

# Auckland Freight Plan

For decision: ☒

For noting: ☐

## Te tūtohunga / Recommendation

That the Auckland Transport Board (board):

- a) Approve the Auckland Freight Plan, including its various components, for public release and implementation.

## Te whakarāpopototanga matua / Executive summary

1. This paper presents the Auckland Freight Plan (the Freight Plan/the Plan) and seeks approval for its public release, to inform industry, business and the public of the desired outcome areas Auckland Transport (AT) will be working towards.
2. Freight is a key enabler of economic activity and fundamental to the liveability of a city. During the COVID-19 pandemic (COVID-19) freight movement has been recognised as an essential service, keeping grocery store shelves stocked, and supplies delivered to critical businesses throughout Alert Level 4. The resilience of the supply chain will be a key part of New Zealand's economic recovery.
3. Freight planning was last undertaken in detail over a decade ago. The resulting Freight Strategic Network (which identifies the priority routes for freight movement in the region) was not formally adopted, nor was it updated in response to changing needs.
4. The release and implementation of the Freight Plan will continue to improve relations with the freight industry and address freight issues on the network. Its core approach is to better identify and incorporate freight needs in planning via recognition of the Freight Strategic Network. A series of additional actions are also proposed to build freight knowledge through data insights, develop stronger relationships for better behaviours, enable smarter freight movement, optimise loading and servicing, and align freight strategy.
5. The ambition level in the action plan is calibrated to reflect anticipated capacity to deliver over the next ten years.

## Ngā tuhinga ō mua / Previous deliberations

6. There are no previous deliberations associated with this paper

## **Te horopaki me te tīaroaro rautaki / Context and strategic alignment**

7. Freight is a key enabler of economic activity and fundamental to the liveability of a city. Goods (and services) that are produced, purchased, consumed, exported, imported, discarded or recycled are moved around Auckland via road and rail, using our networks.
8. AT has had feedback from the freight industry that we are not facilitating the efficient and effective movement of freight within the region, and that freight is perceived as the 'forgotten mode'.
9. In response to this concern, AT has initiated a Freight Reference Group and Freight Working Group, made up of representatives from across the freight industry (such as our transport partners, major freight companies, the ports etc). This group provides a core interface point for AT and the industry, to hear their concerns and share ideas.
10. The Freight Plan is a core output from the Freight Reference Group. Written as a strategic business case, it:
  - identifies the challenges faced by freight as a mode in Auckland,
  - sets out an action plan to address the challenges and to build a more effective freight transport system,
  - refreshes the Freight Strategic Network – a hierarchy of roads and rail for which freight is a high modal priority,
  - develops a framework for local area freight management plans, to plan out interventions in key freight zones.
11. The Freight Plan is informed by, and has an important function to support, the vision underpinned by the priorities of the Government Policy Statement for Land Transport (GPS), and objectives and outcomes sought in the Auckland Plan, AT's Regional Land Transport Plan 2018 – 2028 (RLTP), Auckland Transport Alignment Project (ATAP), and AT's Statement of Intent.
12. The recently released draft GPS 2021 has elevated 'Improving Freight Access for economic development' as one of four strategic priorities for land transport investment to best contribute to improving our communities' wellbeing and liveability. Of relevance is the Crown funding to move more freight to rail, which is recognised in this Plan through a focus on key Freight Strategic Network connections to ports, the airport and major distribution depots which will enable inter-regional rail freight movement.
13. The Freight Plan will feed into the forthcoming Future Connect 30-year integrated network plan for Auckland, currently under development by AT, with the Freight Strategic Network helping to shape the future integrated network and guiding identification of issues and focus areas.

## Ngā matapakinga me ngā tātaritanga / Discussion and analysis

14. There have been instances over the past 12 months where a failure to consider the needs of freight has led to mismatched outcomes on the network. Having a clear, approved Freight Plan will set out the expectations about what is important to operate freight in Auckland, and is intended to prompt more deliberate consideration of the trade-off between freight movement and other priorities.
15. Challenges in freight include; safety and health, congestion and growth, road space and amenity including servicing and loading, and environmental impact. Opportunities to tackle freight challenges have been co-designed with industry and drawn from international literature and learnings. This research and discussion has highlighted some key gaps in our understanding of freight including the availability of accurate and reliable data, which is needed to inform decision making and improve efficiency, management and safety.
16. The freight action plan identifies key outcome areas for AT: building freight knowledge, stronger relationships; better behaviour, smarter freight movement, optimising loading and servicing, aligning freight and strategy. A long list of potential interventions was assessed against the six key outcome areas, and an agreed shortlist of key actions forms the action plan. The list of actions is split between those which AT can progress leveraging existing programmes, those which will need additional funding in the new RLTP and those which will be progressed by external parties.
17. Some key actions outlined under these categories include targeting network pain points (leveraging the network optimisation programme), investigating active and digital management of loading zones and disseminating Vision Zero principles through the industry through education.
18. The Freight Strategic Network refresh has taken the 2009 network and updated it using data and industry feedback. This Freight Strategic Network will be published for the first time and used as a key reference point for network planning and operations. AT has a Statement of Intent measure around achieving a Level of Service C or better across the Freight Strategic Network during the inter-peak period. This new network will ensure that the measure of this metric is a more accurate representation of the performance of the transport system for freight. It has already been used as part of the COVID-19 response, to ensure AT was prioritising freight movement on core links.

## Ngā tūraru matua / Key risks and mitigations

19. There is a risk that publication of the Freight Plan could lead to public criticism, particularly over the Freight Strategic Network where it interacts with other strategic modal and land use priorities. The likelihood of this is low given that it is a strategic planning tool and will not fundamentally change the current function of any given corridor. The mitigation of this risk is through the Roads and Streets Framework and Future Connect projects, which integrate the various modal and land use priorities and ensure they work together.

20. The action plan is intentionally modest, representing the first steps towards understanding and addressing the freight agenda in Auckland. It is essential that the Plan remains flexible enough to take advantage of new opportunities, emerging needs and is developed and built upon in any revision of the RLTP. The actions are categorised for implementation taking into account limited resourcing, budget, policy and other constraints and opportunities. The Plan will be regularly updated to incorporate new actions as permitted.

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

21. The implementation of the Freight Plan is intended to use existing resources from AT and the Freight Reference Group. A request for additional funding from the Regional Land Transport Plan 2021 has been submitted for the next stage of the business case process, but smaller items can be progressed using existing programmes.

## **Ngā whaiwhakaaro ō te taiao me te panonitanga o te āhuarangi / Environment and climate change considerations**

22. The Freight Plan aligns with the Auckland Climate Plan, particularly the key action to “Make freight systems more efficient and move away from fossil fuels to reduce emissions”. The Plan recognises the need to improve the efficiency of freight systems in order to reduce emissions and target climate-compatible development. The industry is also committed to invest in and support better environmental outcomes.
23. Sustainability is one of the six key outcome areas of the Freight Plan, noting that moving freight should be sustainable and build resilience through a network that does not inhibit innovation and changes in technology. It will be measured and monitored through the implementation of the Plan.

## **Ngā reo o mana whenua rātou ko ngā mema pooti, ko ngā roopu kei raro i te maru o te Kaunihera, ko ngā hāpori katoa / Voice of mana whenua, elected members, Council Controlled Organisations, customer and community**

24. The Freight Plan was developed collaboratively throughout 2019 in consultation with the Freight Reference Group (FRG), a representative forum that includes representation from AT, Waka Kotahi New Zealand Transport Agency, Auckland Council, Ministry of Transport, KiwiRail, Automobile Association, Road Transport Association New Zealand, National Road Carriers Association, Auckland

Airport and Ports of Auckland. Together, this group was tasked with overseeing the development and implementation of the Freight Plan. The FRG members are typically represented by their Executive (GM, National/Country Manager, CEO).

25. In releasing the plan, we recommend a programme of business and public communications to raise awareness of the Freight Plan and to flag that we will be proposing changes to freight as a result of the Plan, which we will want to engage on.

## **Ngā whaiwhakaaro haumaru me ngā whaiwhakaaro hauora / Health, safety and wellbeing considerations**

26. The Freight Plan recognises and embodies the Vision Zero principles and, whilst cast through a freight lens, also recognises that transport safety is paramount. A recognised critical challenge is that the movement of freight, particularly as collisions involving a heavy vehicle result in a higher probability of death or serious injury. Safety and Security is one of the six key outcome areas of the Freight Plan, to be measured and monitored through the implementation of the Plan.

## **Ā muri ake nei / Next steps**

27. Once approved, the project team will finalise development of a communication campaign to release the Freight Plan to the public, undertake an internal communications process around the Freight Strategic Network to explain its role and encourage its use in AT projects (in conjunction with Future Connect) and commence implementation of the Freight Plan.

## **Ngā whakapiringa / AttachmentsNgā whakapiringa / AttachmentsNgā whakapiringa / Attachments**

Attachment number	Description
1	Auckland Freight Plan – Summary Report July 2020

## Te pou whenua tuhinga / Document ownership

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