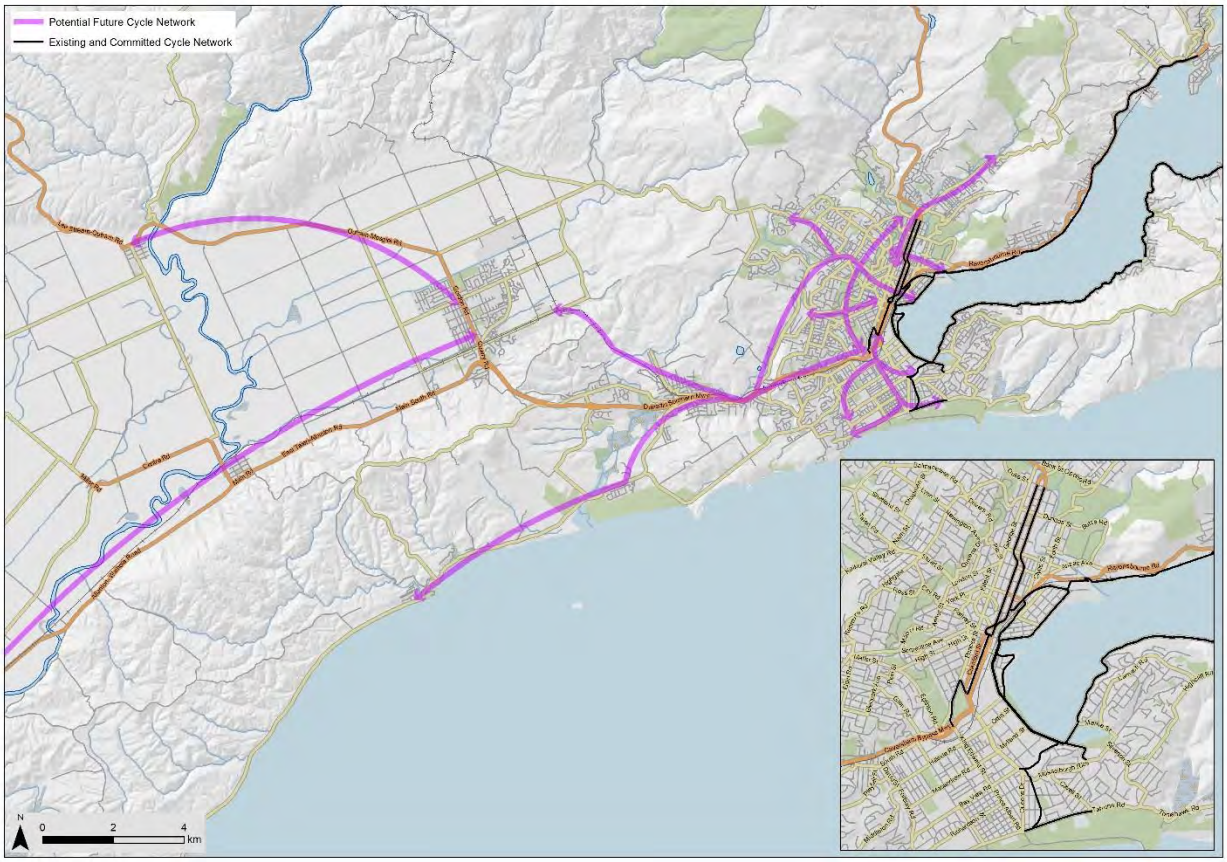
Possibilities include:

- Dunedin – Oamaru and north beyond Timaru.
- Balclutha – Invercargill via the Catlins.
- Bluff – Invercargill – Lumsden.
- Invercargill – Manapouri – Te Anau via Tuatapere.
- A loop connecting Queenstown – Cromwell, Cromwell – Clyde, Alexandra and Wanaka.
- Danseys Pass.

Some of these suggestions may require 100 per cent government funding if the existing roads are to be upgraded to a suitable standard (e.g. Danseys Pass, an alpine route).

The 2013 Dunedin City Integrated Transport Strategy identified a proposed strategic cycle network for the city. Some parts of Dunedin's transport network already have cycle facilities, e.g. a shared path along the western harbour, off-road facilities from the inner harbour to St Kilda beach, as well as some on-road cycle lanes. Additionally, before mid-2018, Dunedin City Council and the Transport Agency plan to complete cycleways on SH1 through the city (the one-way pair), to link NZTA's SH1 / one-way pair cycle lanes, to connecting existing shared paths to form a harbour circuit and linking that circuit to the central business district. The extension of the SH88 walkway / cycleway to Port Chalmers is now going to be delivered as part of the Dunedin-Port Chalmers Safety Improvements Project, which has funding committed.

Figure 6: Dunedin's current and future cycle network



Source: Dunedin City Council Transportation Planning, November 2017

These improvements are designed to improve safety and to encourage increased cycling by both commuters and recreational cyclists.

Future improvements to Dunedin's cycle network, shown on Figure 6, are likely to focus on improving access and safety from residential catchments, employment areas, and Dunedin's key attractors to cycle facilities. Dunedin City Council plans a new cycleway along the Southern Trail corridor between Caversham and Wingatui, as well as a bridge from the inner harbour to the central business district.

Figure 7 shows the proposed cycle network for Queenstown's town centre.

Figure 7: Queenstown's proposed Town Centre cycle network

Source: Queenstown Lakes District Council, November 2017

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3.5 Land transport policies for the RTCs and AOs

Approved organisations, or the RTCs, as appropriate to their functions, will be responsible for implementing the following policies. Other agencies may also be responsible, for example KiwiRail or NZ Police.

Supporting the carriage of freight and exporting
Helps achieve:
Outcome 1 Improved performance and capability of the transport network, and network resilience
Outcome 3 Regional improvements, economic development, productivity and connectivity
Outcome 6 Optimisation of systems

1. Ensure freight movements within or across Otago and Southland are efficient.
    - Generally, all state highways should be capable of providing access for overweight and over-dimensional vehicles. cost effective alternative routes should be available.
    - All state highways, national roads, regional roads, arterial roads and primary collector roads should be accessible by high productivity motor vehicles, or cost effective alternative routes should be available where this is not appropriate.
    - Most local roads should be accessible by 50 tonne vehicles.
    - There should be appropriate links between the road freight network and the rail network.

Supporting and enabling tourism and visitor travel
Helps achieve:
Outcome 2 Improved safety and reduction in the social impact of fatalities and injuries
Outcome 3 Regional improvements, economic development, productivity and connectivity

2. Operate, maintain and improve the strategic visitor network (including the cycle network) to allow safe, reliable visitor travel.

Minimising road trauma
Helps achieve Outcome 2 Improved safety and reduction in the social impact of fatalities and injuries

3. Provide for the safe operation of all legitimate transport modes.

4. Encourage everyone to accept the significant responsibilities in moving, over the longer-term, towards zero serious road trauma on our networks.

5. Manage networks to achieve this:
    - Encourage all users of the transport system to take personal responsibility for their own behaviour, and how it impacts on their own and others safety.
    - Create and foster high social pressure to drive safely.
    - Invest in effective road safety interventions, reflecting the importance of road safety to the region.
    - Follow the Safe System approach for improving road safety, and apply effective interventions.
    - Focus on vulnerable road users and allocate road space to walking and cycling where needed to ensure safe travel.

- In areas where the safety of those using active transport to commute is at significant risk from the traffic, build cycleways/walkways separated from motorised traffic.

6. Reduce crash response times for police and emergency services and improve the rate of recovery from crash injuries, especially in rural areas.

Ensuring community resilience

Helps achieve Outcome 4 Increased customer voice, connectivity, accessibility and modality shifts

7. When needed to ensure resilience, prompt a change in travel behaviour towards increased walking, cycling and public transport use in urban areas, by:
   - managing traffic to maintain certain levels of congestion
   - adapting the supply and pricing of car parking over time
   - promoting multi-modal journeys.

Providing for mode choice including walking, cycling and public transport

Helps achieve Outcome 4 Increased customer voice, connectivity, accessibility and modality shifts

8. Support and promote a growth in cycle and pedestrian trips.

9. Provide these public passenger services (with or without subsidy, as appropriate):
   - Three separate integrated urban public transport networks, one in Dunedin, one in Wakatipu Basin and one in Invercargill delivered by:
     - scheduled bus services
     - taxi and shuttle services, including taxi vans or shuttles with wheelchair hoists
   - Between centres within Otago Southland and beyond, provided by bus and small passenger service vehicles
   - School bus services (separate from public buses in the integrated networks, used by school children) provided by Ministry of Education as an excluded service, or by a bus operator and registered as an exempt service
   - Taxis, shuttles and private hire services in those areas where providers choose to operate
   - Bus and rail services for excursions and special events
   - Community-based schemes and informal arrangements, where people choose to operate them
   - Emergency and medical-related transport services.

10. Consider the needs of people with cognitive, physical or sensory impairments in the design of new infrastructure and the provision of services.

3.6 The RTCs' proposed advocacy programme

Supporting the carriage of freight and exporting

1. Advocate for funding streams to be amended so road and rail are funded from the same source, encouraging sensible strategic planning of transport, and wise use of resources.
2. Advocate for the development and use of a South Island-wide model of freight flows (value and volume).

Supporting and enabling tourism and visitor travel

3. Advocate for alternative funding mechanisms, beyond development contributions, to ensure those directly benefiting from tourism-oriented facilities, infrastructure and services associated with transport, contribute fairly to their funding.
4. Promote touring routes within Otago and Southland, including between Dunedin and Queenstown, between Queenstown and Milford, and the Southern Scenic Route.
5. Advocate for funding to support the completion of a network of cycle rides, rails and routes throughout Southern New Zealand.
6. Advocate for the development and use of a South Island-wide model of tourism flows (numbers and value).

Minimising road trauma

7. Promote better community conversations about road risk.
8. Advocate for a long-term goal of zero serious road trauma.
9. Advocate for cell phone coverage over the whole of Otago Southland to provide emergency coverage.

Providing for mode choice including walking, cycling and public transport

10. Advocate for new urban development providing a range of transportation options and good connectivity between modes – including public transport, walking and cycling, mobility scooters, as well as motorised vehicles.
11. Advocate for the minimisation of regulatory and administrative barriers for initiatives such as car clubs, car sharing, ride sharing and community transport services when these help communities to be self-reliant.

Managing the environmental effects of the transport system

12. Advocate for a national requirement that all trucks carrying stock have an effluent tank that prevents any effluent discharge onto public roads, and for adequate disposal facilities.
13. Advocate for the proper control of vehicle emissions through:
    - government rules on smoky vehicles, and emission standards for imported vehicles and fuels
    - appropriate vehicle quality standards in the requirements for urban buses, and the Regional Public Transport Plans
    - consideration of public transport emissions in NZTA funding mechanisms.