

Transport: change in traffic volumes



Indicator 10.6 Percentage change in vehicle kilometres travelled (local roads)

STEADY

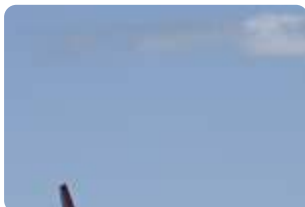
Purpose of indicator

Traffic volumes can have an impact on traffic congestion, the number of accidents, noise and vehicle emissions. From an infrastructure planning perspective it is important that roads are safe and designed to manage the amount of traffic they receive.

Current information and trend

Vehicle emissions release potentially harmful substances into the air such as nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide and fine particles. Figure 10.9 shows the percentage change in traffic volumes on local roads from 2003-2006. The large decrease in traffic volume in 2005 is a data anomaly and creates a misleading downwards trend.

The main reason for this anomaly is the Tauranga Direct Road changing from a local road to a state highway. This means the load of traffic on Tauranga Direct Road, usually included in local road figures, has been attributed to state highway traffic.



When this factor is taken into consideration, it is evident that traffic volumes have remained steady, despite the increase in the number of vehicles owned in the district (Figure 10.10). This steady state can be seen in Figure 10.9 from years 2002 through to 2004, and 2005 to 2006.

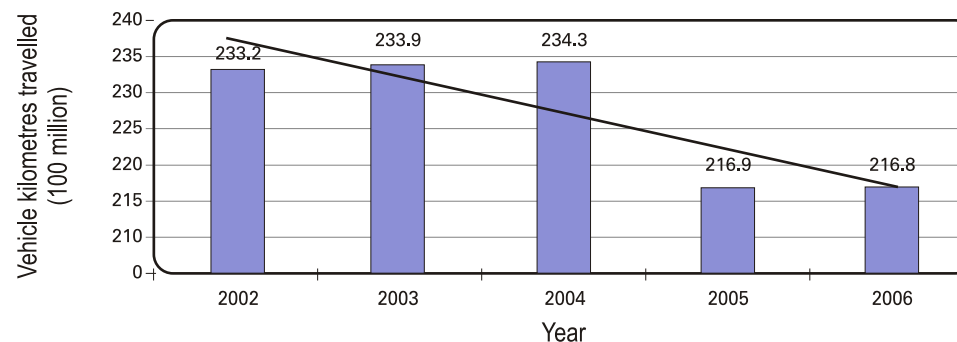


What the community said

In 2002, 55% of the community thought traffic had worsened in their local area. This perception increased to 61% in 2006.

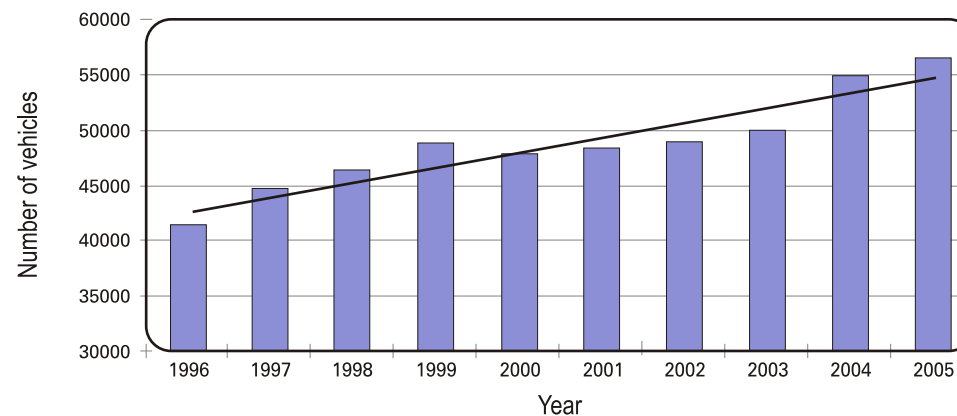


Figure 10.9 Vehicle kilometres travelled on local roads in the Rotorua district



Source: Rotorua District Council, 2006

Figure 10.10 Number of vehicles owned in the Rotorua district



Source: Rotorua District Council, 2006



Purpose of indicator

Heavy vehicles, such as trucks, cause various environmental impacts such as noise, vibrations and fumes, and can also impact on the lifespan of the road asset. The indicator also measures pressures placed on the natural environment. The heavy traffic counts are taken from the city's main entrances and indicate how much heavy traffic is present within, and travelling through, the district.

Current information and trend

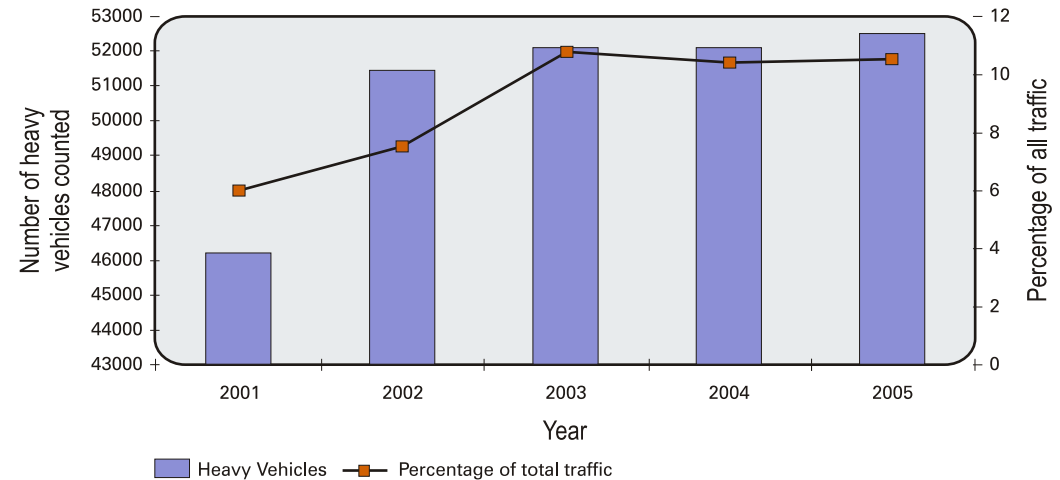
From 2001 to 2005 (at the time of writing this report data was not available beyond 2005) there was a 13.6% increase in heavy traffic (Figure 10.11). This constitutes an increase of 4.5% in all traffic on the road. Two of Rotorua's economic drivers that rely on heavy vehicles for transport are the forestry and dairy industries. An increase or decline in activity by these industries may affect the amount of heavy traffic on the road.

The amount of heavy traffic through Rotorua is being addressed, in part, through the proposed construction of the Eastern Arterial motorway and Victoria Street arterial project. These projects will divert heavy traffic away from local roads resulting in fewer adverse environmental effects in areas where people are present.

What the community said

Almost 77% of the Rotorua community identified air pollution from trucks as an environmental problem.

Figure 10.11 Heavy traffic counts



Source: Rotorua District Council, 2006





Purpose of indicator

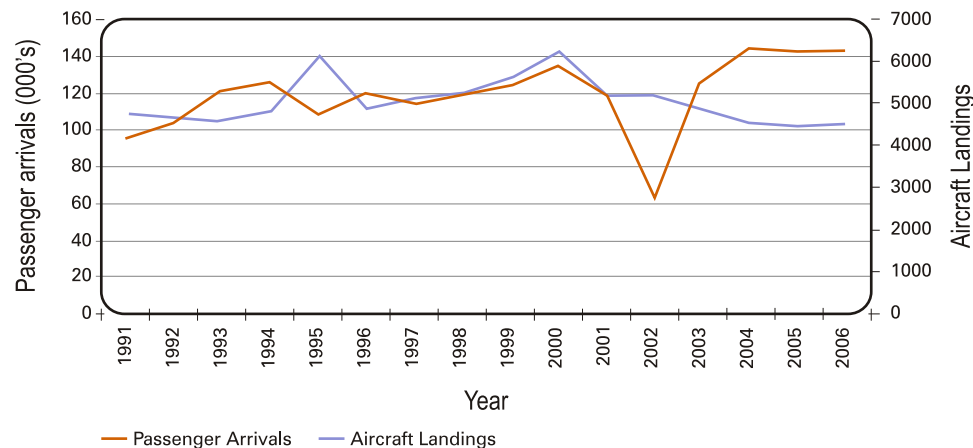
Aircraft landings, departures and passenger numbers have environmental implications such as noise and traffic generation. Aircraft engines produce emissions that are thought to be greenhouse gases.

Current information and trend

The number of passenger arrivals has increased significantly from 62,000 to 143,000 while numbers of aircraft landings have decreased by 653 (Figure 10.12) since 2002. This implies that there is a greater efficiency in the number of passengers carried in each flight, which is desirable for keeping aircraft emissions as low as possible. According to Rotorua Regional Airport the same trend is expected to continue beyond 2007. Newer aircraft with more modern technology emit less greenhouse gases than older aircraft and can carry more passengers.



Figure 10.12 Commercial passenger arrivals and aircraft landings



Source: Rotorua Regional Airport, 2006





ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE

For road safety



In 15 minutes

- ✓ Always wear a seatbelt.
- ✓ Never drive a vehicle when under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- ✓ Plan your trips so that you are not running late or stressed out on your journey.



In 1 hour plus

- ✓ Take regular rest stops when travelling long distances.
- ✓ Drive to the conditions of the road.

For transportation



In 15 minutes

- ✓ Use public transport, ride a bike, roller blade or walk
- ✓ Car pool with your family, flatmates or work mates.



In 1 hour plus

- ✓ Ask your employer to make bike sheds and showers available at work if they are not already available

WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION AND IDEAS

For bus timetables and information

City Ride Rotorua
www.baybus.co.nz

Information on sustainable transport options and road safety

Ministry for the Environment
www.mfe.govt.nz

Sustainable Business Network- Green Fleet
www.greenfleet.org.nz

Land Transport New Zealand
www.landtransport.govt.nz