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Auckland Transport
Via email: rptp@AT.govt.nz

Submission on the Regional Public Transport Plan

Thank you for the opportunity for Auckland Regional Public Health Service (ARPHS) to provide a submission on Auckland Transport's Regional Public Transport Plan 2018-2028.

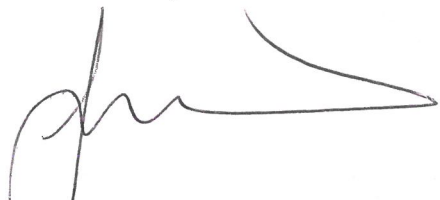
The following submission represents the views of ARPHS and does not necessarily reflect the views of the three District Health Boards it serves. Please refer to Appendix 1 for more information on ARPHS.

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Introduction

Thank you for the opportunity for the Auckland Regional Public Health Service (ARPHS) to submit on Auckland Transport's (AT) Regional Public Transport Plan 2018-2028 (RPTP).

ARPHS commends AT on the progress made since the last RPTP in implementing a new bus network and integrated fares, and for AT's vision for public transport to be the preferred choice that people can travel to safely by foot or bike.

ARPHS supports the actions outlined in the RPTP that create a shift towards public and active transport modes. Our support is due to the substantial impact transport has on health and wellbeing. Some of these impacts are well recognised, such as preventable injuries and deaths from road crashes, air and noise pollution. There are also direct and indirect impacts through the way transport and urban design influences physical activity levels, greenhouse gas emissions, social cohesion, inequities in health, and chronic diseases such as obesity, cardiovascular and respiratory diseases. A well-designed public and active transport system can mitigate these adverse impacts of transport and instead promote health and wellbeing.¹

Our submission supports and recommends:

- Expanding and enhancing the rapid and frequent network as a necessary enabler to changing the way people travel
- Prioritisation and integration of well-designed and high-quality safe walking and cycling routes to support public transport use
- Provision of secure cycling infrastructure at public transport stations and on-vehicle bike facilities
- Addressing affordability and accessibility issues (cost and coverage) for low-income communities to promote equity
- Explicit adoption of a Safe System approach to transport safety
- Bringing forward the electrification of diesel buses to reduce their impact on climate change and poor air quality
- Creating a healthier food, drink and marketing environment
- Encourage compliance with smokefree policy through full implementation of signage and enforcement.

Focus area 1: Expanding and enhancing the rapid and frequent network

1. ARPHS supports expansion of the rapid and frequent network. Successful travel behaviour change interventions make the desired action the easy choice. For public transport this means being accessible, minimal waiting times (frequency of service), reliability, and affordability. An expanded rapid and frequent network that has these features is key to shifting travel behaviour from private vehicles to public transport. The rapid and frequent network should therefore be prioritised and, if needed, road space re-allocated to it and active modes.

¹ Sallis JF, Spoon C, Cavill N, Engelberg JK, Gebel K, et al. (2015) Co-benefits of designing communities for active living: an exploration of literature. *Int J Behav Nutr Phys Act* 12:30

2. Expansion and enhancement of the rapid and frequent network must be underpinned by a Safe System framework to ensure efficiency is not traded off against safety. ARPHS supports explicit adoption of a Safe System or Vision Zero approach across the whole transport network, including public and active transport. Public transport is a safer mode of travel than private vehicles and creating a shift to greater public transport use could make a significant contribution to AT achieving its Vision Zero goals. Additionally, KPIs should be set that measure progress towards safety goals for both public transport and active travel to it.
3. The Integrated Corridor Priority Programme includes bus priority, safety and cycling upgrades in the overall programme. ARPHS supports the integration of these features but with provision of dedicated space for cycling. To truly encourage and support safe travel by bike, dedicated cycle lanes are required rather than shared space with bus or priority lanes. The integration of public and active modes should also include direct, protected cycle routes alongside light rail and provision for on-board bike carriage on light rail. Use of the Roads & Streets Framework to ensure all travel modes are considered and treated appropriately is supported (policy 1.5B).
4. The RPTP notes that public transport patronage is increasing, but so is private vehicle use. A true measure of success for a public transport system is the number of people who shift modes from private vehicles to public transport. ARPHS therefore recommends addition of a KPI that measures mode shift from private vehicles to public and active transport (in addition to patronage).
5. Vehicle drivers have a major influence on the safety of people cycling. Training drivers and crew on safety around people cycling (policy 3.5D) is therefore supported.

Summary of recommendations on expanding and enhancing the rapid and frequent network:

- prioritise and provide direct, dedicated, and safe cycle routes in conjunction with the rapid and frequent network and integrated corridor priority programme
- use a Safe System approach to underpin all public and active transport planning and development
- add a KPI for zero serious deaths and injuries related to public transport, and if possible, the journey to/from public transport
- add a KPI for mode shift from private vehicles to public and active transport.

Focus area 2: Improving how customers get to public transport

6. To create system-level behaviour change and reduce per capita vehicle travel, an integrated active transport and public transport system needs to be capable of reducing reliance on private vehicles. A frequent and rapid transport system enables this transformation when supported by AT's 'customer journey' framework to provide a safe, accessible, convenient and seamless journey across the entire trip from door-to-door.
7. ARPHS strongly supports safe and quality infrastructure development that encourages walking and cycling to public transport, and integration with a cycling and walking network (policy 2.3A). The catchment area for walking to public transport is considered 500m, but bikes greatly expand this catchment area and are thus an integral part of public transport systems. A 15-minute cycling trip makes the rapid transport network or a ferry station accessible for more than half of

Auckland's population.² Because walking and cycling have different catchment areas and specific needs for infrastructure, the needs of each mode should be considered individually.

8. The RPTP notes that "*Real and perceived road and personal safety (being and feeling safe) is central to the attractiveness of the walking and cycling environment*". ARPHS agrees with this statement, which must be a priority to encourage use of public transport. Safety is mentioned at times throughout the RPTP. As previously mentioned, it would benefit from explicit adoption of a Safe System approach to transport safety, similar to the adoption of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles (policy 2.2B) for personal safety.
9. Safe cycling and walking routes need to mimic desire lines – that is, be located at the places where people want to walk or cycle and safely cross roads. Just as people want efficient public transport routes, they also want efficient (direct and protected) routes to and from public transport. Providing safe, direct and efficient routes that mimic desire lines is consistent with the Roads & Streets Framework and AustRoads guidance on cycling design.
10. Bike parking at public transport stations that is secure, visible and sheltered from the weather is supported as it removes a disincentive to people using bikes to access public transport (policy 2.3B). E-bikes expand the catchment for public transport for a greater number of people, and emergency e-bike charging stations could help promote their use.
11. ARPHS supports AT exploring how it can provide shared bike, scooter and micro transit drop off/pick up points at stations. Shared micro transit removes up-front purchase costs and can make public transport accessible to more people.
12. On-vehicle bike facilities allow people to reliably integrate public transport with first and last leg trips by bike. ARPHS recommends these facilities be made available on all bus and rapid transport routes, not just those serving rural communities (policy 2.3C).
13. ARPHS supports high-density development within walking distance of the frequent and rapid transport network as this greatly increases the number of people within a catchment area and can reduce car dependency (policy 1.5C). Parking policies that favour a shift to public transport and active modes can further support public transport use (policy 1.6A).

Summary of recommendations on expanding and enhancing the rapid and frequent network:

- Provide direct, dedicated, and safe cycle routes to/from public transport that follow desire lines and are underpinned by a Safe System approach
- Provide safe walking routes to/from public transport that follow desire lines and follow Safe System and CPTED principles
- Provide quality and secure bike and e-bike parking and infrastructure at public transport stations and on-vehicle bike facilities
- Support the provision of micro transit at public transport stations.

² Auckland Transport (2017). Cycling Programme business case. Available from: <https://at.govt.nz/media/1974191/item114-auckland-cycling-programme-for-investmentfinal.pdf>

Focus area 3: Maori responsiveness

14. ARPHS supports the approaches outlined in this focus area for co-design, social procurement, use of Te Aranga Maori design principles, and increased visibility of te reo Māori.
15. Māori responsiveness also needs to capture service delivery for daily travel patterns (not just to marae), and ensure that public transport and first/last leg active transport is safe and easily accessible, physically and financially, in areas where Māori live, work and play. This could help address inequities in road safety deaths and serious injuries, and economic barriers for Māori. Geographic regions that are underserved could be identified through consultation with iwi and GIS mapping.

Summary of recommendations on Māori responsiveness:

- Work with iwi to ensure the public transport network is safe and physically and financially accessible for Māori communities in their daily travel patterns.

Other areas

16. Diesel buses emit pollutants. Monitoring of air quality on Queen Street shows that after 10 years of improvements, air quality is now deteriorating and diesel emissions, mostly from buses, make up almost 40% of the PM_{2.5} mass and 66% of black carbon.³ Diesel combustion is the primary contributor to PM₁₀ emissions, and diesel vehicles are a disproportionate polluter of both PM₁₀ and total nitrogen oxides.⁴ A 2012 estimate put the health cost of vehicle emissions in Auckland at \$466 million per year, with nearly 130 Aucklanders dying prematurely each year from the effects of vehicle emissions. Diesel vehicles are responsible for 81% of that cost.⁵ Switching from diesel to zero-emission buses will have significant benefits for public health, quality of life, and for the environment.
17. Road transport is the biggest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in Auckland, responsible for 36% of emissions (90% from on-road transport).⁶ The RPTP shows forward planning for moving towards a zero emission bus fleet from 2025. This is a necessary shift towards a more sustainable transport system. We recommend the timeframe for sourcing only zero emission buses is brought forward to reduce the adverse impacts on air quality and climate change. The increased capacity required for 10-minute frequencies should be achieved using zero-emission buses to avoid further contributing to climate change and poor air quality. This is consistent with subject matter expert feedback on Auckland's Climate Action Plan, where accelerating electrification of the public transport system is an identified action, alongside improving access to public and active transport.⁷

³ Draft Auckland Council technical report (2018). *The impacts of transport emissions on air quality within Auckland's central business district*. Referenced in Monitoring Research Quarterly October 2018. Available from: www.knowledgeauckland.org.nz

⁴ Sridhar, S., Metcalfe, J and Wickham, L (2014). Auckland motor vehicle emissions inventory. Prepared by Emission Impossible Ltd for Auckland Council. Auckland Council technical report, TR2014/029

⁵ Kuschel, G (2014). Investigations into reducing emissions from heavy duty diesel vehicles in Auckland – a summary report. Prepared by Emission Impossible Ltd for Auckland Council. Auckland Council technical report, TR2014/018

⁶ Xie, S (2017). Auckland's greenhouse gas inventory to 2015. Auckland Council technical report, TR2017/026

⁷ Auckland Council (2018). Auckland's Climate Action Plan: summary subject matter expert workshops 2-5 October 2018.

18. Embedding network-wide sustainability (policy 2.7A) and *“ensuring environmental, health, social, cultural and safety opportunities are realised, and impacts are mitigated”* should be an underpinning principle for all public transport planning and delivery.
19. ARPHS supports exploring extension of the regional transport network beyond Pukekohe (policy 1.3A/B) and inter-regionally in conjunction with the Waikato Regional Council as this will provide a viable alternative for business commuting. Further, people who live in Tuakau and Pokeno are in the Counties Manukau District Health Board region and access to these services by public transport should be considered.
20. ARPHS has considerable expertise in the health benefits of public transport. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss with AT how ARPHS and Healthy Auckland Together can support its proposed *“investigation into the wider social, health, environmental and economic benefits of public transport with a view to expanding the vote-funding base accordingly for developing the public transport networks”*.

Summary of recommendations on other areas:

- Accelerate the timeframe for the switch from diesel to zero emission buses
- ARPHS would welcome providing support and expertise to AT in its investigation into the social and health benefits of public transport.

Comments and other factors to consider under focus areas

21. The RPTP contains an objective to encourage commercial activity at stations (policy 2.5A). Because of the contribution of food environments to the obesity epidemic facing Auckland, ARPHS reinforces the importance of food-related contracts specifying compliance with a healthy food and drink policy. AT, as a member of Healthy Auckland Together (HAT), has signed up to implement such a policy. A high standard of compliance by contractors would be supported by explicit recognition in the RPTP. ARPHS also recommends restrictions on marketing of unhealthy food or drink to children in all AT advertising space (including buses, bus shelters, and public transport stations), similar to AT’s recent policy to restrict advertising of alcohol.
22. ARPHS has worked with AT on the Wai Auckland HAT project to provide drinking water fountains on road corridors and major transport infrastructure. ARPHS supports extending this work by provision of drinking water fountains at rapid and frequent transport network stations. Provision of water fountains reduces the need to purchase drinks, reduces use of single-use plastics (contributing to sustainability goals), provides a healthier drink alternative to sugary drinks and improves customer experience.
23. AT is proposing work around signage and the customer interface. ARPHS recommends that a specific action is included for signage to support implementation of Auckland Council’s Smokefree Policy. Smoking in public places is a nuisance and carries high health risk for the smoker and for people nearby from second hand smoke.⁸ Harmful effects from tobacco smoke occur up to 10 metres from a burning cigarette in light winds.⁹ Auckland Council’s Smokefree

⁸ Pope et al (2011). Lung cancer and cardiovascular disease mortality associated with ambient air pollution and cigarette smoke: shape of the exposure-response relationships. *Environmental Health Perspectives*. 119(11): 1616-21

⁹ Yamato, H. et al (2013). Designated smoking areas in streets where outdoor smoking is banned. *Kobe J Med Sci*. 59:393-105.

Policy 2017-2025 implementation plan contains an item to “*work with AT to ensure all transport centres (including bus stops and train stations) have appropriate smokefree signage*”. This is an important step towards gaining better public compliance with the Smokefree Policy. Further, we recommend that any opportunities to remind people of the Smokefree Policy are taken, for example, public service announcements at transport hubs. These actions would contribute to goals of the Smokefree Policy to increase public awareness for smokefree environments, ensure smokers are clear about where they can and cannot smoke, and that public spaces are smokefree. We also recommend training of public transport staff to enforce the Smokefree Policy.

24. Decisions around transport can have a disproportionate impact on the needs of people who are transport disadvantaged. Table A8-2 outlines AT’s planned response to increasing accessibility of public transport for people who are transport disadvantaged. However, some groups such as older adults have a comprehensive response, while others do not. ARPHS does not believe that responding to the needs of people on a low-income or living in high-deprivation areas through ‘*personalised marketing*’ will achieve the objective to ‘*Ensure that transport services and facilities account for socioeconomic characteristics and low income*’. As well as ensuring that public transport services are nearby and reach relevant destinations, targeted fare concessions would support use of public transport for people living on a low-income. We recommend policy 5.5B include people on a low-income or living in high-deprivation areas for targeted fare concessions. Eligibility for targeted fare concessions could be verified with a Community Services Card or other mechanism. ARPHS would welcome the opportunity to support AT in developing its approaches to ensuring equity of public and active transport access.
25. ARPHS supports AT continuing its work to ensure infrastructure is accessible for people living with disabilities, and achieving full implementation of such infrastructure.
26. Because of the enormous public good from an efficient, comprehensive, and affordable public transport network, ARPHS recommends AT aim for the lower end of farebox recovery targets, by making public transport as affordable as possible.

Summary of recommendations on other factors:

- procurement contracts for commercial activities at public transport stations comply with healthy food, drink and marketing to children policies
- ensure public transport stations provide good quality and easily accessible drinking water fountains
- ensure smokefree signage is implemented at all bus and train stops and train staff to enforce it
- provide targeted fare concessions for people on a low-income.

Conclusion

27. Thank you for considering our submission on the RPTP. ARPHS supports AT’s intent to improve the public transport system and integrate it with active transport modes.
28. ARPHS urges AT to prioritise implementation of activities that support a shift from private vehicle use to public and active transport by making it easier, safer, cheaper and more efficient to use public and active transport. This shift is important for place-making, health and wellbeing, and sustainability.

29. ARPHS is currently working with AT on the business case for road safety. We would welcome the opportunity to also support AT in both its work around equity issues for low-income communities and its investigation into the social and health benefits of public transport.

Appendix 1: Auckland Regional Public Health Service

Auckland Regional Public Health Service (ARPHS) provides public health services for the three district health boards (DHBs) in the Auckland region (Counties Manukau Health, Auckland and Waitemata District Health Boards).

ARPHS has a statutory obligation under the New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000 to improve, promote and protect the health of people and communities in the Auckland region. The Medical Officer of Health has an enforcement and regulatory role under the Health Act 1956 and other legislative designations to protect the health of the community.

ARPHS' primary role is to improve population health. It actively seeks to influence any initiatives or proposals that may affect population health in the Auckland region to maximise their positive impact and minimise possible negative effects.

The Auckland region faces a number of public health challenges through changing demographics, increasingly diverse communities, increasing incidence of lifestyle-related health conditions such as obesity and type 2 diabetes, infrastructure requirements, the balancing of transport needs, and the reconciliation of urban design and urban intensification issues.