

Memorandum

8 September 2025

To: Governing Body, Members of Houkura - Independent Māori Statutory Board, All local board members

Subject: Local Government (Auckland Council) (Transport Governance) Amendment Bill

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Purpose

1. To inform elected members and members of Houkura of the introduction of the Local Government (Auckland Council) (Transport Governance) Amendment Bill.

Summary

2. On 5 September, the government introduced the Local Government (Auckland Council) (Transport Governance) Amendment Bill.
3. The Bill proposes:
 - Auckland Council is responsible for all regional transport policies and plans
 - Auckland Council approves the Auckland Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP)
 - To establish a new Auckland Regional Transport Committee (ARTC) with members from Auckland Council Governing Body and Crown appointees and a jointly appointed independent Chair
 - The ARTC is responsible for preparing a 30-year transport plan to be sponsored by the Minister of Transport and the Mayor, for approval by Auckland Council and Cabinet
 - Auckland Council is the Auckland Road Controlling Authority (RCA)
 - Local Boards are allocated specific transport decision-making functions in legislation that will apply to local and collector roads.
 - The primary function of the Transport CCO is to provide public transport services within Auckland, with Auckland Council responsible for all other transport functions.
4. The bill proposes significant change for Auckland Council and Auckland Transport.
5. A workshop will be held with Governing Body members, local board chairs and Houkura on 10 September 2025. There will also be a report on the 25 September Governing Body agenda.

Context

6. The legislation seeks to return decision-making power to elected representatives and enable Aucklanders to directly influence transport policies. The reform is intended to support increased responsiveness to Aucklanders' needs, better value for money, and improved transport outcomes for Auckland. It is also intended to address the need for more integrated long-term transport planning between Auckland Council and the government.
7. An aligned strategic approach to transport in Auckland between the government and Auckland Council is critical to establish clear direction, optimise joint resources and achieve both regional and national transport outcomes.

8. Auckland Council has found it challenging to hold Auckland Transport to account through existing statutory levers. The statutory accountability levers available to Auckland Council have not proved as effective as intended and can prove difficult to enforce. In addition, the statutory nature of Auckland Transport has contributed to a culture of independence.
9. Reform requires legislative change as the powers and functions of Auckland Transport were established in legislation under the Local Government Auckland Council Act 2009 (LGACA).

Previous Council Decisions

10. In August 2023, the Transport and Infrastructure Committee unanimously resolved to support legislative change that, at a high level, provides for:
 - joint decision-making between Auckland Council and the Crown on a long-term integrated transport plan for Auckland, and on the funding and implementation of that plan
 - Auckland Council to have the lead role in preparing and approving the Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP), which sets the direction for transport and the allocation of funding in support of that direction
 - Auckland Council to be able to make other key regulatory decisions about the Auckland transport system, including setting parking fines. In addition;
 - Governing Body requested the Mayor advocate for legislative change giving effect to the above to be a priority for the incoming government.
11. In September 2024, the Cabinet Economic Policy Committee agreed that the Minister of Transport would consult with the Mayor of Auckland on a proposal for transport governance reform in Auckland. [ECO-24-MIN-0217].
12. Since these decisions, staff have been developing the transport reform work programme with work underway to prepare for change and identify opportunities ahead of legislation.
13. A confidential Governing Body workshop was held on 21 May 2025. This workshop provided an update on work to date, implications of the Cabinet Paper and requested guidance on opportunities for change that support transition ahead of legislation being enacted.
14. On 26 June 2025, the Governing Body considered opportunities ahead of transport legislative reform. It agreed to accept the delegation approved by the Auckland Transport Board on 24 June 2025 to transfer some strategy and policy functions from Auckland Transport to council [GB/2025/93].
15. The Policy and Planning Committee approved the preparation of a submission on the reform of Auckland transport governance on 14 August 2025 (PEPCC/2025/112).

Reform Proposal

16. The Bill proposes the following:

Establish an Auckland Regional Transport Committee with a strategic focus

17. Establish an Auckland Regional Transport Committee (ARTC) to hold the strategic planning function, with a focus on a 30-year transport plan and preparing the Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP).
18. The ARTC will be a statutory Government and Auckland Council Committee.
19. The membership of the ARTC will comprise the following:
 - An independent Chair jointly appointed by the Mayor of Auckland, following consultation with the Auckland Council Governing Body, and the Minister of Transport. The Chair will exercise a casting vote
 - Ministerial appointees – up to three voting members
 - Auckland Council Governing Body elected members appointed by the Mayor, following consultation with the Auckland Council Governing Body – up to three voting members
 - A non-voting member from each of the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA), KiwiRail and the Transport CCO

20. The ARTC will be responsible for the following functions:
- Prepare a 30-year transport plan for Auckland
 - Prepare the RLTP, with approval of the RLTP assigned to Council
 - Monitor the delivery of the agreed outcomes of the 30-year Transport Plan
 - Undertake other functions as delegated by Auckland Council
 - Undertake any other functions as set out in regulations made by the Governor General by Order in Council on the recommendation of the Minister of Transport, after consultation with the Mayor of Auckland
21. A Joint Officers Group, co-chaired by the Chief Executives of Auckland Council and the Ministry of Transport, will be established to support the work of the ARTC.

Require a 30-year Transport Plan for Auckland

22. The Auckland 30-year Transport Plan must include:
- Strategic direction for the transport system in Auckland
 - Indicative 10-year and 30-year transport investment priorities to guide development of the National Land Transport Programme, the Auckland RLTP, Auckland Council's Long-term plan, and other national and regional strategies and plans
 - Transport outcomes for Auckland and the measures to be used for monitoring the progress towards the achievement of those outcomes
 - Indicative policy and initiatives, in addition to investment, that are required to achieve transport outcomes
23. The ARTC must undertake public consultation on a draft of the 30-year transport plan in accordance with the principles specified in the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA).
24. The 30-year Transport Plan must be approved by the Minister of Transport and Auckland Council.

Auckland Council approves the Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP)

25. The RLTP is prepared by the ARTC and approved by Auckland Council.

Other Regional Transport Policies and Plans

26. Auckland Council is responsible for regional transport policies and plans except for those undertaken by the ARTC.

Auckland Council is the Auckland Road Controlling Authority

27. Auckland Council will be the Auckland RCA, noting that both the Governing Body and local boards will perform Road Controlling Authority functions.

Changes to Local Board decision making

28. Local Boards will be allocated specific transport decision-making functions in legislation that will apply to local and collector roads.
29. All transport decision making that is not specifically allocated to local boards in the legislation will be decisions of the Governing Body.
30. The specific decisions that will be conferred on local boards are listed in Schedule 4 of the Bill (page 39).

Changes to Auckland Transport

31. The Bill transfers most transport functions from Auckland Transport to Auckland Council.
32. It is proposed to repeal Part 4 of the LGACA that relates to Auckland Transport and re-establish a statutory transport council-controlled organisation (CCO). The primary function of the transport CCO is to provide public transport services within Auckland.

33. The transport CCO will be governed by a board of directors.

Transition arrangements

34. Schedule 1 contains the transitional provisions relating to the Bill. In summary:

- a transition director is to be appointed to lead the work
- the new transport CCO will come into effect at Royal Assent of the Bill (expected early next year) and an interim governing body of the CCO will be installed until the transition period is complete
- members of the new ARTC must be appointed within 3 months of Royal Assent. The functions of the new ARTC will be performed by the Chief Executives of Auckland Council and the Ministry of Transport in the interim period.

Next steps

35. Staff have commenced a full analysis of the bill and are preparing advice for elected members.

36. A workshop will be held on 10 September 2025 with Governing Body members, local board chairs and Houkura members. A report will be prepared for the 25 September Governing Body meeting.

Attachments

Local Government (Auckland Council) (Transport Governance) Amendment Bill

Link to Bill: [Local Government Auckland Council Transport Governance Amendment Bill \(2\).pdf](#)