

Regional Passenger Transport Plan



Environment Bay of Plenty
Transportation Publication 2006/01
March 2006

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NEW ZEALAND

Working with our communities for a better environment



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Bay of Plenty Region

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P O Box 364
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NEW ZEALAND

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Chapter 1: Background

This part of the Plan addresses the Bay of Plenty region, the purpose and scope of the Plan, and the legal and policy framework within which it fits.

1.1 Introduction

This document is the Regional Passenger Transport Plan for the Bay of Plenty region. It replaces the Regional Passenger Transport Plan produced in February 2002.

This Plan addresses the passenger transport needs of the Bay of Plenty region, and sets out policies and proposals, which will address those needs. It covers land transport and harbour ferries only.

The term passenger transport means services such as buses and taxis which are available for public use, but does not include school bus services provided under the auspices of the Ministry of Education.

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1.2 The Bay of Plenty Region

The Bay of Plenty region is located on the East Coast of the North Island of New Zealand. The Region takes in the full sweep of the coastline of the Bay of Plenty from Cape Runaway in the east, to Waihi Beach in the west. On the landward side, the Region is mostly bounded by the watersheds of the catchments, which flow, into Bay of Plenty, and includes the Rotorua lakes. On the oceanside, it takes in some 18 offshore islands and extends to the limit of the territorial sea.

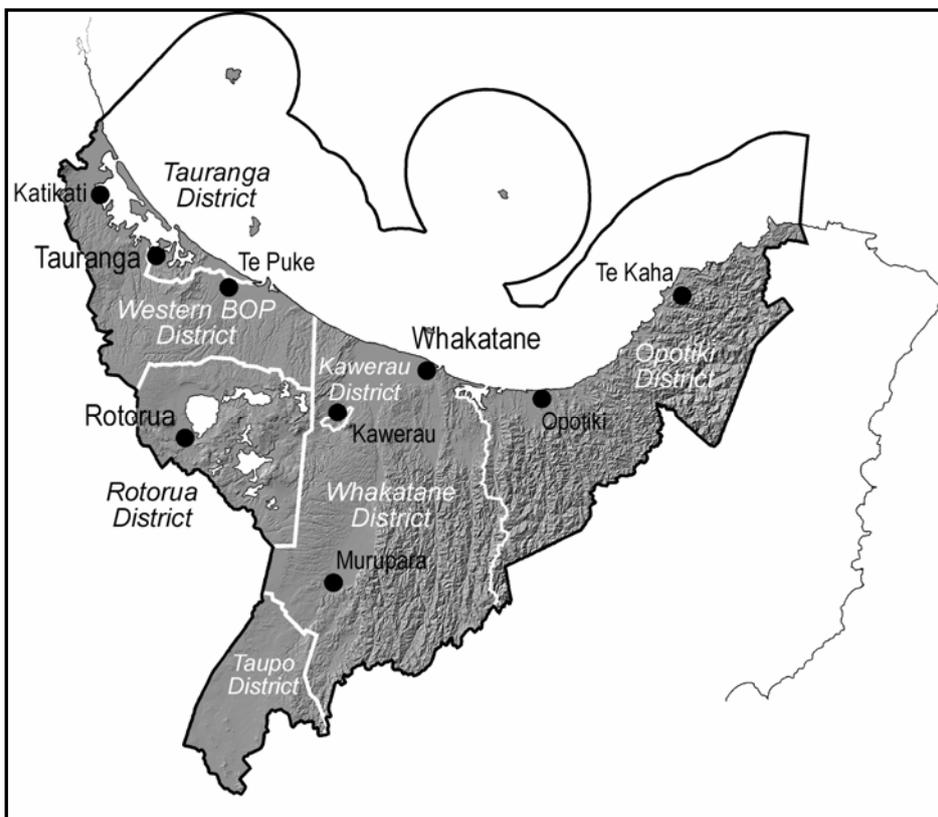
The area of the Region is 20,839 square kilometres, comprising 13,063 square kilometres of land and 7,776 square kilometres of coastal marine area.

The Region had a usually resident population of 239,412 (2001 census), which makes the Bay of Plenty the fifth most populous region in the country. 6.4% of New Zealand's population live within the region. The Region has a population density of 18.3 people per square kilometre. Most of the region's population is concentrated in the Tauranga, Western Bay of Plenty and Rotorua areas.

The population of the region is increasing steadily. The population increased by 10% between 1991 and 1996 and 6.7% between 1996 and 2001. Statistics New Zealand estimate that in 2005 the region had a resident population of 260,300.

The increase was most marked in the west of the region. Western Bay of Plenty district increased by 17.1% between 1991 and 1996 and 9.3% between 1996 and 2001. Tauranga district increased by 16.5% between 1991 and 1996 and 16.9% between 1996 and 2001. Statistics New Zealand estimate that in 2005 the Tauranga Urban Area had a population of 109,100, while the population of the Rotorua Urban Area was estimated at 54,900.

It is projected that the combined population of the region's six territorial authorities will be about 333,000 by the year 2026.



Apart from the many tourist services in and around Rotorua the predominant passenger transport systems available in the Bay of Plenty include inter-regional bus services, urban bus services in Rotorua and Tauranga, taxis in the cities and larger towns, and intra-regional bus services from outlying districts.

Based on the 1996 Census less than 1% of work trips were made by passenger transport in Rotorua, and the percentage in Tauranga was almost zero. However, since the 2001 Census, Environment Bay of Plenty has made considerable changes and improvements to both the Rotorua and Tauranga bus services and patronage on both has increased.

1.3 Bay of Plenty Regional Council

The Bay of Plenty Regional Council was created by local government re-organisation on 1 November 1989. It took over the functions of former authorities within the Bay of Plenty region, including Catchment and Regional Water Boards, Pest Destruction Boards, Drainage Boards, United Councils and Noxious Plants Authorities. Council functions include:

- natural resource management;
- river and drainage engineering;
- land management, including soil conservation and the control of animal pests and plant pests;
- emergency management; and
- land transport planning.

The Bay of Plenty Regional Council has branded itself as Environment Bay of Plenty, which is the name used throughout this Plan.

1.4 The Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of the Plan is to specify the passenger transport services that Environment Bay of Plenty will support. Although the preparation of a regional passenger transport plan is not mandatory, there are several benefits of doing so.

First it clearly outlines Environment Bay of Plenty's policies and service proposals with respect to the provision of public passenger transport in the Bay of Plenty. It should be read as a policy statement, which will provide the basis for Regional Council decisions and actions in the passenger transport area.

It also provides a co-ordinated and consistent basis for funding passenger transport. To be eligible for Regional Council funding a service must be specified, and meet the criteria, in the Plan. However it should be clearly understood that Environment Bay of Plenty is not bound to support services that meet the criteria set out in the Plan.

Finally preparation of the Plan gives Environment Bay of Plenty the opportunity to receive financial assistance from Land Transport New Zealand for any contracted services. The Transport Services Licensing Act 1989 defines a contracted service as one that has been specified in a regional passenger transport plan. If a specified service is not provided on a commercial basis, the Council can contract an operator for the provision of that service.

Any passenger transport service already operating or wishing to operate in this region, regardless of whether or not it is specified in the Plan, can be operated commercially — i.e. without financial support from Environment Bay of Plenty — provided it has first been notified to, and registered by, Environment Bay of Plenty.

1.5 Status of the Plan

This Plan is the Regional Passenger Transport Plan for the Bay of Plenty region, and as such forms part of the Regional Land Transport Strategy for the region. It has been prepared in consultation with the territorial authorities, transport operators and the public of the region. It will be reviewed and updated at the same time the Regional Land Transport Strategy is reviewed, or sooner if required.

1.6 Legislative Framework

1.6.1 Transport Services Licensing Act 1989

A regional passenger transport plan is defined in Section 47 of the Transport Services Licensing Act 1989 as:

“(1) a plan (identified as a regional passenger transport plan)—

- (a) Prepared by a regional council or a territorial authority that has the functions, powers, and duties of a regional council under this Act; and*
- (b) Prepared in consultation with the public and the constituent authorities (if any) in the region concerned; and*
- (c) Made available to the public; and*
- (d) Specifying the passenger services the regional council or territorial authority proposes to be provided in its region or district, both generally and in respect to the transport disadvantaged.*

(2) In addition to the matters described in paragraph (d)...such a plan—

- (a) May specify the conditions of the services the regional council or territorial authority concerned proposes to be provided in its region; and*
- (b) Without limiting the generality of paragraph (a) of this subsection, may specify all or any of the following matters:

 - (i) Routes, capacity, frequency of service and fare structure:*
 - (ii) Any special provisions for users of a specified class or description of the services or any of them; and**
- (c) May specify any other matters the regional council or territorial authority thinks fit.”*

1.6.2 Land Transport Act 1998

The Regional Passenger Transport Plan is linked to the Regional Land Transport Strategy for the region through the provisions of the Land Transport Act 1998. That Act requires all regional councils to prepare a Regional Land Transport Strategy.

Section 175 (2)(k) of the Land Transport Act states:

Every regional land transport strategy must-

include any regional passenger transport plan (within the meaning of section 47 of the Transport Services Licensing Act 1989) that has been prepared by the regional council that has prepared the strategy"

1.6.3 Land Transport Management Act 2003

Section 35 of the Land Transport Management Act 2003 requires Environment Bay of Plenty to consider the needs of "persons who are transport disadvantaged" when preparing any programme under that Act. The programme referred to is the regional land transport programme, which is a request to Land Transport New Zealand for funding for passenger services identified in a regional passenger transport plan.

The effect of this section of the Act is to require Environment Bay of Plenty to consider "persons who are transport disadvantaged" in the preparation of the Plan.

The term "persons who are transport disadvantaged" is not defined in the legislation. However it is generally regarded as meaning those people who, for reasons of age, disability or economic circumstance, do not have access to private transport and therefore, may have relatively poor access to employment, shopping, social and recreational opportunities. Environment Bay of Plenty adopts this definition for use in the Plan.

Council recognises that most of the people identified as belonging to the "people with disabilities" group will first and foremost, belong to one or more of the other groups identified as transport disadvantaged. That is, their disability is a secondary matter influencing how transport disadvantaged they are. However, Council has identified "people with disabilities" as a separate group so as not to exclude those persons with a disability who do not fit into any of the other groups listed.

Policy 1

Environment Bay of Plenty considers that some members of the following groups may be transport disadvantaged:

- children up to the age of 15 years;
- young people in secondary education;
- young people in tertiary education;
- people with disabilities;
- superannuitants;
- unemployed people;
- low income groups;
- other people not in paid employment; and
- people who do not hold a driver's licence.

1.6.4 Transfer of Functions, Powers and Duties

The Transport Services Licensing Act 1989 (section 53A) permit Environment Bay of Plenty to transfer any of its functions, powers and duties under that Act, to a constituent authority. The functions, powers and duties referred to involve the tendering and contracting of passenger transport services.

This issue is discussed in more detail in section 4.2.8 of the Plan.

1.7 Policy Framework

Bay of Plenty's Regional Policy Statement and Regional Land Transport Strategy provide a policy framework within which the Plan has been developed. These policy documents are discussed below.

1.7.1 Regional Policy Statement

The Operative Bay of Plenty Regional Policy Statement (RPS) has been prepared under the Resource Management Act 1991. The RPS provides an overview of the region's resource management issues and promotes the sustainable management of its natural and physical resources. The RPS is the region's guiding policy document for the detailed management of those resources by regional and district plans.

The RPS contains some indirect references to public passenger transport, which have been taken into account by the Regional Passenger Transport Plan.

1.7.2 Regional Land Transport Strategy

The Council adopted a new Regional Land Transport Strategy (RLTS) in September 2004. The RLTS was prepared in accordance with the Land Transport Management Act

The RLTS is based on managing traffic demand (that is, implement travel demand management tools, enhance passenger transport services, provide roading for remaining traffic growth).

The RLTS recognises that the role of passenger transport is to:

"...improve access and mobility, provide transport options, including for commuter travel, contribute to sustainability and managing demand. As a result of the level of public submissions to this strategy as well as changes to Environment Bay of Plenty policy, an improved level of service for bus based public transport will occur. The current service, which caters for the transport disadvantaged, will change to a higher level of service focussing on journey to work commuters, especially in Rotorua and Tauranga.

It needs to be recognised that these additional changes, which involve considerable cost as well as the need for ongoing Government subsidy to help reduce the financial impost on regional ratepayers, will not be an overnight transformation. It will take some time to grow the passenger transport mode to the point envisaged in this strategy (page 79)."

The RLTS notes that the indicative investment programme until 2006/07 for passenger transport is:

“In the first two years of implementing this strategy (i.e. the period until the further review in 2006), the focus for passenger transport in the Bay of Plenty will be mainly to continue to provide a public transport service that is focussed on the transport disadvantaged and investigating the use of public transport as a viable alternative to car based trips. However, consistent with this strategy, Environment Bay of Plenty’s plans into the future are to grow service levels consistent with the strategy’s aims for mode switching ...

... the main activities to be carried out over the next 2-3 years include:

- *Ongoing and increased bus services in Western Bay, Rotorua and Eastern Bay sub-regions*
- *Public transport marketing to support passenger transport services in the Bay of Plenty*
- *Explore ways to improve the reliability of service times by giving priority to buses if possible in congested corridors*
- *Consider allowing taxis access to priority lanes that are established for buses*
- *Work with Tauranga City and Rotorua District to develop ‘Transport’ centres.*
- *Provision of electronic ticketing facilities for the Western Bay and Rotorua sub-region bus services. Also consider the use of an electronic card system for taxis (especially Total Mobility vans).*
- *Provision and maintenance of bus shelters in all three sub-regions*
- *Continued provision of the Total Mobility scheme for people that have disabilities that prevent them using conventional bus services (including assisting in the replacement of taxi wheelchair hoists)*
- *Continued operation of concessionary fare schemes.*
- *Coordination between public passenger transport, and pedestrian and cycling facilities.*
- *Consider allowing the transport disadvantaged to use school buses.*
- *Review the provision of a taxi service in Opotiki” (page 90).*

The RLTS also notes that the indicative investment programme beyond 2007 for passenger transport is that:

“The programme for passenger transport in the region will need to change significantly to achieve the mode shift objectives that underpin the strategy’s focus on managing demand ... it is expected that in the future there will be significant changes to the provision of passenger transport in the region, particularly in the Western Bay sub-region, but in general right across the region, large increases to funding, and developments that could include:

- significantly higher service levels

- bus priority measures (e.g. priority at traffic lights, bus lanes, etc)
- integrated ticketing activities
- real time passenger information facilities
- coordination/integration between public passenger transport, pedestrian and cycling facilities” (page 95).

The RLTS is currently being implemented and will be reviewed during 2006. The Plan will subsequently be reviewed to reflect the new Strategy.

1.8 **Regional Council Passenger Transport Functions and Responsibilities**

Environment Bay of Plenty’s involvement in passenger transport is primarily the planning and funding of passenger transport services where these are not provided commercially.

These roles are set out in

- The Transport Services Licensing Act 1989
- The Land Transport Act 1998
- The Land Transport Management Act 2003

The transport functions and responsibilities of Environment Bay of Plenty include:

- the preparation of the Regional Passenger Transport Plan, Regional Land Transport Strategy, and the Regional Programme for the Bay of Plenty region;
- the registration of notified commercial passenger services;
- contracting and funding of specified passenger services; and
- ensuring the availability of information about passenger services.

1.9 **The Regional Land Transport Committee**

Environment Bay of Plenty is required, by section 178 of the Land Transport Act 1998, to establish a Regional Land Transport Committee. The statutory function of a regional land transport committee is to prepare a regional land transport strategy for the region, for approval by the regional council.

The Bay of Plenty Regional Council has established a Regional Land Transport Committee

The Regional Land Transport Committee consists of suitable persons appointed by Environment Bay of Plenty to represent:

- (a) the objectives of economic development, safety and personal security, public health, access and mobility, and environmental sustainability;

- (b) cultural interests;
- (c) the Regional Council;
- (d) other territorial authorities in the region; and
- (e) Land Transport New Zealand.

Chapter 2: Passenger Services Required

This part of the Plan considers reasons why passenger transport should be supported by Environment Bay of Plenty, and looks at the services required in the Bay of Plenty.

2.1 Benefits of Passenger Transport

The maintenance of a safe, efficient and cost effective transport network is integral to the region's social and economic well-being. People need to travel in order to obtain employment, education, social and recreational opportunities, as well as to gain access to goods and services.

Passenger transport services form an important part of the transport network and complements travel by other means. Passenger transport provides direct benefits to the users of these services and indirect benefits to the community as a whole. These benefits include:

- Mobility for those with limited transport options.

Many people, for a variety of reasons, do not have access to a car. Apart from cycling and walking (each of which has obvious limitations as a mode of transport) public transport is the only practical transport option available.

Inadequate passenger transport provision can cause community isolation resulting in:

- Lack of connectedness due to limitations in accessing appropriate opportunities for interaction and support in the community.
- Mental health stressors as a result of being disconnected from the community;
- Cultural alienation as a result of not being able to adequately interact with family, whanau and whenua; and
- Lack of social cohesion for these communities who are geographically isolated.

- Roading and parking benefits.

Road networks are becoming increasingly congested. Car parking in some areas is at a premium. This is particularly the case in Tauranga because of the continuing rapid growth of the city. Passenger transport can help relieve these problems.

- Safety benefits.

Passenger service vehicles are less likely than cars to be involved in road crashes. The more people on passenger transport, the lower the cost of road crashes is likely to be to the community. In addition there are probably safety benefits from bussing children to and from school in areas where there are no footpaths.

Inadequate passenger transport provision in a community can lead to road safety issues as a result of no other affordable transport alternative which in turn results in:

- Unsafe vehicles on the road;
- An increased risk for rural travellers who already have higher levels of road trauma
- An increased risk for young inexperienced drivers and passengers; and
- An increased risk for people who hitchhike as a result of no other form of available, affordable transport.

- Environmental benefits.

Passenger service vehicles are more fuel efficient per passenger than cars. They also produce less airborne pollutants per passenger than cars.

There are therefore several benefits from supporting passenger transport services. It follows that it is worthwhile paying for a passenger transport service if the cost to the community is less than the benefits that result from the service.

In the Bay of Plenty region the most likely reason to support passenger transport will be for mobility benefits. However all benefits result once the service is in place; i.e. for whatever reason the service is provided, the other benefits will follow.

2.2 Services Required

The Plan is required to “specify the passenger services that Environment Bay of Plenty proposes be provided in its region, both generally and in respect to the transport disadvantaged” (Section 47 Transport Services Licensing Act 1989). The Act further stipulates that only services specified in a Plan are eligible for funding assistance.

This part of the Plan sets out the criteria that must be met for a service to qualify to be a “specified” service and thus qualify for consideration of Regional Council financial support. It discusses the services currently provided in the main centres within the region, and whether these meet the criteria. It also looks at some ways services might be improved.

2.2.1 Criteria To Determine Specified Services

Only services specified in the Plan can be financially supported. The Plan therefore must determine which services are considered to be necessary in this region. Those necessary services will then become “specified” in terms of the Transport Services Licensing Act 1989.

Environment Bay of Plenty has followed the reasoning set out in Part 2.1 above in specifying which services are considered necessary in this region.

Policy 2

The passenger transport services that Environment Bay of Plenty considers should be provided in the region are those that are cost effective and will provide significant benefits to:

- the mobility of people who are transport disadvantaged; or
- road congestion problems; or
- the environment; or
- road safety

Services should be provided in a manner that does not compromise the social and cultural dignity of the user.

2.2.2 Passenger Transport Trial Service Criteria

In order to do implement trial passenger transport services, Environment Bay of Plenty has developed the following criteria to determine whether a trial service proposal will be eligible for Council funding:

- Do the proposed trial service meet Regional Passenger Transport Plan criteria?
- Is the proposed trial service eligible for Land Transport New Zealand funding?
- Is the proposed trial service cost-effective?

Policy 3

For a proposed trial public passenger transport service to be eligible for Environment Bay of Plenty funding, Council will have regard to whether the service:

- is a specified service; or
- not specified, but meets the requirements of Policy 2 of the Plan; and
- meets the funding criteria set out in section 12 of the Plan; and
- is a new service; or
- an increased level of service.

2.3 Passenger Transport Trial Performance Measures

When implementing trial public passenger transport service proposals, Council determines whether or not the service should continue as a contracted service if, at the end of the trial, the operator is not prepared to operate it commercially, by using the following performance measures:

- consistency with the Regional Land Transport Strategy; and
- efficiency ratio calculation

2.4 Current Services

2.4.1 Rotorua Urban Services

In 1999, Environment Bay of Plenty transferred its powers, functions and duties with respect to the Rotorua bus service, to the Rotorua District Council. As part of the delegation, the District Council was responsible for tendering and contracting the bus service in Rotorua. This includes determining the level of service required (routes, timetable, vehicle requirements and fares), tendering, seeking funding assistance from Land Transport New Zealand, promotion and advertising, making contract payments and monitoring performance.

In 2004 Rotorua District Council turned-over to Environment Bay of Plenty the powers, functions and duties with respect to the Rotorua bus service that it had transferred to the District Council in 1999.

Rotorua has a comprehensive urban bus service. The service, which is provided by Reesby Buses Ltd, operates six days a week, except on public holidays.

The Rotorua urban service is a contracted service

Generally speaking, ten short and direct routes cover Rotorua and out as far as Ngongotaha. There are over 40 trips per day on each of the ten routes.

A flat fare structure applies on all services. The cash fare is \$2.00. For smartcard users, the discounted fare is \$1.40. Pre-schoolers travel free.

All services operate as "hail and ride" services, which means they will stop at any point, where it is safe to do so, to pick up passengers.

A Rotorua bus service is considered to be a necessary service in terms of the criteria set down in the Plan. In particular, the service is considered to provide mobility for the transport disadvantaged.

2.4.2 Tauranga Bus Services

In 1997 Environment Bay of Plenty indicated that it was concerned that Tauranga was relatively poorly served by public transport, particularly given the high number of elderly people living there.

With the introduction of Patronage Funding by Transfund New Zealand in November 2000, Environment Bay of Plenty resolved "to undertake patronage commercial trials in Tauranga to improve existing services and increase patronage."

These trials were deemed successful and in 2003 the Council let a new contract to the Bayline Group Limited to operate the service.

Eleven routes currently cover Tauranga from Mount Maunganui in the north, to the suburbs of Papamoa Beach in the east, Greerton in the South and Belvedere in the west. There are over 20 trips per day on most of the services, with two services that have over 40 trips per day. A slightly more-limited service also operates on Saturday.

A zonal fares structure applies on all services. The adult fare ranges between \$1.50 for one zone to \$3.00 for four zones. For children, the fare ranges between \$1.00 for one zone to \$2.10 for four zones. Smart card fares also apply, offering a 20% discount on the cash fare. Pre-schoolers travel free.

A Tauranga bus service is considered to be a necessary service in terms of the criteria set down in the Plan. In particular, the service is considered to provide mobility for the transport disadvantaged.

2.4.3 Other Services

Other services that meet the needs of the community are provided on a commercial and contracted basis. These include inter-regional, taxi, and other services.

(i) Inter-regional Services

For the purposes of the Plan, an inter-regional service is one where part of the journey takes place outside the region. Many inter-regional bus services pass through the region and act like intra-regional services as they provide links between urban areas within the region.

Environment Bay of Plenty does not intend to subsidise inter-regional services but recognises their importance to the region. No inter-regional services are considered to meet the necessary service criteria as set out in the Plan.

(ii) Intra-regional Services

An 'intra-regional service' is a service where the whole journey takes place inside the region. There are currently several commercial and contracted intra-regional services operating in the Bay of Plenty. They include:

- Opotiki to Whakatane and Tauranga
- Kawerau to Whakatane to Tauranga
- Whakatane to Tauranga
- Matata to Whakatane
- Rotorua to Tauranga
- Katikati to Tauranga

These services are currently operating on a predominantly contracted basis within the region. They are valuable services for the urban areas of Opotiki, Kawerau, Whakatane, Te Puke and Katikati because they cater predominantly for people who are living in the outlying towns and working (or attending educational institutions) in Tauranga. The services can be said to provide mobility for people who are transport disadvantaged. They do little to relieve traffic congestion.

Council recognises the importance of intra-regional services to the region and may specify these services if they meet the necessary service criteria as set out in the Plan.

(iii) Taxi Services

Taxis are an important part of the passenger transport network, and in many smaller towns is the only form of public passenger transport available. It is often thought that taxis are only used by the wealthy; in fact those with no car of their own predominantly use taxis. Taxis therefore play an important part in meeting the needs of those who may be considered transport disadvantaged. They also play a vital role in the provision of the Total Mobility scheme.

Taxis services currently operate in:

- Tauranga (including Mount Maunganui)
- Whakatane
- Rotorua
- Katikati

Taxis services are considered to meet the necessary service criteria as set out in the Plan. The implication of this is that if a taxi service ceased to operate in any town in the region, Environment Bay of Plenty would consider options to replace it.

(iv) Ferry Services

Several ferry services operate on Tauranga Harbour. Two vehicular ferries serve Matakana Island: one, between Sulphur Point and Panepane Point and the other provides a scheduled service between Opureora and Omokoroa.

A launch also operates from Sulphur Point to Panepane Point, primarily for forestry workers and school students.

There are also currently two passenger ferry services on Tauranga Harbour offering transport between Mount Maunganui and Tauranga CBD. One is operated as a summer seasonal service catering for holidaymakers and sightseers, while the other is a full-year round service targeting commuters.

2.5 Specified Services

The public passenger transport services which Environment Bay of Plenty believes are needed in the region to meet the mobility needs of the transport disadvantaged, are set out in the Schedule of Specified Services (refer to Appendix 1).

Environment Bay of Plenty will retain the discretion to decide whether or not it will contract for any passenger transport service. This recognises that public funding for passenger transport services is likely to be insufficient to provide for **all** community transport needs.

Policy 4

Environment Bay of Plenty will not be obligated to contract for any specified service that is not being provided commercially.

2.6 Future Actions

One of the submissions to the draft 2001 Plan expressed a need for better coordination in Tauranga, of the Ministry of Education school services and Environment Bay of Plenty's public passenger transport services. Council recognises that students are a transport disadvantaged group, but notes that if it acts on the submission there will be some cost implications for Council. A good first step would be to obtain an understanding of the Ministry of Education services in Tauranga before deciding on a course of action.

The submitter also expressed a need for passenger transport to provide safer and more cost-effective access to schools, where those schools are separated from their main catchments by busy roads.

At such schools, many students either have to cross a very busy road to get to school or are dropped off by parents outside the school gate. In the first scenario, students are at great risk of personal injury when crossing the highway, while in the second, safety issues arise from the motor vehicle congestion caused by parents dropping their children off.

Council recognises this is an important issue that should be investigated.

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A submitter to the review of the Plan requested that the Plan include provisions for public transport in the kiwifruit harvest season to assist moving seasonal workers between Tauranga, Te Puke and Katikati.

Because the Kiwifruit industry is a key contributor/driver of economic development in the region and much of the labour for this industry is seasonal and public transport dependent, the Council will investigate the need for passenger transport services to cater for those seasonal workers.

Another submitter to the review of the Plan has suggested that Council investigate the following service improvements:

- reschedule the Whakatane to Tauranga bus to better align with the Tauranga to Waihi/Coromandel and Tauranga to Paeroa/Thames bus services;
- introduce a new morning service from Tauranga to Whakatane, returning to Tauranga in the morning;
- increase the Whakatane to Tauranga service to two daily return services;
- introduce an 8:00 am Ohope to Whakatane service; and
- introduce a new early morning service from Whakatane to Rotorua (via Kawerau and Edgecumbe).

2.7 Services for People With Disabilities

The Statistics New Zealand 2001 Disability Count indicated that about 20% of the New Zealand population was disabled in some way. Projections suggest that as the population ages the percentage that is disabled will also rise over time.

When considering the needs of the transport disadvantaged it is important to consider the type of service needed. Many of those who might be classified as transport disadvantaged are not able to use conventional public transport. For example people in wheelchairs are not able to access standard buses or taxis. Specialised services are needed to cater for the needs of passengers with disabilities. One such specialised service in operation within the region is Total Mobility.

2.7.1 Total Mobility

Total Mobility is a nation-wide scheme designed to provide transport assistance to people by removing barriers between those with disabilities and those without, enabling users to participate in and contribute to the life of their community.

Essentially the scheme provides financial assistance, by way of a discount on taxi fares, to people eligible to use the scheme. Vouchers are used to gain the Total Mobility discount, which is currently 50%. The scheme utilises existing taxi fleets, including vans equipped with ramps or hoists for carrying people in wheelchairs.

In October 1998, Environment Bay of Plenty introduced a new assessment and ID card system for Total Mobility. Application for membership can only be made through one of the support agencies participating in the scheme (an accredited agency). Accredited agencies are responsible for ensuring that the membership application and application for photo ID card are completed correctly and returned to Environment Bay of Plenty for processing. Members are required to present their ID card each time they use their vouchers.

In the 2004/2005 year 115,800 Total Mobility trips were made in the Bay of Plenty region, at a discount cost of approximately \$400,000. As at February 2006, 3,878 people were registered with Environment Bay of Plenty as Total Mobility users.

The Total Mobility scheme in the Bay of Plenty is funded by Environment Bay of Plenty (60%) and Land Transport New Zealand (40%). The budget for Total Mobility in 2005/06 is \$401,000.

Environment Bay of Plenty funds its share of the cost, and administers the scheme, on a region-wide basis. However, in practice, use of Total Mobility is largely confined to the urban areas served by taxis, i.e. Rotorua, Tauranga, Te Puke, Whakatane, and Kawerau, and the rural areas immediately adjacent to those centres.

Environment Bay of Plenty prints the vouchers and distributes them to agencies and individual users redeems vouchers from taxi organisations and generally manages the day-to-day operation of the scheme. A management committee has been established to develop policies, monitor the operation of the scheme, and facilitate communication between the Council, users, agencies and operators.

Environment Bay of Plenty considers that the Total Mobility service meets the necessary service criteria as set out in the Plan. The Council supports Total Mobility and will look to expand the coverage of the scheme if the opportunity arises, but will continue to press for greater financial assistance from central government.

(i) Eligibility

People eligible to use Total Mobility are those persons who, for reasons of physical, sensory, intellectual or psychological disability, whether congenital, acquired or age related, satisfy the following criteria:

Cannot unaided (or could not if passenger transport were available) complete any of the component activities involved in making use of public passenger transport.

The component parts of public transport use are defined as:

- proceeding to the nearest bus stop/train station;
- boarding, riding securely and alighting; and
- proceeding from the destination stop to the trip end.

The following list of disabilities is used as an aid to assist decision-making on the level of mobility impairment that would qualify for eligibility:

- Inability to walk to the nearest bus stop or board and alight from a bus for reasons such as pain, respiratory problems, sensory disabilities, neurological fatigue, reliance on complex walking aids, or requiring the constant assistance of another person for mobility.
- Total loss of, or severe impairment of, vision preventing the independent use of public passenger transport.
- Intellectual, cognitive or psychiatric disabilities, which may necessitate the constant assistance of another person for, travel on public passenger transport.

This criteria has been adopted by Land Transport New Zealand and applies nationally.

Assessors, who are usually part of a disability support organisation, handle assessment of eligibility to participate in the Total Mobility scheme. Ultimately however Environment Bay of Plenty, through the Management Committee, has control over eligibility.

Policy 6

Environment Bay of Plenty will use the eligibility criteria adopted by Land Transport New Zealand to assess the eligibility of people with disabilities to use the Total Mobility scheme.

Policy 7

All people wishing to access Total Mobility must apply to, and be registered by, Environment Bay of Plenty before being able to use the scheme.

(ii) Total Mobility Agreements

Environment Bay of Plenty must approve disability support organisations wishing to participate in the Total Mobility scheme. The application form will clearly set down the practices the organisation has to adhere to if it wishes to join the scheme (for example, the organisation will only distribute vouchers to members of that organisation who are registered users of the scheme and will keep appropriate records and make them freely available for inspection by Council staff).

To date, taxi companies participating in the Total Mobility scheme have not had to sign any agreements with Environment Bay of Plenty. However, Environment Bay of Plenty believes there is value in establishing agreements between Council and all taxis companies (both new and established) for the provision of the Total Mobility service, as such agreements will clearly set out the rights and responsibilities of each party. The agreement will cover issues such as voucher use and reimbursement, driver training, and treatment of passengers.

Policy 8

Environment Bay of Plenty proposes implementing agreements covering the conditions of participation, between itself and taxi companies for the provision of the Total Mobility service. Before doing so, it will consult the taxi companies and disability support organisations that currently participate in Total Mobility regarding the terms of that agreement.

(iii) Wheelchair Accessible Taxis

As part of the Total Mobility scheme, some taxi organisations have wheelchair accessible taxis. These are usually vans equipped with either a ramp or hoist that allows the wheelchair and occupant access to the vehicle.

Environment Bay of Plenty provides financial assistance from its Total Mobility operating budget, for the purchase and installation of two wheelchair hoists or ramps per annum, where there is a demand for wheelchair accessible taxis

Policy 9

Environment Bay of Plenty shall provide financial assistance from its operating budget for the purchase and fitting of a wheelchair hoist or ramp.

(iv) Driver Training

Taxi drivers participating in the Total Mobility scheme are expected to be able to provide a level of service suitable to the needs of each passenger. This will involve specialised training. Training courses are available and it is a prerequisite that drivers be suitably trained if they wish to participate in the scheme.

Policy 10

Taxi drivers must undergo suitable training prior to their participation in the Total Mobility scheme. In order to define a uniform standard of "suitable training" Environment Bay of Plenty will consult the taxi companies and disability support organisations that currently participate in Total Mobility.

(v) Management of Total Mobility

Environment Bay of Plenty currently maintains a management committee to oversee and monitor the operation of the Total Mobility scheme in the region. This committee will comprise three representatives from each of the following groups:

- Environment Bay of Plenty;
- taxi operators; and
- users of the scheme

The functions of the management committee are:

- to monitor the operation of the scheme and recommend changes where appropriate;
- to assist in expenditure forecasting, planning for future demand and developing alternative transport solutions;
- to facilitate communication and exchange of information between Environment Bay of Plenty, users, agencies and operators; and

- to fulfil Land Transport New Zealand's requirements for a meeting to negotiate and formulate details of a concessionary fare scheme (CFS).

Policy 11

Environment Bay of Plenty will maintain a management committee to oversee and monitor the operation of the Total Mobility scheme in the region.

2.7.2 Accessible Buses

For the purposes of this Plan, an accessible urban bus is a two-door wheelchair accessible bus with low entry and exit areas without steps and without internal steps between the front and rear doors.

To date Environment Bay of Plenty has had to act pragmatically in its approach to providing urban bus services. This has meant, in Tauranga for example, Council utilised an existing bus fleet that was not accessible to people in wheelchairs. However, Council accepts that it is reasonable for people with disabilities to expect that at some point in the future, urban buses will be accessible to them.

To address this matter, Council intends phasing in the requirement for accessible buses in urban areas. While not being ideal for people with disabilities this choice will provide operators with a greater lead in time and will enable the costs of purchasing accessible vehicles to be spread more evenly over a number of years.

Policy 12

By 1 July 2008, all buses operating contracted urban bus services in the Bay of Plenty must be wheelchair accessible with low entry and exit areas without steps and without internal steps between the front and rear doors.

Council is committed to the long-term needs of the region's population and has budgeted to implement Policy 13 as part of its 2006/07 Long Term Council Community Plan.

However, Council is mindful that it will be costly to implement the Policy (perhaps as much as \$1.3m per annum). A district council has also echoed those concerns.

As such, the Council has resolved to also investigate if more cost-effective options exist to provide accessible public land transport.

The outcome from that investigation will be able to be reflected in a future version of the Plan, which the Council will consult on.

A submitter to the Plan also raised the issue of accessible public land transport in rural areas. This is a matter that the Council will need to investigate further.

Chapter 3: Funding and Fares

This part of the Plan addresses how the funding of any passenger transport services supported by Environment Bay of Plenty will be raised, and how much the passengers should pay.

3.1 Funding

The Land Transport Management Act 2003 provides the basis for regional councils to fund passenger transport services. It allows regional councils to make payments for passenger transport services and to receive financial assistance from Land Transport New Zealand toward those payments. Land Transport New Zealand is the central government agency that allocates funding for passenger transport, roading and road safety through the National Land Transport Programme.

Prior to November 2000, Land Transport New Zealand contributed up to 40% of the cost of contracted passenger transport services. The balance was met by regional councils or by the relevant district councils.

In November 2000, Transfund introduced Patronage Funding. The new funding system enables Transfund to provide up-front funding for new services (Kick-Start) of:

- 80% of the cost of new passenger transport projects (November 2000 to June 2001);
- 60% of the cost of new passenger transport projects (July 2001 to June 2002);
- 40% of the cost of new passenger transport projects (July 2002 to June 2003); and
- additional payments for patronage growth.

In September 2003, Transfund New Zealand announced a revised patronage funding scheme. It commenced on 1 July 2004, with the first two years (2004/05 and 2005/06) being transitional years. Since then, there have been a number of developments that potentially affect the patronage funding scheme. Given these developments, Land Transport NZ has decided to extend the phase-in period for at least one additional year to include 2006/07.

In general terms, patronage funding involves Land Transport NZ funding regional councils for passenger transport on the basis of passengers carried. Regional councils that attract more passengers will receive increased funding from Transfund.

The goals of patronage funding are to:

- ensure that funding for passenger transport services goes where it is most needed (e.g. where there is road congestion)
- give regional councils financial incentive to have passenger transport strategies that attract more passengers
- provide the opportunity for funding new passenger transport services
- give regional councils the flexibility to design passenger transport services that suit their regions and meet users' needs.

The overall objective of the revised patronage funding scheme is to provide for bus and ferry services and infrastructure to be funded through a strategically planned, sustainable patronage funding mechanism.

For 2005/06, the estimated total cost of Land Transport New Zealand and local government funded passenger transport services and infrastructure maintenance in the Bay of Plenty region is:

- \$1,390,000 for the bus service in Rotorua;
- \$1,960,000 for bus services in Tauranga;
- \$400,000 for public transport services in the eastern and western Bay of Plenty;
- \$130,000 for the maintenance of bus shelters in Rotorua, Tauranga and Whakatane; and
- \$401,000 for Total Mobility throughout the region.

3.1.1 Sources of Local Funding

Environment Bay of Plenty will meet 100% of the local share cost of new public passenger transport trial services.

For existing contracted passenger transport services, local government is currently required to meet about 50% of any contract payments for those services (the local share cost), and about 50% of administration costs. This local share is generally raised from regional or district ratepayers.

As a general principle, if a contracted service operates wholly within one territorial authority's district, Environment Bay of Plenty will meet 90% of the local share cost of the operation and the district will meet the other 10%. Depending on circumstances, the rate levied over that district could be initiated by either the district council or Environment Bay of Plenty.

The only exception to this is the Total Mobility scheme; it is a region wide scheme and is appropriately funded by Environment Bay of Plenty on a region wide basis.

Where a service covers more than one district, the portion of the local share cost of the service not met by Environment Bay of Plenty shall be met by those districts on an equal basis.

Policy 13

Environment Bay of Plenty will meet 100% of the local share cost of new public passenger transport trial services.

Environment Bay of Plenty will meet 90% of the local share cost of contracted passenger services provided that 10% of the local share cost of any contracted passenger service is raised from the district in which the service operates. Where the service operates in more than one district, the portion of the local share cost of the service not met by Environment Bay of Plenty, will be met equally from those districts.

Environment Bay of Plenty's Total Mobility scheme local share costs will be funded on a region wide basis.

3.2 Types of Funding Support

The following forms of financial support are available for passenger transport services:

- contract payments determined by a tendering process; and
- concessionary fare payments (which can be made in conjunction with either of the other two options).

When considering the possibility of supporting a passenger transport service, Environment Bay of Plenty will consider and select the appropriate type(s) of support based on the circumstances and expected cost.

3.3 Fares

Section 47 of the Transport Services Licensing Act 1989 enables regional councils to specify the conditions of the services they propose be provided in their regions, including the fare structure. Setting fares is a critical aspect of a passenger transport service. Fares that are too high will discourage use; fares that are too low may require large amounts of subsidy support.

When addressing fare issues, the differences between commercial and contracted services needs to be considered.

In general terms Environment Bay of Plenty has little control over standard fares on commercial services, including taxis and inter-regional services. It can only influence fares on commercial services through the use of concession fares for specified groups of people.

Environment Bay of Plenty has greater control of fares on contracted services, and will usually specify, in the contract, the actual fare — or in some cases the maximum fare — that can be charged.

3.3.1 Concessionary Fare Schemes

Where Council wishes to offer fare subsidies to certain groups, one option is to operate a concessionary fare scheme (CFS).

“Concessionary fares are any fares that are less than fares paid by non-eligible groups” (Manual of Competitive Pricing Procedures, Volume 2: Public Passenger Transport, July 2002, Land Transport New Zealand, page 4-2). “The basis for concession fares is an equity consideration in the sense that prices should reflect the ability to pay” (Fare Concessions, March 2001, page 8, prepared by Booz Allen & Hamilton for Environment Bay of Plenty).

If Environment Bay of Plenty considers the fare levels on a commercial service are too high and therefore limits the mobility of transport disadvantaged people who might otherwise use that service, the Council can:

- ask the operator to lower the fare for certain target groups; and
- reimburse the operator the difference between the full fare and the concession fare.

The advantages of a CFS over a contracted service is that:

- the subsidy is directly targeted at those it is intended to help;
- it can be implemented on an existing service;
- it can be made available to more than one operator;
- it doesn't require the administrative costs involved in tendering; and
- it can be ongoing, unlike a fixed term contract.

Before implementing a CFS Environment Bay of Plenty needs to be sure that contracting the service is not a cheaper option.

Environment Bay of Plenty considers the fare levels on the commercial services in Tauranga are limiting the mobility of transport disadvantaged people who might otherwise use the services. To address this issue, Council proposes implementing a CFS in Tauranga.

The grounds on which Council determined that the groups were eligible for concession fares were:

- children – providing concessions for this group recognises that children can not legally drive and are therefore dependant on public transport to a greater extent than adults. Children under five universally travel free of charge.
- secondary school students - providing concessions for this group recognises that its members are not working fulltime and therefore do not generally have an income independent of their parents. It also recognises the national and regional benefits from education and a desire to encourage participation in this by making travel to education more affordable.
- tertiary students - providing concessions for this group recognises that the income of its members is generally likely to be lower than the average adult income.

- people with disabilities - providing concessions for this group attempts to foster equality of opportunity between all in the community.
- elderly people - providing concessions for this group recognises that the income of its members is generally likely to be lower than the average adult income and they have a greater dependence on public transport.
- beneficiaries - providing concessions for this group recognises that the income of its members is generally likely to be lower than the average adult income.

The grounds on which Council determined that the concession level for all eligible groups, except children under five years of age, would be 40% were:

- There was no easy way of assessing the worth of different levels of fare concession to different levels of need or disadvantage.
- The approach generally taken nationally, is that the child concession sets the maximum concession level.
- In Tauranga, a concession of 35% to 40% is currently provided for children under 15 years and for school students in uniform or with a school ID.

After considering such factors as the ability to pay, user comprehension, operational simplicity and revenue implications, it therefore seemed sensible to set the concession at 40%.

Policy 14

Environment Bay of Plenty will implement the following CFS in Tauranga:

- 40% concession on the standard adult fare for children five to 15 years of age, secondary school students between 16 and 19 years of age, tertiary students, people with disabilities, elderly people and beneficiaries;
- concessions for all eligible groups will be available at all times;
- eligible groups will have to meet additional criteria (yet to be developed) to access the concession (such as the need for secondary students to be in school uniform or have school ID); and
- commercial services will be reimbursed the full amount between the standard adult fare and the concession fare, with a cap placed on the amount of subsidy available to operators for concession fares in a financial year.

In order to implement a CFS, both Council and an operator must enter into a CFS agreement. The agreement will outline the responsibilities of each party.

Participation in the CFS will be conditional upon the operator agreeing to the terms and conditions of the agreement.

Policy 15

In order to participate in a CFS, operators must enter in to an agreement with Environment Bay of Plenty that requires them to:

- use vehicles that comply with a minimum standard set by the Council;
- charge fares no higher than those specified by the Council;
- provide monthly key factor reports;
- support CFS claims for reimbursement with auditable data; and
- fit and use electronic ticketing machines in all vehicles participating in the CFS.

The agreement will be reviewed annually and may be terminated by Environment Bay of Plenty if the operator fails to comply with the terms and conditions of that agreement.

While there is a clear need for a CFS in Tauranga, Council is uncertain if a similar need exists in other parts of the region. Environment Bay of Plenty does recognise however, that there may be other parts of the region where people who are transport disadvantaged would benefit from a CFS. Council will monitor such needs and respond as the demand arises.

Policy 16

Environment Bay of Plenty will monitor the need to establish CFS in other parts of the region.

3.3.2 Contracted Services

Environment Bay of Plenty will specify in its tender documents the adult fare (or maximum fare) to be charged for any contracted service. Fares need to be set at a level that balances the needs of the fare paying passenger with those of the subsidy paying ratepayer. However that fare level will also be influenced by other local considerations, including the fares charged on any associated or similar commercial services.

Policy 17

When setting adult fares for services contracted by Environment Bay of Plenty, Council will generally adopt fare levels that:

- are lower than comparable car travel costs;
- encourage use of the service;
- cover a significant proportion of operating costs; and
- are comparable with other similar services.

Council is proposing to implement a CFS in Tauranga (section 13.1). To do so, Council has established a rationale for why some groups will be eligible for cheaper fares and what level the concession will be. The same rationale applies to concessions for public passenger transport services contracted by Environment Bay of Plenty.

Policy 18

Where Environment Bay of Plenty elects to specify mandatory fare concessions for public passenger transport services in its tender documents, instead of implementing a CFS, the following mandatory concessions will apply:

- children under five years of age travel for free;
- 40% concession on the standard adult fare for children five to 15 years of age, secondary school students between 16 and 19 years of age, tertiary students, people with disabilities, elderly people and beneficiaries;
- concessions for all eligible groups will be available at all times; and
- eligible groups will have to meet additional criteria (yet to be developed) to access the concession (such as the need for secondary students to be in school uniform or have school ID).

While Council can justify that only specific groups will be eligible for fare concessions, it is possible that a public passenger transport contractor may wish to take a commercial risk and introduce fare concessions to other groups.

Enabling operators to offer incentives to users to travel on contracted services by way of additional concessions has benefits to both the operator and the travelling public. By offering additional concessions (such as a monthly pass) an operator is hoping to encourage more people to use their service, thereby increasing their fare revenue. Passengers also benefit, as cheaper fares mean they pay less to travel.

Policy 19

Operators of services contracted to Environment Bay of Plenty are free to offer additional concessions, provided any new concession does not exceed the per trip fares or maximum fares determined by the Council and is provided at the contractor's own cost.

The mechanics of introducing any additional concessions will be a matter of negotiation between Environment Bay of Plenty and the contractor and subject to the conditions of contract between the two.

Chapter 4: Registration, Tendering and Contracting

This part of the Plan addresses Environment Bay of Plenty's obligations regarding registration of transport services, and its policies on tendering and contracting of required services.

4.1 Registration of Passenger Transport Services

The Transport Services Licensing Act 1989 requires all operators of passenger transport services in the Bay of Plenty region to register those services with Environment Bay of Plenty. The only exemptions to this are:

- services that do not pick up or set down passengers in the region
- services that are not available to the public generally
- any charter of a large passenger service vehicle.

Any variation or abandonment of a service must also be notified.

Registration forms are available from Environment Bay of Plenty.

The register of services operating in the Bay of Plenty region is available for inspection at Environment Bay of Plenty offices in Whakatane.

4.1.1 Declining to Register a Service

Environment Bay of Plenty may decline to register a service (and therefore refuse to allow it to operate) where the service:

- is likely to have a material adverse effect on the financial viability of any contracted service; or
- is likely to increase the net cost to Environment Bay of Plenty of any contracted service; or
- is contrary to sound traffic management or any other environmental factor identified by Environment Bay of Plenty as being of importance to its region.

An example might be where an operator proposes to provide a service in competition with part of a contracted service. Often one part or route of a contracted service may be profitable, but the entire network of services is not. Allowing the proposed service to operate might put the incumbent operator, particularly if it is on a fixed price contract, into a loss situation and jeopardise the viability of the whole network.

Allowing a new registration may increase the cost of a gross price contract to Environment Bay of Plenty for little or no benefit.

Before making a decision to register a service, Council will establish the likely effects on any contracted service if it was to register that service.

All applications to register new scheduled services in urban areas will be referred to the relevant local authority for consideration of traffic management issues. Examples of issues considered under the heading of traffic management include width of streets, appropriateness of buses in particular streets, and congestion issues.

Policy 20

Environment Bay of Plenty will be guided by the territorial local authority in deciding whether or not to decline a service on traffic management grounds.

Environment Bay of Plenty has not identified any environmental grounds on which to decline to register a service. However the Council will seek the advice of relevant local authorities on these factors if it considers it necessary and may refuse to register a service if it considers it appropriate.

4.1.2 Taxi Service Operating Hours

The Transport Services Licensing Act 1989 requires that all taxi organisations ensure that a service is available 24 hours a day and 7 days a week unless an exemption is granted by Environment Bay of Plenty. Environment Bay of Plenty is able to grant an exemption if in the opinion of Environment Bay of Plenty public demand does not require such a level of service.

In situations where a service already exists, Environment Bay of Plenty will require any new service to provide at least the same level of service as the existing service.

Council will not grant exemptions for the Tauranga, Rotorua and Whakatane urban area because it is of the opinion that public demand requires that a continuous taxi service be provided. Council does recognise however, that in smaller urban areas, public demand does not require a 24 hours a day, seven days a week taxi service and it will consider granting exemptions in these areas.

Where a town has only one operator and that operator wishes to reduce the hours that the service is available, Council will weigh-up the costs to the community of a reduced service versus the costs to the operator of having to provide a service that is used only infrequently.

Policy 21

Environment Bay of Plenty will require all taxi operators in the Tauranga, Rotorua and Whakatane urban areas to provide a service which is available 24 hours per day 7 days per week.

Environment Bay of Plenty will consider applications from taxi organisations in other urban centres of the region, for exemptions from the continuous service requirement, on their merits.

Environment Bay of Plenty will treat all taxi operators providing a service, or seeking to provide a service in each urban area, in the same manner.

4.2 Tendering and Contracting

The Transit New Zealand Act 1989 requires all payments for passenger transport services must be made in accordance with approved Competitive Pricing Procedures (CPPs). The CPPs used by Environment Bay of Plenty have been established by Land Transport New Zealand. Although Land Transport New Zealand is required to approve CPPs within the terms of the Act, it does not have the sole right to formulate CPPs. Any tendering authority may develop appropriate CPPs and submit them to Land Transport New Zealand for approval.

The CPPs require any payment to any operator be determined through a competitive tender process, and specify a framework within which this tender process must be carried out. The only exception allowed from the requirement to tender is in the area of concession fare payments, although the CPPs also specify the framework within which concession fare payments can be made.

Within these parameters Environment Bay of Plenty has some options regarding tender and contract provisions. These are discussed below.

4.2.1 Contract Length

The length of any contract that Environment Bay of Plenty tenders plays an important part in the price of that contract. Longer contracts are generally more attractive to tenderers and allow a greater period over which to spread capital costs.

Policy 22

Apart from trial services, where contracts will generally be for a period of up to two years, Environment Bay of Plenty will favour long term contracts.

4.2.2 Contract Type

Within the tendering process there are two types of contracts that can be used, gross or net contracts.

A gross cost contract is where the operator takes no risk for revenue, tendering a price based on the costs of providing that service. The tendering authority retains the revenue from the service and therefore carries the risk.

A net cost contract is where the operator takes the risk for revenue, tendering a price based on the difference between cost of providing the service and the operator's estimate of fare revenue. The Rotorua contract is a net contract.

Net contracts offer the operator an incentive to increase revenue through better performance. The fixed commitment of a net contract also provides simplicity of budgeting for Environment Bay of Plenty.

However gross contracts may be more appropriate when tendering for new services as the anticipated revenue may be difficult to assess in that situation.

Policy 23

Environment Bay of Plenty generally favours the use of net contracts, although gross contracts may be considered for new services.

4.2.3 Contract Size

Within the limitations laid down in Land Transport New Zealand's CPPs, Environment Bay of Plenty has the ability to vary the size of contracts. For example, it could contract on a route by route basis, or it could contract on an area wide basis. Small contracts allow small operators the chance to tender, but can also result in different operators on each route with consequential ticketing and other problems.

Policy 24

Environment Bay of Plenty favours area wide contracting.

4.2.4 Tender Evaluation

The tender evaluation process is strictly controlled by Land Transport New Zealand's Competitive Pricing Procedures. In evaluating tenders Environment Bay of Plenty will consider factors other than just price in determining the best tender. It will also consider the relevant experience and track record of the tenderer as well as the quality of the service proposed.

4.2.5 Optional Evaluation Factors

Environment Bay of Plenty is able to include optional features in its tenders and state what weighting will be given to these features. The option of including these in a tender bid then lies with the tenderer.

However if Environment Bay of Plenty wishes to include any optional features it must establish what weighting will be associated with each feature. This can be a difficult task.

Therefore, unless there are very good reasons for doing so, Environment Bay of Plenty will not generally include optional features in its tender documents.

4.2.6 Vehicle specifications

The quality of vehicles plays an important part in the success of a passenger transport service. Vehicles should be attractive to users. Issues such as ease of access - particularly for the elderly and people with disabilities—exterior appearance, interior layout and condition, seating comfort and storage space should be addressed.

In the mid-1990's the Bus and Coach Association of New Zealand has prepared guidelines on vehicle quality standards for urban bus services. These are now somewhat dated. Environment Bay of Plenty will prepare new standards based on those used in regions adjacent to the Bay of Plenty. This will mean the approach between the regions will be similar and operators contracting for services outside the region will not have to meet too dissimilar standards to tender for Bay of Plenty services.

Environment Bay of Plenty will also consult with organisations representing people with disabilities when considering the type of vehicle to specify in any tender documents.

Policy 25

Environment Bay of Plenty will prepare new vehicle quality standards for urban passenger transport services based on the standards used in regions adjacent to the Bay of Plenty. Environment Bay of Plenty will consult with both disability support organisations and the Bus & Coach Association when preparing those standards.

4.2.7 Electronic Ticketing

Environment Bay of Plenty will make the use of electronic ticketing machines on all contracted services mandatory. This will enable the introduction of transfer tickets and other ticketing enhancements. It will also provide useful information to Environment Bay of Plenty and the operator on passenger use of the services.

Environment Bay of Plenty notes that the Bus & Coach Association is currently working with the wider industry and other regional councils to implement a nationwide smart card payment system and it will take this into consideration when setting its electronic ticketing policy.

Policy 26

Tender documents for public passenger transport services released by Environment Bay of Plenty will specify electronic ticketing machines as mandatory features.

Tender documents released by Environment Bay of Plenty for public passenger transport trial services, may specify electronic ticketing machines as mandatory features.

4.2.8 Transfer of Powers, Functions and Duties

The Transport Services Licensing Act 1989 permits a regional council to transfer any of its passenger transport powers functions and duties under the Act, to a territorial authority. The transfer must be in accordance with section 17 of the Local Government Act 2002.

Environment Bay of Plenty will consider such a transfer where a service operates entirely within the boundaries of the constituent authority, the constituent authority has no direct or indirect interest in any passenger service, and all affected authorities agree to such a transfer taking place.

Policy 27

Environment Bay of Plenty will transfer its powers, functions and duties, with respect to contracted passenger transport services, to a constituent authority where:

- the local authority has requested that a transfer take place;
- Environment Bay of Plenty considers that it is in the best interests of all involved that a transfer takes place;
- the rights and responsibilities of each party to the transfer are set out in an agreement recording the transfer; and
- the provisions of legislation governing the transfer are met.

Any delegation to tender and contract a bus service should include the following:

- determining the level of service required, including routes, timetable, vehicle requirements and fares;
- preparing and distributing the tender documents;
- holding pre-tender meetings;
- receiving tenders and awarding the contract;
- requesting funding assistance from Land Transport New Zealand;
- raising the local share of funding;
- providing and maintaining infrastructure;
- producing timetables and providing information;
- promotion and advertising;
- making contract payments; and
- monitoring performance.

Where a transfer of powers, function and duties has taken place, the territorial authority will be required to comply with the provisions of the Regional Passenger Transport Plan.

Chapter 5: Infrastructure, Information and Monitoring

This part of the plan addresses issues to consider once a passenger transport service is in place, such as providing bus stops and shelters, timetable information, and ensuring the services continue to meet the ongoing and changing needs of the passengers.

5.1 Passenger Transport Infrastructure

An important aspect of any transport service is the infrastructure associated with the service. This term covers the “non-bus” component of passenger transport, such as taxi stands, bus-stops, signs, shelters and terminals.

Legislation prevents regional councils owning or having a financial interest in any passenger transport infrastructure. Such facilities come under the jurisdiction of the road controlling authority. However Environment Bay of Plenty can access financial assistance from Land Transport New Zealand for the construction of infrastructure such as bus shelters and signs.

Consultation between the district council, the operators and Environment Bay of Plenty is required to determine the infrastructure needed, and ensure that it is appropriate in terms of location and public demand.

5.1.1 Stands, Stops, Signs, Seats and Shelters

The siting and installation of taxi stands, bus-stops, shelters, seats and associated signs is the responsibility of the relevant district council. The district council should determine their location after discussion with service operators.

Bus stops should be as conspicuous as possible, and the street should be marked to ensure the vehicle has access to the kerb.

Where funding permits, Environment Bay of Plenty will encourage district councils to install seats and shelters at busy bus-stops or stops with a high proportion of less mobile people using them, on services specified in the Plan. This will be done in consultation with the district council and operator of the service.

5.2 Passenger Transport Information

In general it will be an operator's responsibility to provide timetables and other information about their services. This is particularly so for operators of commercial services.

However for contracted services Environment Bay of Plenty will work with the operators to ensure comprehensive timetable and route information is available to the travelling public. Environment Bay of Plenty will also endeavour to ensure that timetable information is made available at bus stops and shelters.

All vehicles will be required to display clear destination signs, and route numbers where appropriate.

5.3 Monitoring

Monitoring of the public passenger transport services funded by Environment Bay of Plenty is necessary to ensure that they meet the needs of the passengers, and to provide performance information. It is also desirable, although more difficult, to survey the needs of non-passengers to determine their needs.

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Environment Bay of Plenty will regularly monitor the public passenger transport services it funds to ensure that they meet the needs of passengers, and to obtain performance information.

This monitoring could take many forms. It may range from a simple examination of passenger figures supplied by operators, to conducting interviews with passengers. It will include seeking the views of territorial authorities and community organisations.

Appendix 1 – Schedule of Specified Services

1 Rotorua Urban Bus Services

1.1 Bus Routes

Route Number	Route Name	Description of Bus Service
(Route 1)	Ngongotaha	A service between the Rotorua CBD and the suburbs of Fairy Springs, Selwyn Heights, Ngongotaha and Waimehia.
(Route 2)	Polytech	A service between the Rotorua CBD and the suburbs of Glenholme Fenton Park, Whakarewarewa, and Tihi-o-Tonga.
(Route 3)	Owhata	A service between the Rotorua CBD and the suburbs of Lynmore, Ngapuna and Owhata.
(Route 4)	Sunnybrook	A service between the Rotorua CBD and the suburbs of Utuhina, Fordlands and Sunnybrook.
(Route 5)	Western Heights	A service between the Rotorua CBD and the suburbs of Ohinemutu, Fairy Springs, Selwyn Heights, Western Heights and Pleasant Heights.
(Route 6)	Koutu	A service between the Rotorua CBD and the suburbs of Ohinemutu, Koutu and Kawaha Point.
(Route 7)	Mitchell Downs	A service between the Rotorua CBD and the suburbs of Fairy Springs, Mangakakahi, Pleasant Heights and Pukehangi.
(Route 8)	Westbrook	A service between the Rotorua CBD and the suburbs of Hillcrest and Pomare.
(Route 9)	Springfield	A service between the Rotorua CBD and the suburbs of Hillcrest and Springfield.
(Route 10)	Rotorua Airport	A service between the Rotorua CBD and the suburbs of Ngapuna, Holdens Bay and Hannahs Bay.

1.2 Service Levels

Parsons Brinckerhoff consultants have recommended the following ideal service levels for Rotorua (reports published in January and May 2003). Environment Bay of Plenty recognises that these service levels may never be achieved.

1.2.1 Hours of Operation

- Monday to Thursday (6.30 am – 10.00 pm)
- Friday (6.30 am – 12.00 pm)
- Saturday (6.30 am – 12.00 pm)
- Sunday (7.00 am – 7.00 pm)

- Public Holidays - There is a need to include public holidays as part of Rotorua's urban passenger transport services.

1.2.2 Service Frequencies

Initially a bus every 30 minutes on all routes and greater service frequencies as required.

1.2.3 Free Bus Transfers

The continuation of 'free' transfers on Rotorua's urban passenger transport services encourages greater passenger transport use.

2 Tauranga Urban Bus Services

2.1 Bus Routes

Bus Route Number	Bus Route Name	Bus Route Description (General)
(Routes 1 & 2)	Mount/Bayfair (alternating routes)	A service between the Tauranga CBD and the suburbs of Mount Maunganui, Omanu and Arataki (including the Bayfair Shopping Centre). Routes 1 & 2 also serve some industrial premises.
(Route 3)	Belvedere/Brookfield	A service between the Tauranga CBD and the suburbs of Otumoetai, Bellevue, Brookfield (including the Brookfield Shopping Centre), Cambridge Heights, Sterling Gate and Belvedere.
(Routes 4 & 5)	Brookfield/Matua	A service between the Tauranga CBD and the suburbs of Otumoetai, Cherrywood, Brookfield, Bellevue and Matua.
(Route 6)	Papamoa/Maungatapu	A service between the Tauranga CBD and the suburbs of Tauranga South, Maungatapu, Te Maunga, Bayfair (including the Bayfair shopping centre), Papamoa (including Palm Beach Plaza shopping centre) and Papamoa Beach.
(Route 7)	Greerton/Merivale	A service between the Tauranga CBD and the suburbs of the Avenues (including the Tauranga Hospital), Te Reti, Gate Pa, Greerton and Parkvale.
(Route 8)	Windermere / Ohauti	A service between the Tauranga CBD and the suburbs of Tauranga South, Parkvale, Greerton, Poike, Hairini and Ohauti.
(Route 9)	Welcome Bay	A service between the Tauranga CBD and the suburbs of Tauranga South, Hairini and Welcome Bay.
(Route 10)	Bethlehem/Brookfield	A service between the Tauranga CBD and the suburbs of Tauranga South, Judea, Brookfield (including the Brookfield shops), Parklands and Bethlehem.
(Route 11)	Pyes Pa via Sunvale	A service between the Tauranga CBD and the suburbs of the Avenues (including the Tauranga Hospital), Gate Pa, Greerton and Pyes Pa.

2.2 Service Levels

Booz Allen Hamilton consultants have recommended the following ideal service levels for Tauranga (reports published in February and July 2000 and November 2002). Environment Bay of Plenty recognises that these service levels may never be achieved.

2.2.1 Hours of Operation

- Monday to Thursday (7.00 am – 6.00 pm)
- Friday (7.00 am – 6.00 pm) extending to 9.30 pm
- Saturday (7.00 am – 6.00 pm)
- Sunday (7.00 am – 4.00 pm)
- Public Holidays - There is a need to include public holidays as part of Tauranga urban bus services.

2.2.2 Service Frequencies

- Am peak (7.00 am – 9.00 am) – 10 minutes
- Inter peak (9.00 am – 4.00 pm) – 15 minutes
- Pm peak (4.00 pm – 6.00 pm) – 10 minutes
- Friday (6.00 pm – 9.30 pm) – 20 minutes
- Saturday & Sunday – 20 minutes

2.2.3 Free Bus Transfers

The continuation of 'free' transfers on Tauranga urban bus services encourages greater passenger transport use.

3 Ohope –Whakatane (Urban) Bus Service

3.1 Bus Routes

Route Name	Description of Bus Service
Ohope–Whakatane	A service between Ohope (via Whakatane Hospital, New World supermarket, Quay St Whakatane) and Boon St, Whakatane.

3.2 Service Levels

Environment Bay of Plenty proposes the continuation of the following service levels for the Ohope –Whakatane urban bus service.

3.2.1 Hours of Operation

- Monday to Friday (7.00 am –7.00 pm)
- Saturday (8.00 am –5.00 pm)
- Public Holidays - There is a need to include public holidays to allow continuity of service on the Ohope –Whakatane service.

3.2.2 Service Frequencies

- Monday to Friday - minimum, 6 trips per day.
- Saturday – minimum, 4 trips per day.

4 Inter-Regional Services

Nil.

5 Intra-Regional Services

Route	Description of Bus Service
Opotiki–Whakatane plus Tauranga Link	A service between Opotiki (via Waimana, Taneatua, Whakatane Hospital, New World supermarket, Quay St Whakatane, Boon St Whakatane, Matata, Te Puke, Palm Bch Plaza, Bayfair Shopping Centre and Wharf St, Tauranga) and Tauranga Hospital.
Whakatane–Tauranga	A service between Whakatane (via Matata, Te Puke, Palm Bch Plaza, Bayfair Shopping Centre and Wharf St Tauranga) and Tauranga Hospital.
Kawerau–Whakatane plus Tauranga Link	A service between Kawerau (via Te Teko, Edgecumbe, Awakeri, Whakatane Hospital, New World supermarket, Quay St Whakatane, Boon St Whakatane, Matata, Te Puke, Palm Bch Plaza, Bayfair Shopping Centre and Wharf Street and Tauranga) and Tauranga Hospital.
Rotorua–Tauranga	A service between Rotorua (via Rotorua Airport, Te Ngae, Okere Falls, Paengaroa, Te Puke, Bayfair Shopping Centre and Mt Info Centre) and Wharf St, Tauranga.
Murupara - Rotorua	A service between Murupara and Rotorua, via Kaingaroa.
Matata–Whakatane	A service between Matata (via Edgecumbe, Awakeri, Whakatane Hospital, New World supermarket and Quay St Whakatane) and Boon St, Whakatane.
Rotorua–Tauranga	A service between Rotorua (via Okere Falls, Paengaroa, Te Puke, Bayfair Shopping Centre, Mt Info Centre) and Wharf St, Tauranga.
Katikati–Tauranga	A service between Katikati (via Omokoroa, Te Puna, Bethlehem and Wharf St, Tauranga) and Tauranga Hospital.
Ohope–Whakatane	A service between Ohope (via Whakatane Hospital, New World supermarket, Quay St Whakatane) and Boon St, Whakatane.
Ruatoki/Taneatua–Whakatane	A service between Ruatoki/Taneatua (via Whakatane Hospital, New World supermarket) and Whakatane.
Waihi Beach–Waihi/Katikati	A service between Waihi Beach and Waihi/Katikati.
Maketu–Te Puke	A service between Maketu and Te Puke.

6 **Taxi Services**

The taxi services that Environment Bay of Plenty (as Regional Council) proposes be provided in the region include:

- Katikati
- Kawerau
- Opotiki
- Rotorua (a continuous service is required. No exemptions will be granted)
- Tauranga/Mt Maunganui (a continuous service is required. No exemptions will be granted)
- Te Puke
- Whakatane (a continuous service is required. No exemptions will be granted)

7 **Ferry Services**

The ferry services that Environment Bay of Plenty (as Regional Council) proposes be provided in the region include:

- A scheduled service between Matakana Island and Omokoroa.
- A scheduled service between Tauranga and Mt Maunganui.

8 **Total Mobility Services**

8.1 **Service Levels:**

- Region-wide.

8.2 **Fares:**

- 50% Total Mobility fare discount.
- Maximum Total Mobility fare of \$20.00 (total fare of \$40.00).