

03.

Feedback from consultation

This section summarises the feedback received through submissions on the Draft 2021-2031 Regional Land Transport Plan.

Public consultation on the Draft 2021-2031 RLTP ran from 29 March to 2 May 2021. We presented at five hui (attended by 12 Iwi), held 21 local board workshops, 11 public drop-in sessions, two webinars, a workshop with advisory panels and a partner and stakeholder event.

The consultation was promoted in a number of ways, including:

- Distributing printed fliers to nearly 530,000 properties and post office boxes around the region
- Digital advertising which reached 744,000 unique devices in the Auckland region
- Newspaper advertising in the NZ Herald, 18 community newspapers around the region, AUT and Auckland University publications as well as the Chinese Herald, Kakalu O Tonga, Mandarin Pages and the Indian Weekender
- Advertising on digital screens across Auckland's transport network – located at exits and entrances at rail, bus and ferry terminals
- Posters on trains, buses and ferries which had the potential to reach 280,000 commuters each day
- A Facebook advertising campaign which reached 82,389 people in Auckland
- Translating consultation materials into Te Reo Māori, Tongan, Samoan, Simplified Chinese, Korean and NZ Sign Language.

We sought specific feedback on:

1. Whether we correctly identified the most important transport challenges facing Auckland
2. Funding allocation
3. Projects to add and/or remove from the RLTP
4. Policy changes.

Feedback received

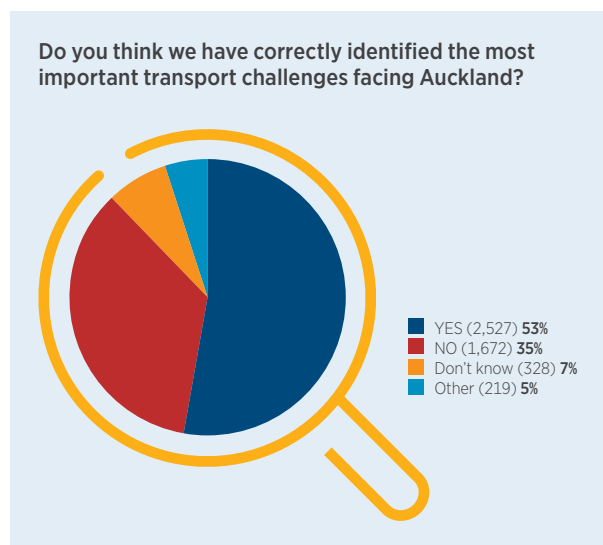
We received 5,818 submissions, including 110 from partners and stakeholders. This included submissions from all 21 democratically elected local boards who together represent 100 percent of Auckland's population.

Submitters responded to a mix of tick-box and open-ended questions in the consultation feedback form, and we received submissions via email and in person.

The feedback received was carefully considered. Every submission was read, analysed and collated into a public feedback report which is available at <https://at.govt.nz/rltp>.

The following is a high-level overview of the responses we received.

1. Have we correctly identified the most important transport challenges facing Auckland?



We asked people if they felt we had correctly identified the most important transport challenges facing Auckland, which were:

- Climate change and the environment
- Travel choices
- Safety
- Better public transport connections and roading
- Auckland's growth
- Managing transport assets.

Fifty three percent of submitters agreed we have correctly identified the most important transport challenges facing Auckland.

Of those that did not select 'yes', many took the opportunity to:

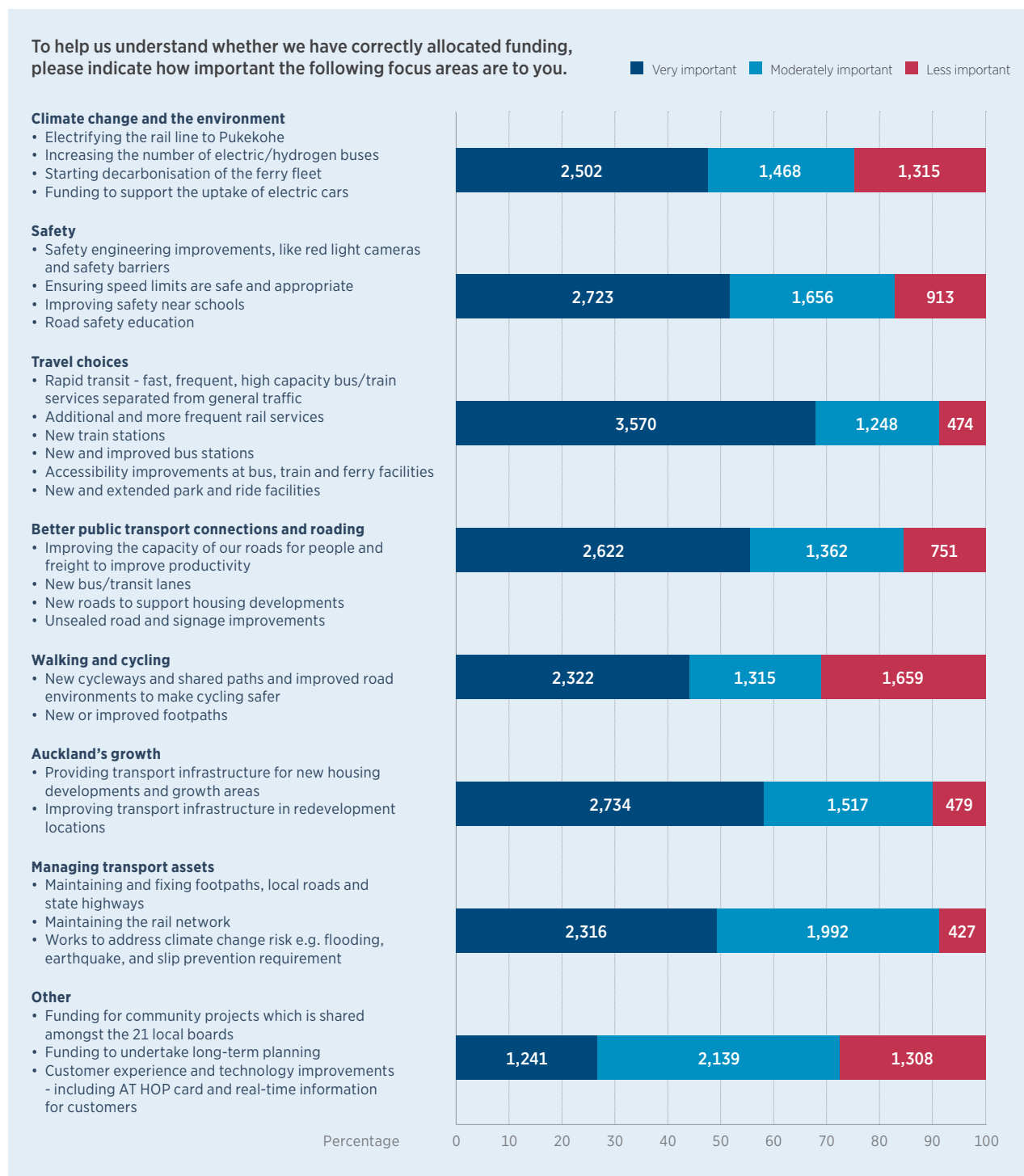
- emphasise the importance of one of the challenges already raised,
- identify challenges they didn't support, or
- give a specific example of a project or activity they felt was important.

The most popular themes in the responses to this question are captured on page 16.

Feedback from consultation cont.

2. Funding allocation

We sought feedback on the level of support for specific areas of focus that inform the prioritisation of funding. Between 68 percent and 91 percent of submitters said they were very or moderately important areas to allocate funding towards.



Top themes – sentiment on challenges/focus areas

Feedback theme

No. of mentions



Heavy rail is important and/or should be the priority

1,673



Bus network is important and/or should be the priority

1,639



Ferry transport is important and/or should be the priority

1,530



Bus rapid transit is important and/or should be the priority

1,405



Cycling is important and/or should be the priority

1,337



Roads are not important and/or do not invest in roads

1,193



Walking is important and/or should be the priority

1,123



Climate change is important and/or should be the priority

1,119



Safety is important and/or should be the priority

1,007



Roads are important and/or should be the priority

889

Other viewpoints

We received 110 submissions from partners and stakeholders, who, in some cases, represented large groups of people, businesses and industry sectors. Their submissions covered a range of matters, many of which are not reflected in the condensed commentary above.

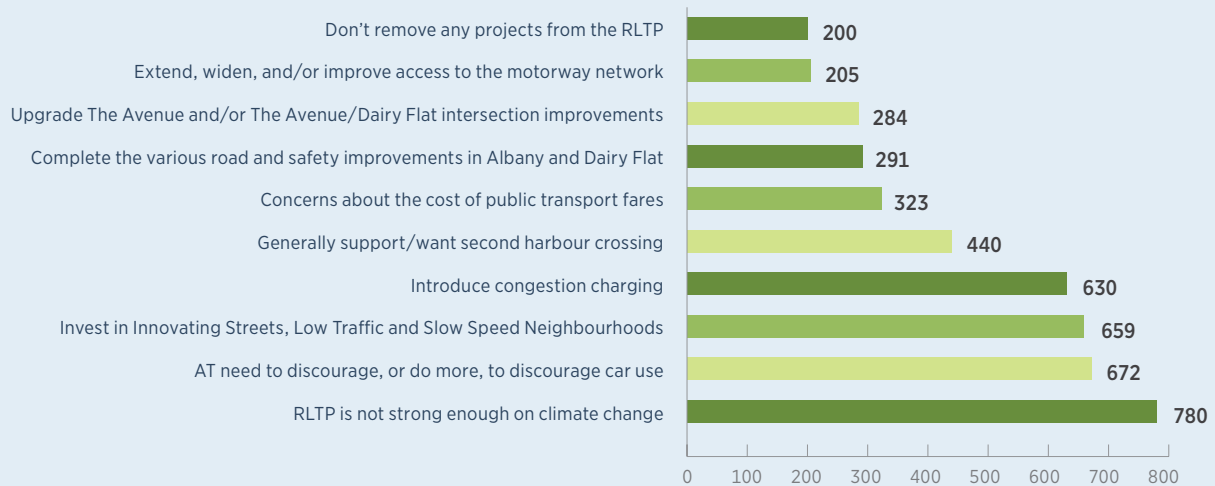
Some submitters, particularly those that represent road users, noted their concerns at the levels of congestion in Auckland and the concern that this could worsen. This impacts negatively on access and connectivity for road users, including freight. They felt the RLTP should have a greater focus on easing congestion for people and freight which make up the majority of users of the network.

All partner and stakeholder submissions are available in full in the public feedback report on our website.

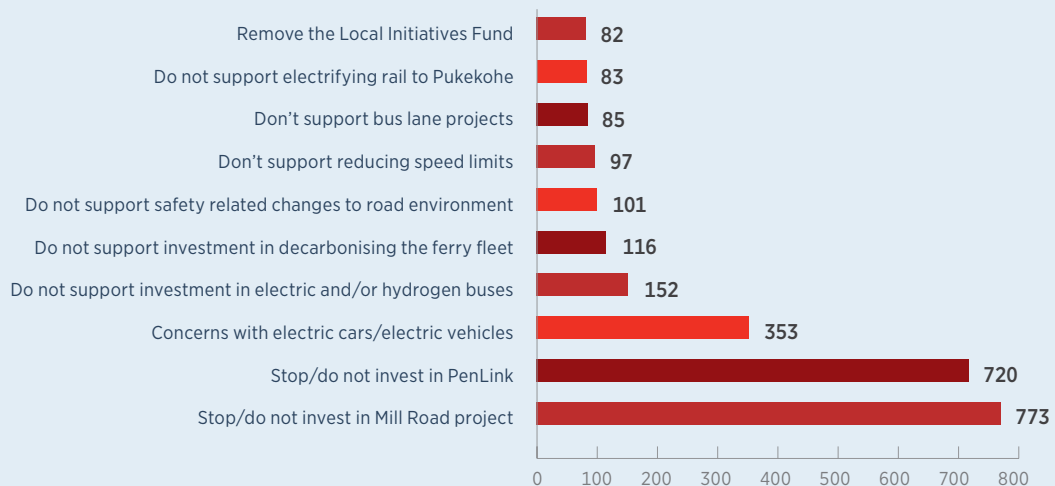
3. Projects to add / remove from the RLTP

We asked people to consider all of the projects included in the draft RLTP and let us know if there are any other projects they felt should be included. And if so, which project(s) would they remove in order to add any new projects.

Top 10 themes – Which projects should be ADDED to the RLTP?



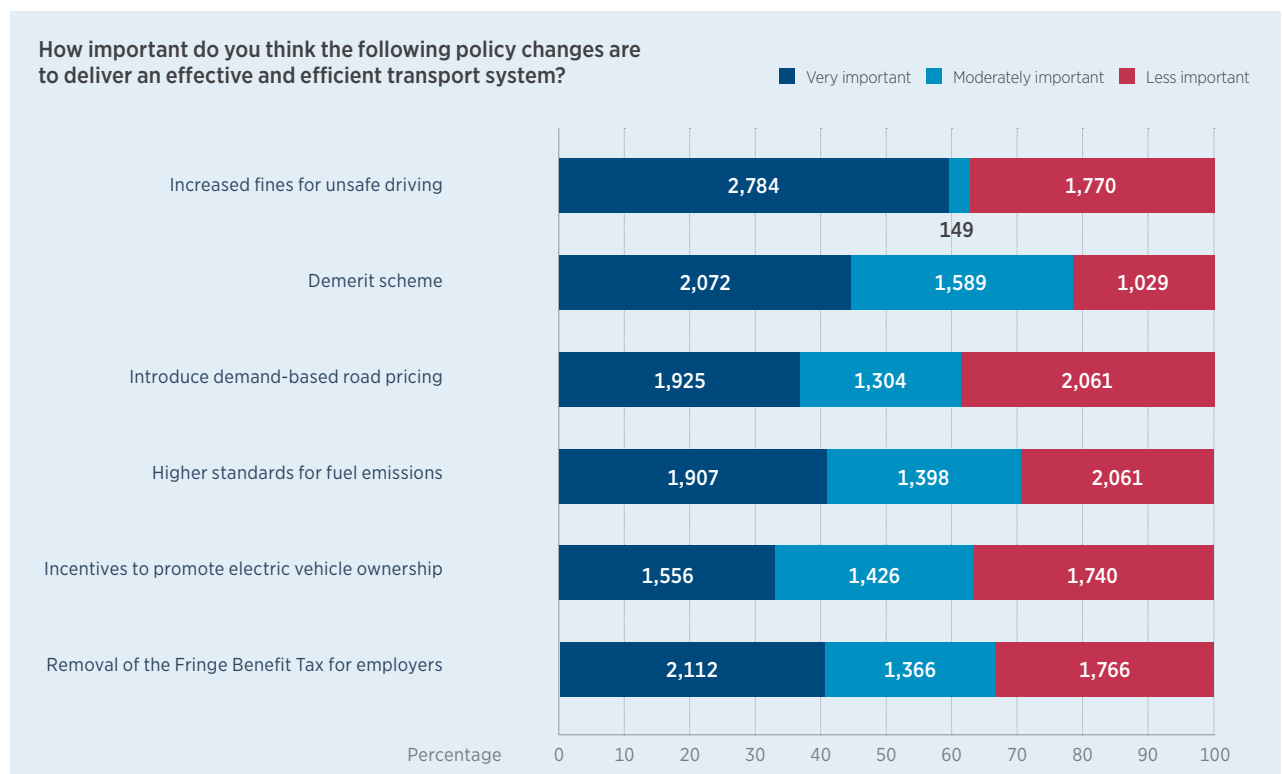
Top 10 themes – Which projects should be REMOVED from the RLTP?



4. Policy change

Delivering a transport system that works effectively and efficiently relies on transport policy and regulations. In order to further improve the safety of our roads, reduce congestion and tackle climate change, policy changes will be required. Some changes can be implemented by AT but the most significant ones would need to be led by central government. This would require strong advocacy to central government to progress.

Between 61 percent and 78 percent of submitters felt the policy changes put forward were very or moderately important to deliver an effective and efficient transport system.



Key themes from Māori

AT presented at five hui attended by 12 iwi. The feedback provided at the hui covered a range of issues, including:

- Safety, particularly around schools but also rural roads
- The uptake of electric vehicles, including leadership by Auckland Council and AT in converting to hybrid/electric vehicles,
- The environment, including impacts of transport on freshwater management, and
- The Regional Fuel Tax (RFT).

We received written submissions from Te Ākitai Waiohau, Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei Whaimāia and Te Uri o Hau. A summary of the themes raised through these written submissions follows.

Electric vehicles and higher standards for fuel emissions

There were concerns that policies that reduce the number of higher-emitting vehicles, or that incentivise the uptake of EVs, can disadvantage lower income households including Māori who may be unfairly impacted by these policies or unable to access the benefits from these incentives.

Environment and climate change

There were concerns about the 'low' prioritisation of funding for the environment, sustainability and climate change. Increased population will put further stress on the environment and more resource needs to be dedicated to reducing carbon emissions. It was noted that no chemicals should be used on roading and footpath projects, (especially near waterways), to avoid polluting waterways.

Feedback from Consultation cont.

Travel choice, walking and cycling

There was support for projects which encouraged mode shift and active modes of transport, and for greater investment in the public transport network. Iwi felt more needs to be done to reduce public transport journey times and make it more attractive, reliable, affordable and better integrated.

It was also pointed out that there are limited travel choices for communities in the outer areas of Tāmaki Makaurau, who are often lower income earners.

Equity

Iwi said the RLTP needs to give more consideration to lower income communities who are also adversely affected by RFT.

Clearways and transit lanes

Iwi want greater enforcement to improve bus journey times by reducing the number of vehicles illegally parking in clearways and transit lanes.

Congestion

More needs to be done to reduce the number of single occupancy vehicles clogging our roads. One hapū expressed support for congestion charging on urban arterial routes that are already well-catered for by public transport. Another expressed concerns about implementing congestion charging where it is not preceded by a public transport system that is efficient, safe and priced to meet the needs of lower-income households including Māori and other disadvantaged groups.

Local Board feedback

Auckland Council staff carried out an analysis of the draft RLTP feedback from local boards (which can be viewed in full in the public feedback report on the AT website).

Below is an overview of the main themes which came through in the feedback from the 21 local boards.

Local Board Initiatives Fund (previously Local Board Transport Capital Fund)

All local boards endorse the proposed investment package in the RLTP to reinstate the Local Board Transport Capital Fund to \$20 million, with many noting that this fund has been crucial in achieving smaller scale local improvements, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists.

Climate change and the environment

Local boards broadly supported the key shift from the previous RLTP to respond to climate change and its impacts, but observed that the actions outlined will not reduce emissions enough to achieve the targets outlined in Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri: Auckland's Climate Plan.

Mode shift

Ten boards expressed support for projects and programmes that encouraged Aucklanders to switch to sustainable travel modes and reduce the increase in private vehicle travel associated with population growth.

Four local boards noted that public and active transport is not a choice available for many Aucklanders, particularly for those in greenfield developments, semi-rural and rural areas.

Electric/hydrogen buses

Eight local boards supported a funding acceleration of the Low Emissions Bus Roadmap to ensure at least half of Auckland's bus fleet is low emission by 2031.

Funding to support the uptake of electric cars

Seven local boards supported the inclusion of funding to support the uptake of EVs.

Most boards see the appropriate role for AT as providing and supporting charging infrastructure, and several local boards would like to see this extended to electric bicycles and other micro-mobility modes as well.

Impacts of climate change on the transport system

Eight boards supported investment in projects that mitigate the impact of climate change on the transport system.

Their concerns included sea level rise, extreme weather events (including drought), wave inundation, flood-prone areas and run-off systems, and slips. This is especially so in those rural and island areas where there are no alternative access points. Significant investment will be required to ensure the network remains resilient and adaptable as these changes are magnified.

Green infrastructure

Ten local boards supported increased investment in infrastructure that reduces negative environmental impacts and increases the restoration and regeneration of the environment.

Rapid transit

Twelve local boards supported investment which increases the speed and reliability of bus services by moving more of them into dedicated bus and transit lanes, separated from general traffic

Local boards emphasised the importance of local connections to rapid transit hubs, including for people walking and on bikes.

Active transport

Fourteen local boards supported initiatives that increase the safety of people on bicycles across the wider transport system.

Ten local boards would like to see AT invest more in creating and maintaining safer footpaths and walkways.

Nine local boards supported investment in walking and cycling as core business for AT, and would like to see a greater investment in these areas.

Accessibility improvements

Six local boards supported investment in accessibility improvements at bus, train and ferry facilities.

New park and rides

Eight local boards supported investment in new and extended park and ride facilities.

Ferry services

Nine local boards supported the inclusion of funding to start decarbonising the ferry fleet.

Four boards would like to see an increased focus on the ferry network and associated infrastructure (including feeder buses) to enable coastal communities to engage in off-road transport options.

Public health and safety

Eleven local boards supported continued delivery of the safety programme as set out in the Vision Zero for Tāmaki Makaurau Transport Safety Strategy in 2019, and supported investment in transport that reduces DSI, noting that the RLTP investment aims to reduce DSI by 67 percent over the next 10 years.

Schools

Nine local boards supported investment which improves safety near schools.

Speed limits and traffic calming measures

Ten local boards supported measures that addressed speed limits and other traffic calming measures.

Access and connectivity

Local boards supported providing transport infrastructure for new housing developments and growth areas so long as this is focused on public transport and connections for active modes.

Managing transport assets

Several local boards noted that low renewal expenditure over the 2018-2021 period (including due to budget impacts from Covid-19) has created a renewal backlog and support increased investment in road renewal, rehabilitation, and maintenance.

Local boards see like-for-like renewals as a risk in terms of affecting transformational shifts to meet the challenges of growth and climate change. They felt the renewal approach should include a review process that tests for mode shift opportunities rather than a default to like-for-like replacement, or that the budget allocated for road renewal and road improvements be combined so that roads can be assessed for improvement or renewal at the time of renewal.

Unsealed roads and chip seal

Five local boards supported investment in unsealed road and signage improvements.

Several local boards requested changes are made to sealing methods, particularly with cycling in mind.

Franklin and Rodney Local Boards advocated for increased renewal, rehabilitation, and maintenance funding to be made available to AT to renew at least 12 percent of Auckland's sealed roads and bridges in any given year (currently below nine percent).

Congestion charging

Five local boards expressed their support for congestion charging.

Process and communication

Several boards have requested that the process and timeframes for local boards to input effectively into the RLTP are improved. They wanted the opportunity for more input into the draft RLTP and to ensure feedback from their local communities.