

Regional Land Transport Plan 2015 – Significance Policy

A. Purpose of the Policy

This policy sets out how to determine;

- The significance of variations to Greater Wellington’s Regional Land Transport Plan as required by section 106(2) (A) of the Land Transport Management Act (the Act)
- Which activities included in the RLTP under section 16 of the Act are considered to be “significant” as required by Section 106 (2) (B) of the Act

B. Significance and Variations to the RLTP

Application of this Policy

The RLTP can be varied by the Regional Transport Committee at any time during the six years to which the programme applies if –

- The variation addresses an issue raised by a review of the RLTP after 3 years (Section 18 CA of the Act) and / or
- Good reason exists for making the variation

Consultation ***will not*** be required on any variation if that variation is deemed to be not **significant** or if it arises from the declaration or revocation of a state highway.

Consideration should be given to the costs and benefits of any consultation process or procedure and the extent to which consultation has already taken place.

There are two key steps when considering variations to the RLTP. These are;

- Does the change require variation to the RLTP? and if so
- Does the variation to the RLTP carry “significance”?

In relation to “does the change require variation to the RLTP” the criteria for ascertaining “does the change require variation to the RLTP” are set out in the Act (Section 18 and 20 of the Act). There are a number of changes and amendments that ***do not*** require a formal RLTP variation. These include;

- Requests to vary the NLTP allocation amounts
- Requests for emergency reinstatement
- Changes to ‘automatically included’ activities requested by approved organisations (for example local road maintenance, local road renewals and local road minor capital works variations requests made to NZTA)
- Variations to timing, cash flow or total cost for improvement projects or community programmes.
- Delegated transfers of funds between activities within groups
- Supplementary allocations

- End of year carryover of allocations
- Road policing and NZTA national programmes.

Determination of what “significance” is and whether consultation is necessary as a result

Where a variation to the RLTP is required, the significance of that variation will always be determined on a case by case basis. The variation will be considered in relation to its impact on the RLTP regional programme as a whole rather than as a standalone activity.

The proposed policy outlines the key considerations in determining the significance of a variation. These include whether the variation to the RLTP would:

- Materially change the balance of the strategic investment in a programme or project
- Negatively impact on the contribution to Government and / or GPS objectives and priorities
- Affect residents (variations with a moderate impact on a large number or residents, or variations with a major impact on a small number of residents will have a greater significance than those of a minor impact)
- Affect the integrity of the RLTP, including its overall affordability.

Several subject areas are in themselves not considered to be of significance in their own right. These include:

- Activities that are in the urgent interests of public safety
- A small scope change costing less than 10% of the estimated cost for an agreed package or strategy, or less than \$20 million, irrespective of the source of funding
- Replacement of a project within a group of generic projects by another project of the same package
- A change of the duration and / or order of priority of the activity or activities that the Regional Transport Committee decides to include in the programme, which does not substantially alter the balance of the magnitude and timing of the activities included in the programme
- The addition of an activity or activities that have previously been consulted on in accordance with sections 18 and 18 (A) of the Act and which comply with the provisions for funding approval in accordance with section 20 of the Act.

However even if the variation meets any of the above subject areas these should also be compared against the four major determinants of significance namely:

- Material change to the balance of the strategic investment.
- Negatively impact on the contribution to the GPS objectives and priorities
- Effect on residents.
- Affect the integrity of the RLTP, including its overall affordability.

If it is deemed that the change does not require variation to the RLTP or the variation to the RLTP is not seen as significant then the variation can proceed direct to Regional Transport Committee for consideration and approval process.

If a variation is necessary, and is seen to be of significance, then consultation must be considered (Section 18 of the Act). The relative costs and benefits of consultation are especially important. In deciding whether consultation would be necessary consideration should also be given to any likely impacts of time delays or cost, on public safety, economic, social, cultural, environmental wellbeing as a consequence of undertaking consultation. Additionally extent to which consultation has already taken place is very relevant.

C. Significant transport activities (high-cost, large, new projects)

Application of this Policy

This aspect of the significance policy sets out the way to determine which land transport activities included in the RLTP might be considered “of significance” and thus significant for the purposes of section 16 (and section 106) of the Act.

Significant transport activities in a broad manner are typically high-cost, large, new projects that require significant funding and have a larger impact on the local, regional and inter-regional transport networks.

Section 106 (2) (B) of the Act requires that the RTC identifies;

- Activities that are to be included in the RLTP under Section 16 and then;

Section 16 of the Act then requires that the RTC identify all activities that;

- Are “**Significant**” activities to be prioritised (Section 16 (3) (D) of the Act). These activities once identified and ranked provide NZTA with a clear signal as to which large new projects in the region are considered to be most important regionally, for consideration when developing the National Land Transport Fund.
- Have regionally significant expenditure to be funded from sources other than the National Land Transport Fund (Section 16 (2) (C) of the Act)
- Are activities that have inter-regional significance (Section 16 (2) (D) of the Act)

These activities once identified and ranked in order of importance provide a clear direction to the NZTA as to which projects in the region are deemed to be regionally important in relation to the National Land Transport Fund.

Inter -Regional Significance

The following activities are considered to have inter- regional significance:

- Any regionally significant activity (see above) and / or
- That has implications for connectivity with other regions and / or
- For which cooperation with other regions is required.

Activities of national significance are considered to also be of inter-regional significance.

Significant expenditure from other sources

The identification of significant expenditure from sources other than the NLTF will include: Any expenditure greater than \$5million on individual transport activities, whether the activities are included in the RLTP or not, from:

- Financial expenditure by Approved Organisations

- In kind donations of goods and / or services
- Third party contributions.

Establishing “Significant Activities” is important in order to establish which activities and projects require prioritisation in line with the Act (Section 16 (3) (D)) and so that the prioritisation methodology can be reflective of the “significant” definition. The criterion for determining significance is determined by this Regional Transport Committee significance policy and is identified by section 16(3) (D) of the Act.

From the definition in the significance policy these significant activities are in essence large new improvement projects that have regional or inter regional effects and regionally significant expenditure, this has been agreed as having a total cost of >\$5million. Significant activities, when prioritised using the RLTP programme prioritisation methodology will form the basis of the draft RLTP programme that is the basis for public consultation (subject to RTC approval).

Packages are actively encouraged within the RLTP process by both Greater Wellington Regional Council and NZTA as they given the best outcomes not only for the region but also in terms of their strategic fit, effectiveness and economic efficiency. For the purposes of the significance policy and the RLTP 2015 prioritisation methodology packages are NOT seen as significant activities even if the sum of their parts totals greater than \$5Million threshold. However, if an individual element(s) of a package does pass the agreed \$5Million threshold then these will be treated as significant activities and would be subject to project prioritisation.