

# Northern Integrated Transport Plan

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# Introduction

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The first Northern Integrated Transport Plan (NITP) was developed in 2003 by the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources (DIER), in collaboration with Region North (now Northern Tasmania Development) and the eight member councils in the Northern Region.

Changes occurring to regional industry structures and the implementation of a range of new State Government, Council and regional initiatives since then mean that it has been timely to review the plan and look to the future.

The new NITP will focus on the future of the Northern Region and the opportunities and challenges which may exist. The NITP provides a coordinated and strategic framework to recognise and address transport issues within the Northern Region over the next twenty years. The focus is on the highest priority strategies and actions which will benefit the region.

As with the first plan, the NITP has been developed as a joint initiative between the Tasmanian Government (including the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources, Department of Economic Development, Tourism and the Arts, and the Tasmanian Planning Commission), Northern Tasmania Development (NTD) and its eight member councils: Break O'Day, Dorset, Flinders, George Town, Launceston, Meander Valley, Northern Midlands, and West Tamar.

While the NITP sets up a framework to guide decision making and provides some priority actions, it will also be flexible enough to change over time depending on the challenges and issues which face the Northern Region in the future. The NITP will need to be reviewed and updated to ensure it responds and keeps pace with change.

## Links to other projects

Infrastructure is one of the key tools listed in the *Tasmanian Economic Development Plan*. The *Tasmanian Infrastructure Strategy* and the *Northern Regional Economic Development Plan* focus on infrastructure as a lever that government can influence to facilitate economic development. The NITP includes transport infrastructure like ports, roads, and bridges, as well as a focus on land use planning, and inclusion of sustainable transport modes like walking and cycling, and public transport. The NITP links closely to a number of other projects, particularly other transport projects within the Region, the *Greater Launceston Metropolitan Passenger Transport Plan* and the *Launceston Traffic Review*. Launceston City Council is also leading the development of the *Greater Launceston Plan*, which will cover a range of issues including transport. Ongoing consultation with other key infrastructure bodies will help to ensure consistency between the NITP and other plans and strategies to be developed in the future. A more comprehensive list of strategies relating to the NITP is included on the next page.

## Consultation

The NITP has been developed through a process of consultation with a number of key stakeholders including:

- Northern Integrated Transport Plan Background Report 2012 – information and analysis on the transport system in the region, and the challenges and opportunities
- Northern Region Strategies Workshop September 2012 – councils and key stakeholders worked together to develop priority strategies for the region
- Northern Region Actions Workshop December 2012 – councils worked together to identify priority actions for the region
- Public Consultation Period – July/August 2013

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A significant amount of work has been undertaken in the Northern Region to better understand and plan the region’s transport system. Some key initiatives affecting the region include:

State	<p>Tasmanian Economic Development Plan</p> <p>Tasmanian Infrastructure Strategy</p> <p>Tasmanian Transport Policy (under development)</p> <p>Tasmanian Freight Strategy (under development)</p> <p>Tasmanian Urban Passenger Transport Framework</p> <p>Tasmanian Walking and Cycling for Active Transport Strategy</p> <p>Tasmanian AusLink Corridor Strategy 2007</p> <p>Tasmanian Road Safety Strategy 2007-2016</p> <p>Safer Roads: Non-Urban Road Network Strategy</p> <p>Infrastructure Australia Submissions</p> <p>Nation Building 2 Submissions 2012</p>
Regional and corridor	<p>Northern Regional Economic Development Plan</p> <p>Greater Launceston Plan (under development)</p> <p>Northern Tasmania Regional Transport Funding Priorities</p> <p>Regional Land Use Strategy of Northern Tasmania</p> <p>Greater Launceston Metropolitan Passenger Transport Plan (under development)</p> <p>Midland Highway Partnership Agreement</p> <p>North East Freight Roads Project</p> <p>Northern Industrial Land Use Study (under development)</p> <p>Northern Regional Housing Needs Study (under development)</p> <p>Principal Urban Cycling Network</p>
Local	<p>Examples include:</p> <p>Launceston Traffic Study</p> <p>Meander Valley Traffic Study</p> <p>Break O’Day Settlement Strategy</p> <p>Break O’Day Transport Master Plan</p> <p>Northern Midlands Development Plans</p> <p>Dorset Council Projects of Importance</p> <p>Launceston Cycling Infrastructure Strategy</p> <p>Flinders Structure Plan</p> <p>Flinders Airport Master Plan</p>

# The Northern Region

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The Region includes the eight Local Government Areas of Break O’Day, Dorset, Flinders, George Town, Launceston, Meander Valley, Northern Midlands, and West Tamar. It covers a total area of approximately two million hectares, or around 29% of Tasmania’s total land area.

The urban centre of Launceston and the surrounding townships of Longford, Legana, Perth, Hadspen and Westbury are the main locations for both population and commercial activities. Other key centres for the Region include Beaconsfield, Beauty Point, Bridport, Deloraine, Lady Barron, Scottsdale, St Helens and Whitemark. Industrial and maritime activity has been centred in George Town, around the port of Bell Bay.

## Transport in the region

The passenger and freight task are heavily focused on the State road network. While most of the road network is owned by local government, the majority of freight and passenger movements are on the State road network, which links major population centres, industrial areas and ports. In 2008/09 the state road network carried 78% of the northern region’s heavy freight task in tonne-kilometres.

## Key inter-regional links

The key inter-regional links are the most important road and rail links enabling movements of passenger vehicles between large population centres in the three regions and movement of freight across regional boundaries to major shipping, processing or industrial sites. The key links include Illawarra Main Road, the Bass, Midland and East Tamar Highways and the Southern, Western and Bell Bay rail lines.

The Bass Highway links the Northern Region to the North West, in particular to Devonport and Burnie which are the North West region’s most populous towns and major ports. The Midland Highway links the North and South regions, and the two major population centres of Hobart and Launceston. These two highways in combination with Illawarra Main Road also serve as the major inter-regional link for vehicles travelling between the South and North West regions.

With the largest change in the freight task being the increase in agricultural freight, road corridors in the state’s key agricultural regions are likely to experience the most significant changes in freight volumes, with key inter-regional corridors carrying the largest increases in freight. The Bass Highway is projected to nearly double its freight volumes in 2029, with the Midland Highway and East Tamar Highway also projected to have significant growth.

Similarly, the importance of the Southern and Western Rail Lines as key inter-regional links is largely as a result of freight between the South and North West regions, with just a small component having an origin or destination in the northern region.



## Key regional links

Regional roads serve an important role in moving people from regional and rural areas to major regional cities or key inter-regional links, and in transporting freight from resource and industrial areas to export and processing points. Some key inter-regional links, such as the East Tamar Highway, also play an important regional role.

In the Northern Region, regional roads in general move mainly forestry and agriculture products or inputs. Some specific road and rail linkages are also important for transport of local construction materials, mined resources such as coal, or consumer goods. Regional links are also projected to have a large increase in freight volumes. The Frankford-Birrreele-Batman route and Bridport Main Road are forecast to have increased volumes, mostly associated with increased agricultural production. The Fingal rail line is the only regional rail link, while strategic regional roads include:

- Batman Highway
- Tasman Highway
- West Tamar Highway
- Frankford and Birrreele Main Roads
- Bridport Main Road
- Esk Main Road
- Poatina Main Road
- Evandale Main Road
- Lilydale and Golconda Roads
- Lady Barron Main Road
- Gladstone Main Road
- Ringarooma Main Road
- Lake Leake Main Road

Council owned sections through towns on these key regional links are integral to the routes' performance.

## Key metropolitan links and urban transport corridors

Strategic urban roads are critical links in the region's freight and passenger networks. Key metropolitan links and urban transport corridors in Launceston include:

- *Bathurst / Wellington Streets couplet*: the key links through central Launceston, linking the southern and northern suburbs of Launceston and vital role connecting regional or inter-regional links north and south of the city.
- *Charles / Goderich Streets*: north of Launceston serving a similar role to Bathurst and Wellington Streets connecting the East Tamar Highway to central Launceston and used as a major urban route from Invermay, Mowbray, Newnham, Mayfield and Rocherlea
- *West Tamar Road*: key passenger route from suburbs on the western shore of the Tamar River including Trevallyn, Riverside and satellite suburbs further north including Legana, Rosevears and Grindelwald

- *Westbury Road*: Major route from western suburbs Prospect, Summerhill, Prospect Vale and satellite suburb of Blackstone Heights
- *Elphin Road / Penquite Road / Hobblers Bridge Road*: form a key passenger route from Launceston eastern suburbs including Elphin, East Launceston, Norwood and Waverley and connects to Tasman Highway and North East
- *Cimitiere Street and Invermay Road*: provide important connections to industrial and commercial land in inner eastern suburbs
- *Kings Meadows Link / Quarantine Road / Johnston Road / St Leonards Road*: Linking Blessington Road (important for forestry freight and agriculture) and industrial areas along St Leonards Road to Midland Highway and intersecting other key metropolitan links including Hobart Road and Penquite Road.
- *Hobart Road*: southern suburbs (Kings Meadows, Youngtown) into Wellington St

### Key seaports

The Port of Launceston at Bell Bay is the key port in the Northern Region. In 2011/12 it handled 2.3 millions tonnes of freight (20% of the State's total freight) and is a major bulk goods port. This was 42% less than in 2010/11, while total throughput for the State declined by 16% for the period. The port has good road and rail access from the north east and south. The Bell Bay industrial area is a key location for metal manufacturing and forestry freight processing. Recent changes to shipping arrangements at Bell Bay have resulted in a substantial decline in container movements.

Other ports in the region include St Helens which services fishing vessels and ports at Bridport and Lady Barron, which provide an important connection to Flinders Island, which is a valuable part of the State's livestock market, producing 15% of the State's beef and 8% of lamb.

### Key airports

Launceston airport is the major airport in the region, providing connections to Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Flinders Island. Flinders Island airport, near Whitemark provides connections to Launceston and Melbourne. St Helens airport provides tourist flights, as well as transporting live seafood. The airports are particularly important for passengers and access to the Royal Flying Doctor Service, but also carry freight, including time-sensitive products.

### Population

The population of the Northern Region is concentrated around Launceston and the surrounding townships of Longford, Legana, Perth, Hadspen and Westbury. Other population centres include Beaconsfield, Beauty Point, Bridport, Deloraine, Lady Barron, Scottsdale, St Helens and Whitemark, and these act as service centres for the surrounding communities.

Recently, higher growth rates have been in outer urban areas, reflecting land availability, housing prices and lifestyle reasons. The largest growth has been in the southern suburbs of Youngtown – Relbia, the northern suburbs of Newnham – Mayfield, and Legana to the north-west of Launceston.

Current trends suggest a moderate increase in population of over the next 20 years, which is positive for the region, however, as with other areas of Tasmania, the Northern Region has an ageing population, so this will present challenges. An older population is likely to mean different demands on particular transport services, as more people are travelling outside peak commuter periods to a range of destinations and more people do not have access to private cars.

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# Future Transport System

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Transport is fundamental to the Tasmanian community and economy. It provides us with access to work, education, health services, family and friends. As an island state with an export-oriented economy, Tasmania depends on shipping and air services for interstate and overseas movement of goods and passengers. High-value industries, such as seafood and seasonal produce, rely on timely market access. Growth in agriculture in the Northern Region and changes to the forestry freight task, as well as shipping movements, mean that there have been a number of changes to the freight task in the Northern Region. While this presents a number of challenges, there are also a number of opportunities.

At a time where budgets are constrained and transport competes with other infrastructure sectors for funding, it is important that we invest wisely and ensure that we look at a range of options before making a commitment. Building new or upgrading existing infrastructure are options that must be considered, but also with the understanding that new infrastructure is not just a one off cost, but also adds to the maintenance budget for the future.

By working together to develop an integrated transport plan for the Northern Region, we are developing a framework to respond to the challenges and opportunities in the region, and move forward. We want a transport system that is safe, supports connectivity for communities and promotes industry efficiency and productivity.

The Northern Integrated Transport Plan focuses on the following strategic policy areas:

- Freight
- People
- Land Use Planning
- Environment
- Tourism

The policy areas are linked, with many strategies and actions connecting across areas.

Goals – the goals describe what we want the transport system to achieve

Strategies – the strategies describe how we will achieve the goals – these are described in “the future and how we will get there”

Priority actions – these are the key actions that we will take towards achieving the goals over the next 2 years. We realise that we can’t achieve everything immediately, but commit to these actions as a starting point. The actions are a mixture of measures which work together to improve outcomes for the transport system, including planning, providing information and education,

managing demand, using technology, partnerships, as well as maintenance and targeted infrastructure upgrades.

The actions are across three broad categories:

- Strategy and planning – background work to develop long term plans for the Northern Region, to gain a better understanding of issues before committing to other actions
- Program – long term actions that are committed to over a long period of time
- Project – short-term, specific actions which might include building or upgrading infrastructure, using technology, one-off studies on a particular topic or area

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# Freight

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## Goals:

- A regional freight network which can cater for the current and future freight task including intrastate, interstate and international linkages. The network must support lowest cost, efficient and reliable supply chains.
- A safe freight transport system including road, rail, bridges, ports, airports and intermodal facilities
- Integrated, evidence-based planning for the freight system which provides a long-term plan for the future

## Context:

Industries in the Northern Region rely on the freight network to move their goods to markets locally and to link to markets can generate high volumes of freight traffic both in urban areas and across the region. The location of different industries in relation to roads, rail, ports, airports and other infrastructure and services is a key demand driver of the transport system.

In order to better understand the transport system, how it operates and how transport infrastructure is used, it is essential to gain an understanding of freight and how it moves in the Northern Region. The relationship between industry and the transport system involves supply and demand: the location of industrial areas and their linkages to the transport system, as well as current freight movements and how this demand will change in the future.

The freight task is heavily focused on the State road network. Freight predominantly moves intra-state via road, with rail generally being used for bulk goods travelling longer distances. There have been a number of industry changes within the Region in recent times which have an impact on freight and how it moves, including decreases in forestry and manufacturing, increasing investment in agriculture and the irrigation network, and a change in the role of the Bell Bay port.

The Australian Government has provided \$1.5 million for the establishment of an industry-led Freight Logistics Coordination Team. The Team will provide expert advice and guide the completion of a long-term freight strategy for Tasmania, providing recommendations to the Minister for Infrastructure on Tasmanian supply chain issues as part of this process. The work will include extensive industry consultation and analysis of current freight volumes and future markets, as well as quality and cost benchmarking of land and sea parts of the freight supply chain. The existing land freight network including intermodal and export points and their relationship to land use will also be considered.

This analysis and recommendations will provide a strong basis for planning for the freight network within the Northern region, including the future of ports and key connections to the ports.

The Australian Government has committed funding for a number of projects in the Northern Region through the Nation Building Program including: Midland Highway – Duplication Perth to

Breadalbane, Midland Highway Safety Package, Midland Highway – Launceston Bypass Planning, and Freight Rail Revitalisation.

Northern Tasmania Development has commissioned an Industrial Land Use Study, with the recommendations to be incorporated into the *Northern Regional Land Use Strategy*. This study will help to determine the optimal locations for industrial land in the region.

<b>Corridor name</b>	<b>Projected volumes</b>	<b>Key corridor characteristics</b>
<b>Bass Highway:</b> <i>Burnie to Illawarra Main Road</i>	2009 – 3.56 MT to 4.39 MT 2029 – 6.59 MT to 8.62 MT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inter-regional movement between north/ north-west and southern Tasmania</li> <li>• Intra-regional movement within the north-west</li> <li>• Key link to northern ports for southern Tasmania</li> <li>• Mostly used for agricultural freight, consumer goods and forestry</li> </ul>
<b>Midland Highway:</b> <i>Bridgewater to Launceston</i>	2009 – 2.49 MT to 3.01 MT 2029 – 4.55 MT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inter-regional movement between north/ north-west and southern Tasmania</li> <li>• Key link to northern ports for southern Tasmania</li> <li>• Mostly used for consumer goods, agricultural freight and forestry</li> </ul>
<b>East Tamar Highway:</b> <i>Launceston to Bell Bay</i>	2009 – 3.25 MT 2029 – 4.53 MT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inter-regional and intra-regional movement to Bell Bay port</li> <li>• Mostly used for forestry, agriculture and construction</li> </ul>

***Projected freight volumes on key inter-regional corridors in the Northern Region***

<b>Corridor name</b>	<b>Projected volumes</b>	<b>Key corridor characteristics</b>
<b>Frankford-Birrallee-West Tamar - Batman</b>	2009 – 1.69 MT 2029 – 2.64 MT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inter-regional movement of agriculture freight from north-east</li> <li>• Connects north-east to north west</li> </ul>
<b>Bridport Main Road</b>	2009 – 1.39 MT 2029 – 1.85 MT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intra-regional movement of forestry freight to Bell Bay area</li> <li>• Inter-regional movement of agriculture freight from north-east to north-west</li> </ul>
<b>Esk Main Road:</b> <i>St Marys to Midland Highway</i>	2009 – 0.62 MT 2029 – 0.96 MT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Movement of coal, forestry and agriculture products</li> </ul>

***Projected freight volumes on regional corridors in the Northern Region***

### The future and how we will get there:

In the future we will work towards a freight transport system which supports economic development within the Northern Region – transport planning must be linked to identified industry growth and development areas through mechanisms like the Regional Economic Development Plan. Capital and maintenance investment will be targeted into key projects on the strategic regional freight network which provide the greatest benefit. For example, roads which move the largest share of the freight task and provide linkages to ports will be a focus. The work of the Freight Logistics Co-ordination Team will help to determine ways to optimise our freight network, to ensure that we achieve the most efficient, reliable and lowest cost supply chains. A strategic plan for ports will be developed, including Bell Bay and how it fits into the broader State context. The Tasmanian Government will continue to work with Local Government to support effective local connections to the strategic regional freight route.

Good quality data and analysis of the freight system is critical for making the right decisions in planning and investment on the network in the Northern Region. In particular, developing an understanding of the likely future growth of new and emerging industries and how this will affect the freight system is important in developing a network that meets the needs of users. Work will continue from the Northern Industrial Land Use Study on recommendations to ensure greater integration of land use and transport planning. Questions to be considered include the future of industrial areas like Breadalbane, and whether there is a need for an intermodal facility in the Northern Region.

Safety will continue to be a primary consideration in new road construction and will be integrated into the planning and design of infrastructure. Improvements will also continue to be made to the inherent safety of existing road and roadside infrastructure. Such an approach targets known crash problems and includes initiatives such as Black Spot Programs and broader route based projects aimed at improving the overall safety of the road network. DIER will continue to work with local government and industry to minimise the risks on the road network of incompatible road users through separating different types of users. Monitoring of heavy vehicles for loads and other safety measures will continue to be important in ensuring the safety of all road users.

### Priority actions:

- Continue to progress high priority projects including: Freight Rail Revitalisation program, Midland Highway – Duplication Perth to Breadalbane, Midland Highway Safety Package, Launceston Traffic Solutions, Illawarra Main Road upgrade/South Perth Bypass, Birralee Main Road Upgrades, , Bass Highway – Latrobe to Deloraine, Tasmanian Freight Model, North East Freight Roads, Brid River Bridge, upgrade Lady Barron Port, Fingal Valley Coal Transport Plan
- Define the Strategic Regional Freight Network including bridges, road, rail, ports, airports and intermodal facilities linking to the Principal Freight Network
- Optimise the performance of road infrastructure through a prioritised maintenance program
- Focus investment on the high productivity vehicle network and PBS network, on strategic freight routes and key linkages supporting industry growth
- Assess the need for an intermodal facility in the Northern Region

- Recognise and support the role of the Bell Bay Industrial Estate as a key industrial area for the Region
- Recognise and plan for Bell Bay port in the context of a whole of state Port Strategy, based on analysis and recommendations from the Freight Logistics Co-ordination Team
- Support the continuation of St Helens as a working port for fishing vessels
- Support the provision of infrastructure and freight services via sea and air to the Furneaux islands

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# People

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## Goals:

- Improved transport safety for communities
- Integrated, evidence-based planning for the public passenger system which provides a long-term plan for the future
- Improved health and wellbeing, liveability and accessibility for communities
- Improved travel time reliability on key urban transport corridors

## Context:

Car ownership and usage is high in the Northern Region, with this trend likely to continue over the long term.

The location of residential areas in relation to shops, workplaces and school has a significant impact on personal travel patterns and on transport options. Expanding urban areas like Launceston, with recent growth in outer urban and rural areas mean that many people have limited alternatives to car use to meet their transport needs.

The Northern Region has an ageing population, which poses challenges in planning for the future passenger transport task, as well as the location of critical services.

Personal travel patterns are becoming more complex, with different work and business hours, and people often combining a number of different trips into one. Gaining a greater understanding of these trips is an important part of understanding the overall passenger task.

The Northern Region's public transport system is based around buses, which are serviced by a number of different companies. Having a small, dispersed population creates challenges in delivering public transport – in metropolitan areas, it is difficult to provide high frequency services across a dispersed population and bus services in rural areas can be limited, which has an impact on those communities and their ability to access services only found in major centres. Taxis fill some gaps, but are not necessarily affordable for everyone. Community transport is also important in meeting some transport needs.

DIER is currently working with stakeholders on the *Greater Launceston Metropolitan Passenger Transport Plan*. This will provide a framework to guide future passenger transport development and investment in Greater Launceston. The plan will work towards outcomes through:

- Mapping passenger transport demand drivers;
- Mapping land use patterns, including residential and future growth areas, key activity and employment centres;
- Identifying key passenger transport corridors and attributes and assessing potential travel demand management measures such as park and ride and high frequency transit corridors; and
- Identifying and assessing local transport linkages and opportunities.

While cars will likely continue to be an important transport mode for the region, improving public transport, walking and cycling can provide alternatives to car travel. To encourage a shift towards alternative modes it is important to consider the location of key services, opportunities for higher density and mixed land uses, and the provision of well-connected walking and cycling tracks. DIER and councils have been working together to improve cycling routes within the Launceston district.

### The future and how we will get there:

In the future we will have a better understanding of personal travel patterns – where, why, when and how people travel, and better match that demand. Services will be more integrated and seamless. Our communities will be healthier and more connected, both to local services within the community, and to external services. More people will be using public transport and active transport (walking and cycling) through improved land use planning and the provision of services that meet their needs.

The provision of high frequency public transport corridors and more integrated services will improve public transport service levels to population centres with high levels of transport disadvantage as identified through needs analysis.

We will look for greater innovation in providing solutions, which might include investigating different ways for funding transport, better use of technology to provide information about transport services, and greater integration of services.

Further actions to improve safety will continue in the future, including safer speeds, protecting vulnerable transport users, and enhancing vehicle safety. This will be done through the ongoing implementation of strategies including the *Tasmania Road Safety Strategy*, *National Road Safety Strategy*, *Community Road Safety Partnerships*, and *Safer Roads: Non-Urban Road Network Strategy*, as well as crash analysis.

Other safety initiatives that complement infrastructure projects to support a reduction in serious casualties, introduced or underway, include: introduction of the *Safer Roads: Non-Urban Road Network Strategy* and improved speed limit signage; roll-out of Electronic School Speed Limit signs at schools across Tasmania; investigating further changes to the Graduated Licensing System; improved Government fleet safety; implementation of an alcohol interlock program; and point to point speed enforcement.

### Priority actions:

- Develop transport modelling for public transport in Launceston through the Launceston Passenger Transport Economic Analysis Model
- Investigate methods of gaining a better understanding of personal travel behaviour and future needs
- Identification and prioritisation of hotspots across the Region where there is potentially incompatible interaction between different road users
- Councils to develop plans to deal with emerging passenger transport issues across the Region including ageing population, access to medical treatment, isolation for rural youth etc

- Investigate the feasibility of transit corridors with connecting access services to these corridors, connecting residential populations and activity centres to and through the CBD
- Investigate methods of integrating commercial and community transport
- Plan and integrate passenger transport services supplied by different operators to improve urban/regional connections through timetabling and ticketing
- Plan an integrated bus interchange to improve transport connections to and through the Launceston central area
- Review current networks, including school services, to determine whether there is potential to improve bus services
- Plan and integrate passenger transport services so that there are connections between passenger transport and walking and cycling routes
- Delivery of connected and direct walking and cycling routes that create healthy and accessible communities and support people to access services using active transport modes
- Delivery of cycling infrastructure on the Principal Urban Cycling Network for Launceston
- Development of the integrated greater Launceston Arterial Bicycle Network by improvements to cycling amenity and accessibility
- Maintain major inter-regional routes: Bass Highway, Illawarra Main Road, Midland Highway, East Tamar Highway
- Maintain major regional routes: Batman Highway, Tasman Highway, West Tamar Highway, Frankford and Birralee Main Roads, Bridport Main Road, Esk Main Road, Poatina Main Road, Evandale Main Road, Lilydale and Golconda Roads, Lady Barron Main Road, Gladstone Main Road, Ringarooma Main Road, Lake Leake Main Road
- Continue to progress Launceston Traffic Solutions with a focus on East Tamar Highway/University Way, Mowbray Connector, Charles Street Bridge, Midland Highway/Kings Meadows Connector, Hobart Road corridor, Cimitiere Street, Wellington/Bathurst Street couplet, East/West Traffic
- Focus investment on identified high priority sustainable transport routes including public transport, walking and cycling



**Principal Urban Cycling Network for Launceston**

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# Land Use Planning

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## Goals:

- Greater integration of transport with economic and land use planning for the Region at a strategic and operational level
- Protect the strategic function of regionally significant transport infrastructure
- Transport investment and planning decisions in the Region are informed by evidence-based strategic land use planning

## Context:

The location of residential and industrial areas, retail, education, employment and medical centres has a major impact on how people use the transport system. Well planned residential areas with access to walking and cycling connections, public transport and basic services can increase an area's liveability, with a number of benefits. Conversely, new greenfields developments create new traffic volumes and travel demands. While it is sometimes necessary to provide solutions by upgrading roads or providing additional capacity, land use planning allows us to look at other solutions by supporting growth in areas with existing transport connections, better using the existing capacity rather than always building new infrastructure. The significant costs of providing new infrastructure and maintaining existing infrastructure emphasise the need to better use the capacity within the existing transport system, rather than expanding the network.

The Northern Region, like the rest of Tasmania, has a relatively dispersed population, with many people choosing to live in areas outside major population centres, often near the coast. Our love of this kind of lifestyle means a high dependency on cars, and often, as these areas grow, there are increasing expectations about improvements in services, which may not be economically viable. New developments generate traffic, including different vehicle mixes, which can impact on the efficiency, safety and function of the transport system and sometimes require new or upgraded accesses onto the road network.

The topography of an area also affects the way in which land can be used, and the metropolitan area of Launceston in particular has some constraints because of this. The physical characteristics of the city, being based around a river, with some extremely steep areas, mean that land use and transport options can be limited or have a high cost to deliver benefits.

Land use planning also has a role to play through protecting key transport assets from future encroachment by other uses which might limit their development in the future.

Land use planning reforms have started the process of improving land use decisions across Tasmania. A Northern Regional Land Use Strategy has been developed, which is being implemented through new planning schemes across the Region. These new planning schemes have been based on a common statewide template and will provide increased consistency and certainty for development across the Region, and the State.

### The future and how we will get there:

Economic development, transport and land use planning in the Northern Region will be integrated, facilitated through good communication and data sharing across all levels of Government.

In the future, residential development and services will be located in areas with good access to viable public transport services, including within priority transport corridors and areas with connections to active transport networks, creating healthy and accessible communities. The recommendations from the Northern Regional Housing Needs Study will be incorporated into the Regional Land Use Strategy and will focus on consolidating growth in established areas with good connections to existing services.

Similarly, major industrial development will be located in areas with good access to the strategic regional freight network. New development will be consolidated into existing sites, favouring sites which are away from incompatible uses.

Through the Regional Land Use Strategy and co-ordinated planning schemes, key transport sites and corridors will be protected from incompatible land use nearby. The planning system will support development of land for priority uses determined through strategic regional planning, with efficient approvals processes.

Work will continue on long-term planning, including regular reviewing of likely growth areas and their impact on the transport system. Planning and investment decisions will be based on a shared understanding of best practice land use and transport planning for the Region, promoting economic stability and liveability.

### Priority actions:

- Review of the Regional Land Use Strategy to integrate with other key strategies including the Northern Industrial Land Use Strategy, Northern Regional Housing Needs Study, Greater Launceston Metropolitan Passenger Transport Plan, Greater Launceston Plan
- Early engagement with key stakeholders on major developments that have a significant transport impact
- Work with Councils to identify options to improve the approvals process for major transport infrastructure
- Identify existing and future key freight and passenger transport corridors and sites and incorporate into key regional and subregional strategic planning including the Northern Regional Economic Development Plan
- Finalise the Road and Railway Assets Code to ensure consistency of decisions around the protection of the safety and efficiency of transport networks
- Analyse transport demand in support of regional growth areas including: Perth, Legana, Prospect/Blackstone, Newnham
- Plan for industrial development, activity centre and residential growth which better utilises, rather than extends, the existing transport system

- Plan for development that attracts high numbers of people (major commercial, employment, education and health services) at locations that are highly accessible by public transport, walking and cycling for improved health and wellbeing
- Identify and agree existing and future key freight and passenger transport corridors and sites at a regional and metropolitan level

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# Environment

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## Goals:

- Reduced emissions from transport
- Reduce the impact of climate change on transport infrastructure
- Minimise the adverse impact of transport on communities and the environment

## Context:

Transport has an impact on the environment in a number of different ways. Transport is a significant contributor towards the State's greenhouse gas emissions. Air and noise emissions can have health impacts on the community. Transport can also have an impact on the environmental values in areas close to the transport network, particularly for new infrastructure. Climate change and extreme weather events can have an effect on transport infrastructure.

The Northern Region has a high rate of private vehicle ownership and ageing vehicles. This has resulted in more cars on the road and more air pollutants. Motor vehicles are a primary source of major air pollutants including carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, ozone, and particulates. While there have been advances in vehicle emissions technology, there has been a lack of uptake of this technology, seen through the number of older vehicles still on Tasmanian roads. Rising vehicle numbers, as well as an increase in distances travelled due to dispersed settlement patterns means that emissions from transport have continued to increase, with transport responsible for around 20% of the State's total greenhouse gas emissions.

Predicted increases in the freight task are likely to correspond to increases in transport emissions, and there are significant challenges in supporting strong economic outcomes in the Northern Region, without a rise in emissions. Using higher productivity vehicles and other efficiency gains may also have an impact on emissions and other impacts such as noise. The Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics analysis estimates that transport of freight by rail produces about 15 per cent of the carbon emissions of road transport using heavy vehicles.

While the transport network provides a number of benefits, it also generates impacts which can affect the quality of life for individuals and communities, including transport noise. In the Northern Region, some of our major freight routes travel through urban areas. In addition to this, there are a number of small industrial areas situated in various parts of the region, sometimes close to urban areas or other conflicting land uses.

Transport also has an effect on the environment through the construction, operation and management of the transport network, including visual impacts, loss of natural and cultural values, roadkill, pollutants and weeds.

Climate change and an increase in extreme weather events also have an impact on the transport network. Infrastructure across the Northern Region is susceptible to extreme weather events and sea level rise.

### The future and how we will get there:

In the future, we will work towards developing a more environmentally sustainable transport system for the Northern Region. This may involve small changes over time and some innovative approaches. All levels of government, the community and industry must continue to work together to better understand the impact of climate change on transport infrastructure and to plan and design more resilient infrastructure.

We will continue to investigate ways to reduce emissions from freight movement including productivity gains, alternative fuels, technology and the mix of road and rail. Some of these methods also result in possible improvements in efficiency or cost effectiveness.

Providing more sustainable travel choices, coupled with land use planning which makes these choices more preferable, also has the possibility of reducing emissions. We will work together to provide the community with up to date information on transport and its impact on the environment, so that we can all make informed choices about how we travel. Planning for sustainable communities to have good access to walking, cycling and public transport can reduce our dependency on cars.

Natural, cultural and indigenous heritage values are considered in transport infrastructure developments. We will continue to work towards identifying these values early so that planning and design can be responsive to them. We will develop more innovative ways to design transport infrastructure which minimises its impact on the environment and focus on improving our existing infrastructure, rather than developing new sites.

### Priority actions:

- Investigate options for incentives and disincentives to facilitate transition to low carbon personal transport options, and use this to better inform travel choices
- Develop resources and education on transport options, costs (eg actual vehicle costs) and carbon emissions to raise awareness
- Monitor impacts such as landslip, sea level rise, flooding, and fire and respond by planning and designing resilient transport infrastructure in accordance with Austroads guidelines (elevated roads, more heat resistant surfaces etc)
- Rollout of new locomotives for TasRail with lower greenhouse emissions
- New low-emission accessible buses for Metro
- Implement Vehicle Noise Strategy including development of Guidelines for project delivery

# Tourism

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## Goals:

- Transport infrastructure and services that contribute to a positive tourism experience

## Context:

While tourists make up only a small proportion of total transport volumes, they add a significant contribution to the Region's economy, making it important to plan and cater for tourist access to the Northern Region, and safe movements within the Region. There is also the potential for increased tourism in the future through greater promotion of the Region.

The Northern Region's transport network provides essential linkages for tourists and visitors by providing a good standard of access to the region, and ensuring journeys are safe, timely and simple to navigate. Signage is particularly important for tourists and consistent signs help tourists to get to where they want to go much more easily. Visitors also appreciate having well positioned rest stops and areas to stop to appreciate views.

Tourists are often travelling outside the major urban centre of Launceston to visit attractions. Some of Tasmania's regional roads involve winding, mountainous climbs and descents, and are highly subject to changes in local weather conditions. Tourists may be unfamiliar with these factors and this can affect travel times, making journeys which may look short on a map, take significantly longer than planned.

The Northern Region has a number of Touring routes which are designed to help visitors to explore the region including:

- Tamar Valley Trail
- North East Trail
- Great Western Tiers Tourist Route
- Heritage Highway
- East Coast Escape
- Fingal Valley Road Trail

New Regional Tourism Organisations have been recently established, Tourism Northern Tasmania and East Coast Tourism, which will assist the development of a new regional destination management plans for the Northern Region, working with local government and other key stakeholders.

Tourism planning considerations relate to both on-road conditions and supporting off-road infrastructure. Passenger transport linkages between key locations, including air and seaports with major townships, are also important. The location of activities and attractions to complement and capitalise on touring routes and the road network benefits both private enterprise and government.

Signage is particularly important for tourists. Having consistent signage types across the Northern Region helps tourists to navigate around the region, to find services and attractions. Guidelines have been developed to assist with providing signage that tourists find easy to understand, and that is fair and equitable to businesses.

### **The future and how we will get there:**

With the prospect of growth in the number of tourists visiting the region, improving understanding of tourists' needs will continue to be an important step in delivering a transport system which is easy for tourists to use.

Key to improving the transport experience for tourists is for stakeholders to continue to work together.

Transport facilities which are regularly used by tourists, like ports, airports and surrounds will continue to be a focus.

### **Priority actions:**

- Review existing tourist data in context of transport demand and provide to decision makers for use in determining required actions
- Work with Regional Tourism Organisations to ensure on-going decision-making is informed regarding visitor needs
- Continue to review and update the Tasmanian Roadside Signs Manual including Tourism Signing Guidelines to ensure they reflect visitor behaviour
- Continue to work together with local stakeholders to provide information to tourists about road closures
- DIER and councils to work together to prioritise key future transport infrastructure to facilitate tourism in the Northern Region

# Principles

These are some underlying principles which will guide the way that we plan and invest in the transport system for the Northern Region to ensure that we are making the right decisions for the future.

Focus	Principles
Decision making	Evidence-based approach to identifying and evaluating options for transport issues
	Incorporate economic, social and environmental considerations in our decision making and focus on long-term benefits
	Utilise and reflect existing frameworks, policies and plans in our decision making
	Review and evaluate decisions to ensure outcomes are achieved
Effective partnerships	Early stakeholder engagement, actively seeking and considering stakeholder views
	Co-operation between levels of government and across council areas to address areas of common interest
	Work with industry in the planning, provision and management of transport infrastructure and services
System wide approach	Planning that considers all transport modes within an integrated system
	A holistic, Safe System, view of the road transport system that considers interactions among roads, roadsides, travel speeds, road users and vehicles
	Adoption of a network approach, regardless of who owns or operates transport infrastructure and services
Innovation	Consider a broad range of solutions in addressing transport issues, including non-infrastructure solutions
	Investigate and implement a range of complementary measures
	Influence and manage demands on the transport system
Integration with land use planning	Ensure co-ordination of land use and transport planning
	Make best use of existing infrastructure and services, and protect transport assets and systems through integrated land use and transport planning
Viable and sustainable infrastructure and services	Decision making is financially responsible, sustainable and benefits multiple users
	Resources are directed to the areas of greatest need and benefit
	Maximise use of existing infrastructure and services to optimise performance
	Speed management used as a mitigation treatment until infrastructure improvements can be undertaken

# Implementation

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DIER and the councils of the Northern Region have worked together to develop the plan, and its effectiveness will be ensured by continuing to work together on implementation. Both levels of government will work with key regional stakeholders including transport providers, industry and the community to improve transport outcomes.

## Implementation plan – setting timeframes and responsibilities

The existing Steering Committee will meet to agree an implementation plan with responsibilities and timeframes within 3 months from the release of the plan. This will allow for greater alignment with other key work currently underway in the Northern Region which is due to be finalised, including the Greater Launceston Plan, Greater Launceston Metropolitan Passenger Transport Plan, Northern Regional Housing Study and Northern Regional Industrial Land Use Strategy. Once agreed, all stakeholders will work together towards the priority actions, to ensure that we have a shared understanding of expectations and continued support for the work that needs to be done.

The NITP will need to be reviewed regularly to ensure that it is still relevant. A joint Implementation Committee will meet annually to assess and report on progress towards the actions identified. Priorities may change as time progresses, and actions identified as part of the NITP will still have to go through normal budget processes. As the context of the NITP changes, it is important that this is captured, and the Implementation Committee will jointly initiate a review of the content of the NITP five years after the plan is released.

It is important that the framework that is developed through the NITP is reflected in other relevant documents for the Northern Region which are yet to be produced. In addition, continuing to work closely together to identify further opportunities for the Region will ensure that the NITP remains current and reflects other policies and strategies.

## Appendix 1: Priority Actions

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Priority actions have been included in each of the policy areas, however other actions were identified through stakeholder consultation. Some of the actions included here are already committed or under way. These actions will be reviewed annually to determine whether or not they are still appropriate.

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## Strategy and Planning

### Freight

- Recognise and support the role of the Bell Bay Industrial Estate as a key industrial area for the Region
- Recognise and plan for Bell Bay port in the context of a whole of state Port Strategy, based on analysis and recommendations from the Freight Logistics Co-ordination Team
- Assess the need for an intermodal facility within the Northern Region
- Support the continuation of St Helens as a working port for fishing vessels
- Support the provision of infrastructure and freight services via air and sea to the Furneaux islands

### People

- Investigate methods of gaining a better understanding of personal travel behaviour and future needs
  - Develop transport modelling for public transport in Launceston through LPTEAM (Launceston Passenger Transport Economic Analysis Model)
  - Investigate methods of integrating commercial and community transport
  - Development of the integrated greater Launceston Arterial Bicycle Network by improvements to cycling amenity and accessibility
  - Identification and prioritisation of hotspots across the Region where there is potentially incompatible interaction between different road users
- Councils to develop plans to deal with emerging passenger transport issues across the Region including ageing population, access to medical treatment, isolation for rural youth etc

## Project

### Freight

- Continue to progress high priority projects including: Freight Rail Revitalisation program, Midland Highway – Duplication Perth to Breadalbane, Midland Highway Safety Package, Illawarra Main Road upgrade/South Perth Bypass, Birralee Main Road Upgrades, Bass Highway – Latrobe to Deloraine, Tasmanian Freight Model, North East Freight Roads, Brid River Bridge, upgrade Lady Barron Port and Flinders Island Airport, Fingal Valley Coal Transport Plan
- Define the Strategic Regional Freight Network including bridges, road, rail, ports, airports and intermodal facilities linking to the principal freight network

### People

- Plan and integrate passenger transport services supplied by different operators to improve urban/regional connections through timetabling and ticketing and central interchange facilities
- Plan and integrate passenger transport services so that there are connections between passenger transport and walking and cycling routes
- Investigate the feasibility of transit corridors with connecting access services to these corridors, connecting residential populations and activity centres to and through the CBD
- Review current networks, including school bus services, to determine whether there is potential to improve bus services
- Delivery of cycling infrastructure on the Principal Urban Cycling Network for Launceston
- Development of the integrated greater Launceston Arterial Bicycle Network by improvements to cycling amenity and accessibility
- Continue to progress Launceston Traffic Solutions with a focus on: East Tamar Highway/University Way, Mowbray Connector, Charles Street Bridge, Midland Highway/Kings Meadows Connector, Hobart Road corridor, Cimitiere Street, Wellington/Bathurst Street couplet, East/West Traffic

## Program

### Freight

- Focus investment on the high productivity network and PBS network, on strategic freight routes and key linkages supporting industry growth
- Optimise the performance of road infrastructure through a prioritised maintenance program

### People

- Maintain major inter-regional routes: Bass Highway, Illawarra Main Road, Midland Highway, East Tamar Highway
- Maintain major regional routes: Batman Highway, Tasman Highway, West Tamar Highway, Frankford and Birralee Main Roads, Bridport Main Road, Esk Main Road, Poatina Main Road, Evandale Main Road, Lilydale and Golconda Roads, Lady Barron Main Road, Gladstone Main Road, Ringarooma Main Road, Lake Leake Main Road.
- Focus investment on identified high priority sustainable transport routes including public transport, walking and cycling

## Strategy and Planning

### Planning

- Review of the Regional Land Use Strategy to integrate with other key strategies including the Northern Industrial Land Use Strategy, Northern Regional Housing Needs Study, Greater Launceston Metropolitan Passenger Transport Plan, Greater Launceston Plan
- Work with councils to identify options to improve the approvals process for major transport infrastructure
- Identify and agree existing and future key freight and passenger transport corridors and sites at a regional and metropolitan level
- Early engagement with key stakeholders on major developments that have a significant transport impact
- Plan for development that attracts high numbers of people (major commercial, employment, education and health services) at locations that are highly accessible by public transport, walking and cycling for improved health and wellbeing

### Environment

- Investigate options for incentives and disincentives to facilitate transition to low carbon personal transport options and use this to better inform travel choices

### Tourism

- Review existing tourist data in context of transport demand and provide to decision makers for use in determining required actions
- Work with Regional Tourism Organisations to ensure on-going decision-making is informed regarding visitor needs

## Project

### Planning

- Finalise the Road and Railway Assets Code to ensure consistency of decisions around the protection of the safety and efficiency of transport networks
- Analyse transport demand in support of regional growth areas including:  
Perth, Legana, Prospect/Blackstone, Newnham
- Identify existing and future key freight and passenger transport corridors and sites and incorporate into key regional and subregional strategic planning including the Northern Regional Economic Development Plan

### Environment

- Rollout of new locomotives for TasRail with lower greenhouse emissions
- New low-emission accessible buses for Metro
- Develop resources and education on transport options and costs (eg actual vehicle costs and carbon emissions) to raise awareness

### Tourism

- DIER and Councils to work together to prioritise key future transport infrastructure to facilitate tourism in the Northern Region

## Program

### Planning

- Plan significant residential growth to integrate with the transport system, including through the Residential Land Use Study and Greater Launceston Metropolitan Passenger Transport Plan
- Plan for industrial development, activity centre and residential growth which better utilises, rather than extends, the existing transport system

### Environment

- Monitor impacts such as landslip, sea level rise, flooding and fire and respond by planning and designing resilient infrastructure in accordance with Austroads guidelines (elevated roads, more heat resistant surfaces etc)
- Implement Vehicle Noise Strategy including development of Guidelines for project delivery

### Tourism

- Continue to review and update the Tasmanian Roadside Signs Manual including Tourism Signing Guidelines to ensure they reflect visitor behaviour
- Continue to work together with local stakeholders to provide information to tourists about road closures