

Auckland Conversations: 10-year Budget and 30-year Plan – Transport

Wednesday 28 February 2018

- Well good evening everyone. And tena koutou kato, welcome to the first Auckland Conversations event of 2018.

I'm Bernard Hickey and I'll be facilitating the Conversation this evening.

These Conversations provide an opportunity to inspire and stimulate your thinking about the challenges around Auckland. I am sure we all are inspired and stimulated every day around the challenges of Auckland. And here's a great chance to think about it in a deeper way and start talking about what we do next. Because tonight we focus on transport and the 10 year budget and Auckland plan 2050 consultation which is open today and will run until the 28th of March. So mark that on your calendars. We want to hear from as many of you as possible on the consultation topics during this month. And from today you can have your say, and visit akhavetoursay.nz, so it's akhavetoursay.nz to find out more about this consultation and provide your feedback. Or you can get hard copies of the feedback form. And more information can be found at the stand at the back of the room. So if you want to do the analogue thing, the stand at the back of the room, the doodle thing, akhavetoursay.nz.

And thank you for joining us tonight. It's great to have such a fantastic turnout. Who would have thought a boring discussion about transport policy would get so many people out and about. Perhaps we should've charged for people to come in. That would've helped pay for the transport perhaps. Or maybe pay per view, because of course, this is being streamed live. More popular perhaps than the Joseph Parker fights, and maybe more blood on the floor by the end of it perhaps, I don't know. It's great to have you all here tonight. And there will be live streaming of this event at both the Auckland Conversations, and the New Zealand Herald websites.

Just a couple of housekeeping notes to start with. In the unlikely event of an emergency, an alarm will sound and we'll be directed out of the building by our ushers. So be on the lookout for those. Bathrooms are located at the back of the room to the left the bar. So just around the corner here. We also have to thank Auckland Conversation's partner, the sponsor Resene, and our Auckland partner Southbase Construction, and all of the programme supporters. Tonight we're going to be joined by a group of panelists from Greater Auckland, the website, formerly known as Transport Blog, Auckland Transport, McGredy Winder & Co., and Infrastructure New Zealand to talk about transport in Auckland.

The format tonight, we're first going to have a discussion amongst the panelists.

We're going to hear from the Mayor. And then there'll be a chance for people here to ask questions both, through an interesting new interactive tool that we've got tonight called, Slido, and if you've got a smartphone with you, who actually doesn't have a smartphone. Oh, we've got someone at the back. Is it a Nokia? Yes. Well, if you've got a smartphone, what you need to do to be able to launch and online question is to go to slido.com. That's S-L-I-D-O .com and enter the event code, X, that's uppercase X 115, X 115. That's for asking your question. And

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there'll be a roll of questions in front of us here on the panel. And we'll answer those questions through the evening.

There will be a time too for people who want to put up their hand, and ask a question at the end, and we're also keen to be as inclusive as possible, and accessible, there is on demand viewing of the event. There will be a full transcript, and captioning of the event. And the presentations will be available on the Auckland Conversations website in the next few days.

I wanted to, before we introduce the Mayor and our panel, just have a quick view around this amazing place of Auckland and think about transport. Before I do I want to introduce you to a key piece of my personal tool box. Can you all see what this is? This is an AT HOP card and the reason this is interesting, is that I live in Wellington. So what am I doing with an AT HOP card? Well, actually I find, and I have to come to Auckland every couple of weeks for a day or two, that now, this is the way I get around the city, both from the airport, and into the CBD, and around the CBD. I'm finding as a Wellingtonian, that I have to think about Auckland's transport situation. And I'm sure everyone here is in that situation.

Now and particularly, we've had a change of government, and there is a different mood, if you like, in the room about how our transport should be planned for. How it's going to be paid for and of course, we've got the news that came through just before Christmas, that the new government is keen to bring in a 10 cent per litre fuel levy from July the 1st to help pay for the transport infrastructure that will have to be put in the city to deal with the real pressures.

The one to two billion dollars a year of costs from congestion charges. The pressures of our population growth, which at two to three percent has been much faster than we had expected, and which transport planners had expected. We're going to talk tonight, and I'm sure you're already aware about the discussions around congestion charging. You know, a charge for perhaps, going onto the motorway in the long, long future. Other ways to manage this real challenge we have in Auckland. It's going to be a fun discussion tonight. I'm sort of serious about pay per view. I think we'd have a big audience online. But first I'd like to introduce the Mayor, Phil Goff. So please, Mayor Goff, come, please come to the stage and give us a rundown on how you see things.

- Kia ora Koutou and thank you very much Bernard for that introduction. Despite the fact he's a Wellingtonian, he's been incredibly helpful in helping us address our housing challenges, on the Housing Taskforce, and secretly, like everyone else in the country, he wants to be an Aucklander. And that's the basis of our problem.

Can I acknowledge tonight, our elected representatives here. I might not have caught everybody, but I know that Counsellor Desley Simpson is here, Pippa Coom, Chair of the Waitemata local board, and board members Richard Northey, Adrianna Christy, and Rob Thomas. So welcome, it's always good to have elected representatives here listening to what you have to say on an issue that's really important.

Can I acknowledge also the panel members. Patrick Reynolds, Cynthia Gillespie, Peter Winder, and Stephen Selwood. It's an excellent panel, and I think we're going to get real value out of the interchange of ideas and discussion that comes from that group.

I'm not surprised to see so many people here. I think that transport is the single most frustrating issue that we have to tolerate in our city. I live in the south of Auckland but if I don't leave before six o'clock in the morning, it takes me twice as long to get into town. It takes me an hour and a

half to get into town if I leave at seven in the morning. If I leave before 6:30 at night to go home, the same sort of ratio applies. It's frustrating. It's eating into our productivity. I think the costs of congestion are something like one to two billion dollars on a conservative basis and incredibly frustrating from the viewpoint of the time that you might otherwise be enjoying with family, or doing things that you'd rather be doing, other than being parked on a motorway if you travel by car.

The 10 year budget released today is open for consultation. And it's open from today to the 28th of March, and would certainly encourage everybody to have their say. There will be in Our Auckland being published in a physical form with a feedback form inside, looking at the key proposals of the 10 year budget. But there'll also be a series of Have Your Say meetings, and consultation meetings, and we'll be doing some independently organised surveys to get a cross section so that we know what Aucklanders are thinking.

Firstly, I suppose we begin, and I want to go a little bit broader than transport in setting out what the vision for the city is. I think my vision for the city is that we are a world class city. That we are a city that is globally competitive, that can attract talent, and retain talent to live in our city, that gives our people choice and opportunity, that's a diverse and inclusive city, that's environmentally pristine, and that protects our quality of life.

Now you consider all of those things that make up, what helps create a world class city, you acknowledge that transport, and your ability to move around that city, is at the heart of it.

We know that Auckland, despite its challenges is an attractive place to live. We are growing by 50,000 people a year. That's an over three percent increase in population. Every three years we add a population the size of the city of Tauranga, which I think is our fourth or fifth biggest city. So that is great. It's wonderful to live in a city that's growing, and that has the diversity that growth brings, and the choice and the opportunity that it brings, but it also challenges us. It challenges us in particular in our social and our physical infrastructure which has not kept pace with that growth. In the recent past, we've had a significant level of under investment in infrastructure. And that means a backlog in the work that needs to be done. For example, we don't have enough houses. We need 14,000 extra houses a year. We are only creating 7,000 - that creates problems with shortages and affordability.

We haven't invested enough in water services. We haven't tackled historical problems, like sewage overflows every time it rains, onto our beaches. And of course, in the area of transport, that under investment is most obvious. We are still adding 800 extra cars a week to our roads in Auckland.

I was reading the congestion question report the other day, and they used another statistic. They said in the last four years, the number of kilometres being travelled each year in Auckland is increased by 1.6 billion kilometres. Just consider those two figures and it's not hard therefore to understand why we have the problems that we do.

So the focus of our 10 year budget is on addressing those key challenges, and on finding ways to fund our infrastructure given the two key constraints that we have. The first constraint is that we have already fully utilised the easy way of funding infrastructure. Infrastructures inter-generational - you can borrow to pay for it, but we are close to the debt to revenue ratio that constrains our ability to borrow further.

The Standard and Poor's sets our credit rating based on a 270% debt to revenue ratio. We are coming close to 265%. So borrowing is no longer an easy answer and rates has never been an easy answer given the sensitivity of rates.

People in this audience will probably be able to tell me what your quarterly rates demand was that came in a couple of weeks ago, but you probably can't tell me how much you paid in income tax last week and hence the problem of sensitivity of rates as a source of revenue.

So with the last government, to build transport infrastructure and housing infrastructure we invested new ways of overcoming this constraint. Special purpose vehicles where the debt appears on the books of the government agency and not Auckland's. We were able to raise about 800 million dollars last year in that way towards transport infrastructure for new subdivisions, and other infrastructure.

We were also pleased that the last government finally came to realise that a little bit more of its revenue needed to come back to our city. Now I'm not asking for anything that is out of proportion to our contribution to New Zealand, but I do know, with 34% of the population, and 38% of the GDP of the country, we were paying masses in road taxes, and petrol taxes, and income tax, GST, and in company tax and what we're saying is more of that money has to come back to the city where growth pressures are creating the biggest problems. Because when you lose two billion dollars a year in congestion, that's not a cost just to us in Auckland, it's a cost to the whole country. And therefore it's an issue that the whole country needs to meet.

We now have a new government, and that has produced some advantages from my perspective. The first advantage is an acknowledgement that the focus of our transport needs to be, not simply on more and more motorways that quickly get clogged up, but on public transport, on better utilisation of existing network, and on active modes such as cycling and walking. And I welcome the fact that the government is fully committed to a light rail system.

There is just a few of us in this audience that still remember when the trams ran, and carried most of the commuter traffic in Auckland and we are now at the point where our buses are reaching bus congestion levels on Symond Street, Queen Street, Dominion Road. Light rail needs to be the answer if we are to move people more effectively and efficiently around our city. Out down the isthmus to Mount Roskill, across to Onehunga, across the Manukau Harbour, out to the airport, not just because of the travellers, but because in the precinct of Manukau Airport you've got the fastest growing employment in the country after BCBD in Auckland. And in funding light rail, I would certainly encourage the government to consider whether in line with its announced policy position of using the national land transport fund for things other than roads, that light rail is certainly land transport, and I think it would be a very good idea to fund our light rail from that source, and would encourage the government to think about that.

I would also, but I won't, retrospectively you have to ask why Auckland paid for the City Rail Link, the only piece of heavy rail infrastructure in the country, paid half by a council rather than fully by the central government. But I think it's probably unrealistic to expect a retrospective decision to give us our 1.7 billion dollars back in that regard.

I'd also encourage the government to consider broadening our revenue base. When I've looked at how Australian cities fund their infrastructure through their state government, it's through

devolution of GST, it's through a payroll tax, it's through sales tax. Eric Garcetti was telling me, he's funding his light rail through an extra imposition on sales tax in Los Angeles. We don't have those options available, and I'm not necessarily asking for those specific options. But I would ask this government, as I asked the last government, and probably expect the same reply, that you know, when you've got a city our size, devolution of funding such as a GST would make sense.

The government, I think, takes out of Auckland, 260 million dollars a year by imposing GST on our rates. So, if we increased your rates, theoretically by 10%, which we're not intending to do, they would take that up to 11 or 12% with GST. Well if they're taking the money based on our rate take, giving that back to us would enable us to do more things for ourselves.

One of the things I have to applaud, however, in the change of government, is that an agreement to enable us to charge a regional fuel tax. Now I know taxes aren't popular with anyone, probably including myself, but at the last election I went out and if you attended any of the meetings I went to, you would have heard my statement, which was crystal clear, if you want us to do something about transport problems in Auckland, you've got to give us the financial means to do so. And I said that I would be promoting a regional fuel tax because it was more in line with relating what you were paying, with what you were using in terms of the transport system.

We have in the council, an interim transport levy, \$114 flat rate across everybody. If you're a pensioner that never goes out of your home, you pay the same amount as Sky City pays as a big corporate. That is inequitable, that will go. A regional fuel tax will raise two to three times as much money, probably as much as 1.3 to 1.5 billion dollars over the 10 year budget period. And it will enable us to do a lot more.

We cannot expect provincial New Zealand to pay for the transport system that we have in Auckland. We have to make a contribution ourselves. And if we were to put it on rates, it would be another eight to nine percent on your overall rate increase, which will be about two and a half percent. I think this is a better way of doing it. It's not quite demand management but at least it has components of that. Can I say that any money raised is going to be hypothecated. So you know that when you pay your regional fuel tax it will go into transport. It won't be subverted into any other area. And it will go into a broad pool to fund the Auckland Transport Alignment Project, which will provide for projects right across our city.

Now I'd love, but I don't have the time, but I would love to have talked about what will be in the Auckland Transport Alignment Project. It's vital for all of us but because we had a late election. Well an election close to our 10 year budget, and because there are new policies from a new government, we are in the process of working through that. We should know by the end of March.

But I imagine that it will be about funding the public transport system that we need about extending busways, about making better use of existing transport, of making sure that we have networks for cycling, including, I hope, a sky path across the Harbour Bridge as quickly as possible to connect the North Shore for the first time. You'll be able to walk and cycle between the shore and the city. I think all of those things are important. And I think also connecting the airport by a mass transit system to the Puhunui Railway station would be a quick win for the city. We're working through those options. It's not easy. But I want to finish on this point. Our 10 year budget in 2015 set aside 7.9 billion for transport expenditure over the decade. And this 10 year

plan, three years later, we will be increasing that to 11 to 12 billion. Is it enough? No, it's never enough. Will it make a difference? Yes, it will make a real difference. But if we don't run fast, we won't even stand still, we'll fall backwards. Congestion will get worse unless there are serious investment, and serious alternatives to the use of the single occupant motor vehicle. I hope you enjoy the panel discussion tonight. Thank you for being here to engage in the conversation. Please take part in the Have Your Say event for our 10 year budget. It's your city, it's your money that we're spending. We need to know what you're thinking about it. Thank you very much.

- Yes, I can see there's going be an awful lot of people running fast in the next couple of months, as these big decisions are taken about spending billions of dollars in the next decade or so. Money spent by the Auckland council, but also by the central government. And it's going to be a big national debate. So let's get cracking here with an excellent set of panelists who can dive into the fun policy detail of all of these implications of what we're talking about here. Starting with Patrick Reynolds. So if Patrick could come to the stage. Because Pat, I am a big reader of blog sites, and a publisher of blog sites, and Transport Blog was a real pioneer in helping to broaden and deepen a debate in a particular place. And of course now it is the Greater Auckland website. Patrick is a photographer, and an urbanist, and heavily involved in fostering that debate, Patrick.

- Thank you very much for coming to talk to us today.

- And it wouldn't be a panel without someone who is actually on the inside who can see what's happening with all that planning, and spending, and operations, that's Cynthia Gillespie, who is the Chief Strategy and Development Officer at Auckland Transport. Cynthia welcome to the stage.

There are plenty of people with interests in the debate. But it's great to have someone who's independent, who's outside of the process who's been there before. Who has seen this money spent in various different places and can have some sort of background corporate knowledge about what's going on, and Peter Winder who is the Director of McGredy Winder and Co. Consultants. Please come to the stage Peter. Because I'm sure he will be able to contribute to the debate in a really detailed way, Peter thank you very much.

And we also have Stephen Selwood, who is the Chief Executive of Infrastructure New Zealand. We heard the Mayor talk about the need to spend 11 to 12 billion dollars on transport infrastructure over the next decade. And frankly it should be a lot more. Stephen is in a great position to tell us about some of those needs around infrastructure development and has some views on how that should be done. So I'm really looking forward to this discussion.

And it's going to be better than a Parker fight. I'm sure it is. I'm sorry, I'd like to get things cracking with a discussion about this 10 year budget and the Auckland plan for 2050. It's out there. The consultation document's there. You can all see it. But I wanted to ask Patrick first, you've had a look at this document. What do you think it should include?

- Well there are two documents of course, the high altitude Auckland plan is a plan, and the other is indeed a budget. I'm glad it's been called a budget. So they're quite different things. A

plan is a strategy document that should encapsulate values and vision. And as you go through the plan, I think you can, most of us will agree that the words are fine. The inspirations are noble but what I feel is critically lacking from it, and for it to be effective, is some actual numbers. Some actual, real aspirations. Some, we're going to do this. Even over a long time period. And if you look around the world, you can see that other cities do this really precisely. My current favourite is London. Transport for London plan. Which has really, really firm ambitions. A totally carbon neutral transport system by 2050. Zero deaths, and serious injuries, in the transport system by 2041. It has reduction targets for vehicle kilometer travel, so complete reductions. A target is reducing the amount of driving that happens. Because none of these aims can be met without people driving less. So before it gets into the particulars of what we're going to build, how we're going to offer a greater public transport system or better cycle ways that lists why it's doing that, so you can get buy in from, especially from the bureaucracy. I think this is a really critical thing. Currently I feel the Auckland plan, and I do believe vision documents are really important. You've got to show value. You've got to show why you're doing something. But you've got to have real targets in it, otherwise, the bureaucracy can just kind of drift. It doesn't have any impulse to achieve anything and when we come down to the budget level, we don't have an objective thing to measure against. We don't have something to say, well will this reduce the carbon emissions from the transport system? Will this reduce deaths and injuries? And we heard before, the Mayor say, that congestion is calculated as costing Auckland between one and two billion dollars a year economically. Well deaths and injury is a similar figure. We shouldn't just talk about traffic congestion. Yeah, it's really frustrating to be stuck in congestion. But it's quite annoying to be killed as well. And it's a disaster for why do families, we've got an epidemic at the moment, we're on a complete rebound after a long period of improvements in that. At the moment the road, our road network is incredibly unsafe. And if we have a document that says that safety is our priority, and we go on to prioritise vehicle speed, well we're lying with the first statement. So we need these vision documents to be much more hard hitting than they are.

- So to put you on the spot Patrick, what should be those targets?

- Well they should be zero carbon emissions from the transport system by say 2050. I mean they need to be analysed really carefully. We have a situation at the moment where the morning peak into the city centre, we have a vehicle mode share of below 50%, 47% of people entering the city centre in the am peak are driving their vehicles. Now in 1984 that was 80%. We can continue that trend. But the best way to continue that trend is to have it as a real target. So let's say by 2025 we want it to be 20%. In the Auckland plan we got things called projections, which say we might get to this thing. But they don't say we should try to get this.

- Because in London they have targeted--

- They have absolute targets. And the Mayor is on the blog saying, I'm going to deliver this. My policies will lead to this. So, I mean some people think, oh 30 year plans, it's all waffling, we can't tell anything. But if there are real, real targets that we have to be on our way to, then that makes the shorter term plans measurable against them, and can concentrate minds

enormously, especially by the middle level bureaucrats who have a tendency to just want to do what they've always done.

- So let's say we did target those things, which seem pretty ambitious, you know going from 44% to 20% of private vehicle movements going to the city. Peter, is the current plan there? 11 to 12 billion in spending, is that enough to achieve anything like that?

- No it's not and not even close, and I suppose for me, if I look back over the last 20 years, we spend an inordinate amount of effort trying to get the strategy right. And having debates about whether it's motorways or public transport, and other things. But all of that happens in the context where there has never been enough money to spend, and we still don't have enough money to spend. So to me, it's sort of like, don't worry too much about the strategy. Follow the money and make sure that there's enough money to invest. And I'm sure we're capable of spending it wisely in a whole lot of things. The work that Stephen and I were involved in in 2015, we estimated that stage that we needed to be spending about \$400 million a year more than we currently are. And last year's estimate was that it was about \$600 million a year. Since 2015 construction costs have gone up. We've added a whole light rail system to the strategy and thinking about what we need to do. Where we're at now, great that the governments said yes to a regional fuel tax, and I applaud the council for pursuing that. But it's still nowhere near sufficient to deal with the level of investment that is necessary, both in building capital stuff, and in operating the system.

- So let's scare the heck out of an awful lot of ratepayers and tax payers around the country, and come up with an actual number that it could be. Because this budget talks about 11 to 12 billion. What do we really need to achieve the sorts of things that Patrick's talking about?

- Well as I say, it's in the order of another \$600 million a year. And that's not a new number. That's been around for a long time. And there'll be an argument as to whether you could do it for more or less. But it's going to be of that order no matter how you come at it. And yes it's a scary number. But that to me is the elephant in the room. That's the thing that Auckland and the government actually have to grapple with because the current funding tools simply won't take us there. And, as I said, wonderful that there's a regional fuel tax on the table that wasn't several years ago. But it's still not at a level that's remotely close to where we need to be in terms of the total amount revenue on the table.

- so let's go there. Let's go to those funding tools. Stephen, what's your view on how we can bridge this funding gap.

- Well this is not really rocket science. There's only a few forms of funding. One is taxes, which is the one we're talking about today. And it sets out a property rates tax increases. Two and a half percent seems very modest given our investment backlog. I would have thought that should have been going up by more than two and a half percent. and I think Aucklander's should be supporting that. I mean you've got to make a choice. Do you accept what you've currently got, and just incrementally grind to a faster and faster halt, or do you actually invest in a better

future? And that requires thinking about spending a bit more. The second option, is user pays in some sort of shape or form. And we have to make a decision, I think, in Auckland, sooner rather than later, to shift to some sort of pricing regime on our road system. You know, if we put another 10 cent per litre on petrol as is proposed, plus GST. Once you take off the interim transport levy in place, we're probably niching about another 100 million per annum. Well, there's 15% of the problem solved. What are we going to do about the other five to seven, and I think the number is now much bigger than 600 million 'cause we knew, when we did the ACHAP analysis last year that that was actually going to make things worse even if we were investing at that pace. So the number's bigger than 600 million a year. The only thing that's going to move the needle anywhere near that would be something like a motorway congestion charge. And just to put that into context for you. There's a million cars a day join the Auckland motorway network on a daily basis, a million. Just imagine if they paid on average two bucks for every trip. There's two million bucks a day. Now there'll be a bit of a demand management effect obviously because of the pricing. So you're not going to get a straight 365 days a year times two million. But you're going to get somewhere between four and 500 million revenue out of that. Now that sort of a charge is not a punitive charge. And if we were smart about how we levied that charge, and made it variable so that people who got on the motorway at peak would pay a higher rate than those that got on the motorway off peak, then you could start to manage demand as well as raise a heck of a lot of money. And by that process you would also encourage the sort of mode shift. People will make choices about when and how they travel. They would make decisions about what route they travel. And do they really have to be all on the road at the same time. And maybe employers might start to think actually do I really have to run a nine to five working day. Could I be more flexible with working hours. And it's all about getting the incentives right. Unless we make bold decisions around that. We're just going to keep on tinkering away at this problem, and it's just going to get worse and worse and worse. It's time now to be bold.

- So wouldn't that though make it really difficult for poorer people living on the edges of town who have to go back and forth across town to maybe two or three jobs, dropping off kids. Wouldn't they really find it difficult to pay that two, three dollars to get onto the motorway, and wouldn't they just go around to the other smaller roads around it and block those up?

- Well, here's the really interesting thing. The southern motorway, everyone knows the Mount Wellington crossover beside Sylvia Park, and the motorway narrows down to two lanes at that point. At morning peak, 1,000 cars a day get through that point because the traffic is travelling so slow, we are using the motorway system at its most inefficient way. If traffic was able to travel at 60 kilometres an hour through that point, then you would actually get 3,000 cars. The road has capacity to put 3,000 cars at that speed. So if you were to charge a price that would balance the supply and demand so that cars could travel at 60 kilometres an hour, and not only cars could travel at 60 kilometres an hour, but so could public transport services, buses, express service buses in the same sort of corridor. So you're starting to provide viable options for people who maybe are not able to provide that two dollar toll. But at the end of the day, those people will have choices. Because they can take the parallel route on the great south road if they so choose, or maybe other forms of public transport, or moving around the city might be possible because we will have the revenue stream to enable the debt to fund the public

transport necessary. But if we keep on just sort of burying our head in the sand, and say, oh gosh, it's going to have a cost impact, well I'm sorry we're not ever going to make the decisions that we need to actually address the problem.

- So let's look, in perhaps in a broader way, at the amount of investment that's needed. And also the idea of using congestion charges, this is something a bit broader and maybe longer term than just a motorway charge. I wanted to bring Cynthia into the conversation here because Cynthia comes to us from Australia and has studied how congestion charging schemes and other places deal with these sorts of infrastructure challenges. I wonder if you could tell us, what are the sorts of things they're doing elsewhere to try and deal with these issues, and could they be applicable here.

- Thank you, before I start, I just want to take it back a step. The discussion that we're having now in Auckland is no different than any other city in the world. Everyone, if you gave me, and New York's a classic example. They've just appointed a new CEO into the transport for New York system. He needs something like, he's estimated, 39 billion dollars to make his transport system work. We can have this conversation for the next 30 years. In fact, the first document I picked up when I started in the job six months ago, was a document written in 1965 that says you have to invest in public transport and you have to invest in infrastructure equally. Well you've invested in infrastructure the whole way through, and you've only just started investing in public transport. We've got to start to change the conversation. The conversation can't be, we need more money. There is no more money. It's not coming from anywhere. We have to change the way we're thinking as Auckland to move. And you know it is still about investment. And we've still got to talk about how we're getting people, the mode share changed onto public transport. And to make that effective, we've got to invest more in public transport. And you know, that's part of the conversation. It's not all the conversation. The active transport piece that's been so effective around the city is a small component of it. The thing that I see is that we have to continually have conversations about we want to introduce a congestion levy. And yes they do work, and they have worked in other parts of the world, for different reasons. Singapore's different to London experience. And US is a different story again. But the story that you continually see is we continue to manage transport systems as we have to have congestion management is the panacea to the congestion issue, the public transport is. It's not. We've got to start managing the transport system as a system and it is a combination of a spend on all of those things. So we have to have, you know, we've been given a 12 billion dollar envelope, we now have to work at what is the best way to spend that. We will not fix congestion in a 12 million dollar envelope. We won't. You could give me 60 billion dollars in the next 10 years, I won't fix congestion, 'cause you will always fill those roads. That's how it works in every city in the world. So we have to start the conversation about what will make people move to public transport. The mode shift to public transport at the moment, while we've got a celebrated 20 million people moving on the public transport system, and it's usually successful, and it is only seven years old. What we found is, the mode share, over the last 10 years, is only about one percent of the population. So while the public transport has grown, so has the use of cars. That's the conversation we've got to have. Why do people want to use cars. Is public transport not effective? Is it not efficient? You know I saw an article today, and I don't know who wrote it in

the paper about how long it takes to get from Westland into the city. It took the cyclist 31 minutes, at New Lynn, sorry, 31 minutes. It took the bus 57 minutes. It took to drive 56 minutes. People will not shift modes while it's slower to get on public transport than it is to drive. So that's the story we've got to have. That's where we've got to start to invest. Not just building infrastructure, for the sake of road infrastructure. It has to be about public transport focus. And you know, Patrick talked rightly about the safety issue. That's an issue that's emerging pretty quickly in Auckland as well. But that's where we have to have that discussion. How do we actually as a community work out what's effective for people to do that mode share. That's the discussion we need to have. And that's what we need to understand at Auckland Transport, what will help you get into a mindset where it's easy for you to get public transport than it is today.

- Just one thing on the debates about public transport projects. We often have these big debates about the big honking project, you know the CRL, or the waterview tunnel, you talked about a system. Should we also be talking about the second tier projects?

- So coming from a country where local government doesn't invest, and doesn't have to pay for strategic assets which I find alarming, in terms of, you people sitting in the audience have bought trains, you are paying for a tunnel, it's not done in Australia. It's simply not sustainable in the future for that to happen, ratepayers can't pay. The Mayor will never be able to cap and keep your rates at two and a half percent if you continue to invest, and have to pay for strategic assets. That's the first issue that I see, and we've got to have that conversation. It's a really difficult conversation with people from Wellington. But you know, that's the first issue.

- I quite like the Mayor's suggestion of asking for the billion dollars back.

- Well I would be.

- And Stephen Joyce is a bit quiet at the moment, but maybe he could come up with a chequebook..

- But while we're focusing on those big projects, and everybody knows politicians love big projects. You can cut a ribbon, and everybody loves them. It's the same the worldwide. I want to talk about the tunnel. I want to talk about the big roads. The thing that I'm seeing is, and the feedback that I'm getting from community and local boards is that we are missing that secondary level. So we foresee on the big projects, at the expense on what's actually happening on our roads, and sealed roads, and safe roads, and the public transport system. So we've got to have, we've got to step away from being attracted to these fantastically big, sexy projects. So you know we've got to start thinking about that next level down and what it actually is delivering. What we as Auckland Transport are delivering for the community. So you know, I think that's one of the things that I've noticed when I first got here is we're not having that conversation about really what's happening on the local roads, for the local people,. So that's part of the issue.

- Something that's completely relevant. We have this very odd situation where we keep electing Mayors who stand on a platform of providing strategic assets. But they don't control that decision. That's controlled down in that little fishing village at the bottom of the island.

- Hey, that's my home you're talking about.

- They control, exactly, I mean there's an imbalance. And it's not only the question that nearly 40% of the GDP is generated by this city. Also 50% of the growth happens here. We do need to move to a situation, hopefully we have with the new government that understands the value of Auckland, and not just the costs. So we do need to get Auckland Transport and the Mayor out of big strategic assets and actually into providing local stuff. But can I just say one thing about this enormous problem with we need infinite money. It's really important what you don't build as well as what you do build. And that last ATAP, which not only said that we had to build all these gazillion things, including many motorways parallel to motorways all over the show, is it also said, and you know, you referred to this, Stephen, earlier, that the modelling, it just gets worse. And part of that reason is we're still building last century's ideas as we've moved to proposing to build this century's. Yes we need to find more money, and more creative sources of funding, and breeding multi-generationally. But we've also got to stop building the bad shit.

- Stephen can I just jump in a bit for that-- Yes we need to stop building bad stuff, but I'll take you back to the comment the Mayor made at the outset. If we're adding a population the size of Tauranga every three years then that means that everything that goes with the population of Tauranga needs to be added to Auckland--

- The can't all drive.

- They can't all drive, but it's not just transport, you know. Hospital beds, schools, auto supply, waste water, the whole lot needs to be funded. And that's got to be delivered every three years under the current growth rate. And I suppose we are reflecting on the discussion today, there's been discussion on and off in Auckland since the 90s about some form of congestion charge to try and raise money and to deal with this. And it hasn't happened. And the current work that's called the congestion questions on a timeline that mean it might, it requires the Mayor's words recently, it's not within the next three to four years or anytime soon after that. Which to me says, somewhere we need to come to grips with something that might be more achievable than that sort of approach to funding. Perhaps there's a different rationale or engagement with the government about the nature of its revenue sources as the means indicated that gets us into a different space. Because yes we can focus on more sensible things to build but, my gut tells me, the end of the day, the bottom line will be, there simply still won't be enough money within the current funding prime group to do what is necessary.

- There's also quite a bit of efficiency to be achieved. And I think this is within Auckland Council's power. At the moment the plan for how we grow Auckland enables significant growth, in fact massive growth to the north around Dairy Flat, Silverdale parallels sort of a level of growth out to the west, and then slightly larger again down in the Papakura or Drury area, and

north of Pukekohe. The plan is to also lay out more urban density in the bay and existing built up area. But the trouble with that level of intensification. It's not high intensity intensification close to public transport which is fundamental to really getting the sort of numbers that public transport starts to become a viable option for people. But with subdividing sections in Pakuranga and Mount Roskill and inner Howick, and out Henderson way, and people are putting up another house on their existing section, and typically not that well aligned to public transport, so wherever another house goes up, there's another two or three cars go in that location as well. And by that growth strategy, were actually increasing the level of car density as much as we our housing density. So if you think of the growth strategy now, that enables growth both northwest and south at the same time, thereby creating demand for movement between those three locations, where you're carving out the middle with urban infill, and you wonder why traffic congestion is getting worse. This is not rocket science. So what we could do, is we need scale development. And Infrastructure New Zealand is advocating we should promote a satellite city development. And our argument is to the south, for a whole variety of reasons that I won't go into now. But effectively what it means, is that you could do development around the main trunk line, you would have to put the fourth main line in to enable the capacity. But that sort of scale development is the sort of level of density that we require to really make rail work. And when you think about it, all of the key employment areas for Auckland are in and around the main trunk line to the south. And so I'm not just talking 30,000 households down there, but actually building a city of the scale that would attract international investment. Would achieve economies of scale. That would enable modular construction of homes that will bring down the cost of construction. And a design lead city that could enable walking, cycling, live, work, play, and all of those things that we want. So we have a choice. We can either just keep on doing what we've always done which is incremental growth everywhere, and try to backfill the infrastructure after the event, always scrambling for money, and that's the Auckland story. Or we could change how we think about how Auckland grows. But inevitably we are going to need more money. And we're going to have to use our existing transport systems more effectively. So that's where the pricing component is fundamental to progress.

- So that's one view of how a plan, could go. What about this other view that I hear sometimes that why are we building all these motorways and railways when we've got this new technology coming. We've got driverless cars. We've got ride sharing. We've got electric bikes you know. Hey, why spend all our money, our taxpayer money, our rate payer money and dream up these new funding schemes when you know, Zuckerberg, and Gates and Co. are going to solve our problems. Patrick?

- Well driverless car, however the car is driven, or powered it's still a car taking up space. And all of the evidence that we have currently from rideshare companies, Mr. Uber is here I believe, is that they increase congestion in a city. So the idea is fanciful that these technologies will decongest our streets by getting more people to take more journeys. Currently we have an average occupancy of private motor vehicles of 1.1. So there's 1.1 person per vehicle. Once we have vehicles that can drive themselves without people we will drop the average occupancy of our vehicles below one. We will send them home to get our homework we forgot. They will be running on errands, and they're called zombie vehicles. So the point about Avs at the moment,

is that they're in a particular point in their development, that they are sufficiently far enough away that people can fantasise these and--

- Cynthia.

- I would like to support what Patrick's saying about driverless vehicles but we've got an issue about congestion and mode share today. We can't, you know we can, we should be, there's no doubt we should be watching the future because transport systems have to be a combination of a lot of stuff. And the driverless car, I'd love a driverless car, 'cause I hate driving. But you know, the deal is he's right. As many cars as you put on that network, we've got to stop talking about cars. Let's start talking about different things. Let's start the conversation about, you know, should we have driverless buses? They're out there. Las Vegas put theirs in. And they've got a fleet of 25. They crashed on first day. But they've got 25 out there. They're running them around. We've got to start talking about different ways to do technology that is here today. So you know, Australia's talking about on demand. And on demand services in Auckland, so you know, we use, spoke, and hub model to get people around in public transport. But the issue that I see is that we don't have enough, you can't get to the rail stations. It's really hard, park and rides. You know you've got low numbers of park and rides. That's yesterday's technology. How do you, you know, on demand is how you ring up and say I want to move here at this time and you want to take me to a train station, a bus station, or if you're in the city, you know, around. And we need to start using that sort of, that's the future of mobility, you know, for Auckland at the moment. That's the next generation that we're talking about. We should watch this stuff. We should be watching mobility as a service. We should be watching what the world's doing. Don't make the mistakes the world makes with first generational technology. Most of you in the room should understand that. But there's things we have to do now. And the investment in public transport is about that next generation of public transport uplift, that will change us having to use cars. We, as I said before, we need to understand what will make you use public transport and get out of your cars.

- So what has actually worked overseas to get people to change their culture.

- A real transport network. We've only got one joined up network at the moment. And that's the driving network.

- It's really not rocket science. You need to be able to walk up and catch the public transport vehicle without having to think about the time table. And it needs to take you where you want to go. And you need to be able to not walk too far at the other end, and not get wet. And none of these things are rocket science. We all understand what they are. We're still a long way away for there. Even 10 minute rail frequencies is not the walk up and catch the next one sort of experience. So that's the direction we need to head, and we need to be realistic that we're not going to bridge the gap between where we are now, and that sort of network in a hurry. And it's going to cost a lot of money to get there. But that's the sort of system we need to provide.

- So we're talking that the light rail proposal that's here at the moment or more than that?

- Yeah, more than that.

- Whether it's light rail, advanced bus, whatever, the keys are travel time, you know, can you do it faster than cycle. Is it reliable. Can you walk up without thinking about the time table. Can you do it without getting wet. And is it reasonably affordable. Those are the things you've got to be able to deliver.

- Can I just remind everyone in the room though, that the issue is not just around commutes from home to work, actually the transport system is also about providing mobility for our entire economy. It's about business trips. It's about getting concrete to the housing, building site. And it's about the commerce, the jobs, and everything that drives our society in Auckland. So whilst it's really important to keep a very strong, and I 100% support the focus on improving public transport services and increasing the urban density to enable that to occur, we also have to keep in mind that we're all going to those jobs, and those jobs are depending on getting goods and services to all sorts of people across the city. Most businesses in Auckland, 96% of businesses in Auckland employ 20 or fewer people. That's a really important number.

- But congestion is caused by private vehicle. 77% of vehicles on the road are private occupant, single occupant vehicles, so by solving, you're absolutely right, I completely agree with you about the really important freight, and deliver, and trading tasks, but they are being held up by all of us sitting in our cars. A reluctant granny or undergraduate has to drive because there's not a good alternative. It's causing congestion.

- But the primary demand here is during the commute period. And that's the viable option that public transport can address. The trips, the business trips that are across the network today on a daily basis. I mean there used to be a peak hour, or a peak two hours which was kind of seven until nine. Well on almost the entire southern motorway, particularly northbound on the southern motorway, and southbound on the northern, that peak is now right across the whole day. Driving the economy as well as getting people to and from work.

- But those business travels, the couriers, and the concrete trucks, and the vans are they going to pay their fair share out of this? 'Cause we've got this fuel tax coming up which many businesses won't have to pay for.

- That's exactly why we should be pricing the roads, not using petrol taxes as the primary revenue stream. Of course they will pay their share if you had the right pricing mechanism in place. And it's appropriate that they do. And it should be factored into their business decision making about where to locate their businesses and all those sorts of incentives. But petrol tax alone will hit the motorists. But it actually, unless it's on diesel, it won't make a contribution, and it becomes a very problematic issue. So you've got to get your revenue raising tools targeted at those who use the service.

- So just to focus on that for a minute. 'Cause there's lots to talk about fuel taxes and motorway charges. There is an equity impact on poorer people here. How are we going to make sure that the people who can't really afford this stuff don't get pinged in the way that we have these tobacco taxes, and all sorts of things--

- There's two ways in Auckland. Auckland is very specific. Many of the well to do communities are closer into the CBD. So you don't really want a distance based charge which is common in other jurisdictions. Because if you have distance based then those who live in Manukau, and Henderson, etc will end up paying a lot more money. So you need an access charge, not a distance charge. So you could get on the motorway, and I'm using the southern as the example, at Manukau for three bucks in the morning, and you can drive as far as you like for that three bucks. But if the person in Remuera gets on, when they could've actually taken a bus, walked or cycled because they had much better options, they will have to pay the same sort of fee for a much shorter trip and that's designed to incentivize their behaviour. But also for those that are truly disadvantaged then you have to find another way of supplementing their income. We do it with housing. There is no reason why we couldn't do it with transportation.

- Peter.

- Equity in terms of who pays is fundamentally important. And the work that the consensus building group did in Auckland through 2013/14 spent quite a bit of time looking at that. Fuel taxes have the potential to be quite regressive. Poor people tend to live at the edge of the city. They tend to travel to places where they don't have choices by public transport. They tend to work shifts, or multiple jobs which means that they drive a lot. Fuel taxes disproportionately hit them. Alternatively businesses that use diesel aren't caught by a petrol tax. (It's a fuel tax) Excellent, great to hear. Perhaps I should pay more attention to the detail. The other thing that I wanted to say is that I'm a problem. White, middle aged male, I drive, I enjoy driving, unlike Cynthia, and my car is an extension of who I am, and part of a perception of who I am, that's the generation that I come from. And trying to get me to do something different will require a whole lot of effort. And my children are completely different. They don't drive much. They catch public transport because that's how they've grown up, that's how they engage with the city. And they have no expectation that they would drive to work and park a car. And I think in the core of that, is a quite significant opportunity for us in terms of the way that we deliver services, think about them, engage with people, and also in terms of who we think about who the problems are in terms of the choices that they make and can afford to make.

- But politically they don't have a voice, 'cause they don't vote so much.

- So Patrick

- Yeah, I mean, I think it's very clear we need to move to a form of road tax because electric vehicles alone will render fuel excise redundant. And especially my neighbour with his Tesla. He'd be very happy, he wouldn't notice any kind of charge. But how we design it is completely critical. The idea of simply charging the motorway system is fatally flawed. Why do we build

motorways in the first place. To relieve the local roads. If we put a financial incentive for people to pour back onto rat run, the point of building waterview will be lost. Every single car will be on Dominion Road. We know from, we know very clearly that people will go a long way to paying two dollars.

- You don't understand the efficiency of demand management pricing that will actually increase the capacity of the motorway and actually allow more traffic to use it. Because more vehicles can access that Mount Wellington corridor at 60 k's an hour--

- Stephen, your little example was very poor. If you get 3000 more vehicles through there in the am peak, they just get to the next roadblock quicker.

- You know the point, you know that that design

- I'm curious too. I've taken an interest in behavioural economics in the last few years, and they now win the Nobel prizes. And this rational economics view that people will see a two or three dollar charge and get out their spreadsheets and work it out. Don't they just jump off--

- I can tell you Bernard, it is working today in the US, where they have managed motorway lanes. (They are not kiwis)

- You know what they call them don't you Stephen. They call them Lexus lanes don't they.

- Well maybe kiwis are completely different, I don't know. But I suggest not. Look it is happening right now. We're, and numerous in effect tens of motorway managed lanes where people pay a variable toll, they guarantee a speed of 50 miles an hour, you pay the toll, you get the service, and people have the choice to go on a parallel free lane which is congested. So from that point of view it is perfectly feasible. It is doable. We can talk about kind of long term plans for congestion pricing. But Singapore hasn't delivered their electronic GPS based system yet. They're the leaders in the world, and their context is quite remarkably from Auckland.

- Cynthia.

- I'm still concerned that in Auckland we're talking about, and it's progressive discussion, and we should have this discussion. Australia's not going to have this discussion. Politically it's unpalatable. But we're still having a discussion where we've got a transport system. London, 180 years old. Sydney, 130 years old. Auckland, your transport, your road network is 30, 50 years old. Your public transport system is seven years old. So we should be having those conversations about the options, but the you know, cars are a viable mode. Freights got to be considered, you know, your productivity of Auckland. You've got to have a combination of buses, active transport, rail, we've got to get the balance right. We've got 12 billion dollars. What do we do with that 12 billion dollars to get that balance right. And we haven't got all the answers.

- For those people that have the mobile phones, the smartphones, and you've already logged on to Slido.com on your phone and put in the event code X115, now is your chance if you haven't already done it, to send us a very pithy question, as opposed to a very long statement. A very pithy question like why, or what, with a few extra words, but really tight. And then we have a chance to take questions from the Slido, and actually people have been doing this, and we've already got a few questions. And we'll throw them to the panel for a discussion. So, and one of the things we're not going to do is go deep down into individual roads, if that's alright because, this is a broad city wide plan. So I wanted to go to this question where we've got the question, why don't we make the light rail crossing of the Manukau part of the old Mangere bridge replacement, reducing cost and negative visual impact of another bridge. So the question is why don't we use that old Mangere bridge to do that? Anyone got a particular view on that?

- Well we need to rebuild the old one even for people to walk across it, so we'll have to do a new bridge, but that's a good alignment, and there's a good argument for that, and it should be studied.

- I think you'll find that the piers of the new bridge are designed to support heavy rail--

- Yes, so the next question we've got is, can we talk about other important issues like resilience, health and safety, energy. And we haven't talked much about climate change and carbon emissions tonight.

- We ought to.

- Well let's get into it. 'Cause London's got this target of 2050, no carbon emissions, can we actually do that in New Zealand, 'cause we're pretty addicted to our cars, and diesel--

- Yeah, that's the worst argument I've ever heard. This idea about personal character is really irrelevant. Supply leads demand. People use what there is. No one can catch a train that isn't there. What we, if we only build roads, people will drive. It's really easy. It's not about a character, personal character, or a weird character that we have, that other places don't have. Australians and Americans all love their cars, and the same kind of men in Australia and America love their cars in the same way that Peter does. We aren't uniquely different from anywhere else. Auckland is a city. And we have all of the rules that any city has.

- Stephen.

- Well I think that, I mean this is one of the attractions of concentrating growth in one location. Because it creates an opportunity to do an innovation kind of development. So you'd be looking at solar energy supply rather than continued dependence on. Where we kind of retro fit on existing networks it is always much harder to be innovative. Because you've got pockets of developments all over the place, but scale development in one location. Which would enable you to bring on the latest technology. Both from energy, resilience, and live, work, play creates an opportunity to design our future rather than trying to retrofit. Now I'm not saying we shouldn't

do development in the existing. Of course we should. But that should be targeted much more closely at public transport corridors, than allowing a little bit of growth everywhere. And the combination of the two would potentially be transformational.

- Cynthia, the whole area of health and safety. You know the deaths and serious injuries. How much of a factor should that be in the debate?

- I think, first thing I want to say is that to be fair to the local government here, the Mayor has actually made a commitment to C40. And he has said that from 2025 we will not buy any more public transport, or put any more public transport on the roads that is not zero emissions. So that's happening.

- That's seven years away.

- That's pretty soon in the lifetime of a bus.

- It is, and understand that you probably have in Auckland the newest bus fleet that I've ever seen anywhere in the world. So understand that. You could change them. You could change them, you now, in a couple of years. I don't think you can afford to change the fleet. But so that's a sensible solution, is that as the fleet ages and you do a normal fleet replacement you'd put it out, and you'd change them then. So the Mayor has made that statement. You guys keep beating yourselves up. You have put in electric chains in the last few years. You have got, transport is, there are high emissions from transport, and it's 37%, I don't quite know the exact figure of the emissions in Auckland are from transport. And we're talking about land transport. I haven't even had a discussion about what's happening off your harbour. Although I did note when we were at that port open day the other day, that they've made a commitment that by 2050 I think, that they're going to be emissions free. There is an enormous amount being done. Auckland Transport do little things like we're changing our fleet out to an electric fleet. So people are trying to do things. See the most forward thinking city, in terms of electric vehicle uptick, we've got to do more policy work in terms of electric vehicle uptick to make it more attractive. But I think you know, there's a lot being done. And you are progressive. It's not enough. We need to continue to have the conversations. But the Mayor and his, the councilors have made that commitment so I think, you know, that is happening. In terms of, the thing that I'm alarmed about the most at the moment is DSI rate.

- DSI meaning?

- Deaths and serious injuries on the road so in the last three years it's gone up by 78%. That is extraordinary so you know I think people need to start having the conversation not only about getting out of cars. That's an obvious one because congestion is the biggest thing in your minds today until one of your loved ones is killed on the road, and then that will be on the foremost of your minds. So we need to start thinking about having that conversation about why people are dying on our roads, at a rate of about one a week. That may be the wrong stat, somebody said more than that. So you know the stats, the statistics are, that I looked on that in my Twave site

that we need to be having that conversation, why are people dying on our roads? And there's a lot of reasons. But we need to start thinking about how we're going to invest to stop that.

- So what could you do on the motorway, and other networks to reduce that rate?
- Well visions, the obvious things is what works everywhere else in the world. And we don't need to local studies to find that how we're different, we just need to adopt it and get on with it and make it policy.
- But doesn't vision zero, isn't in the current, in the current plans.
- Well it's the government policy. And it certainly hinted at in the Auckland plan, in slightly vague language. But it needs to be adopted as firm strategy.
- Right. We've got some, couple of questions here about bikes. We haven't actually talked much about cycling here as part of the discussion, what do our panel think about you know, everyone using, or a lot more people using bikes. Particularly the electric bikes, which there's a few hills in Auckland. I'm from Wellington, there's some real hills there. They're quite useful.
- I'll surprise you. Because half the time I do actually commute to work on an electric bike, which you weren't expecting at all. And the issues are quite simple-
- Is it a Holden Commodore electric bike?
- No, it's a nice electric bike, pedal assist. For me the issues are simple. It rains a lot, and when it rains it's not so nice. And it's at less safe. And whilst the cycle network is fantastic where it is, where you leave the dedicated cycle lane and into the traffic it's not safe. So you know there's, for me there's a whole lot of issues about how you manage that interface. And we need to spend more money in order to make it more attractive. And I think the balance tips quite quickly when you get into that space. And the health benefits of exercise alongside everything else in my mind, makes it well worth pursuing.
- And are we actually including those health benefits in the sort of cost benefit analysis.
- This is a problem because along with death and serious injury there's public health outcomes. So we are now suffering an absolute epidemic of what are called the diseases of inactivity. And this epidemic is principally a result of cars. So we drive because it's convenient. And we are not getting really simple daily exercise. So the exercise you get just walking to a public transport thing, or riding a bike, that sort of daily exercise is incredibly valuable. Adds to your life. It reduces heart disease, diabetes, etc. We need to build this into our daily routine. And cities and countries that have high levels of cycling and walking are obviously, the Dutch and the Danes have amazing data on public health. It saves a nation a fortune. And human misery is low. Everything about the bicycle, it is kind of the most magic pill. It's the most energy, everything about it works. And we ought to be just doing everything we can to stimulate it.

- Yeah, but what about when it rains?

- There are, I think is amazing technology called raincoats. It's new I know, but, cities that are well adapted for cycling, people you know, it's minus 20 in those cities. Hills and rain are a small issues, we know what works. It's building a safe network. When you build a safe network, you get a transformational shift--

- It is, it is about the safety factor. You know I ride bicycle as well. But I won't ride on a ride on a road where I have to share it with another vehicle. You just can't feel safe. So you know Auckland has invested a lot in cycle ways. And we will continue to invest in cycle ways. My view is, you know, my personal view is, that strategic cycle network has been hugely successful. And it needs to be finished. But we've then got to start, and people will go. You know there's different opinions around the room, of course, but, you know, then we have to start focusing on how we get the kids to use the cycle ways, and have their safe, you know I would not let my son ride to school if he wasn't safe. So we got to start focusing on that next generation of cycle ways in terms of getting kids onto cycle ways, not just the adults.

- We all know what happens on the school holidays right? The roads get clearer. Right, I mean some people estimate, I've seen estimates that's about 10% less traffic when kids aren't going to school. We know what that traffic is, it's parents dropping children off at schools. So simply a network of cycle ways that are school centered, and we get kids back to doing what they did in the, what they used to do, and riding to school. They'll learn better. They'll be healthier. And frankly cyclings a joy. So long as you're not, you know, sharing it with an 18 wheeler.

- I love cycling. I cycle to and from work in Parliament, up the Brooklyn Hill for those of you who know Wellington. That's a lot of fun. Up it's a lot less fun. But we've had a debate in Wellington, and I'm guessing that you've had debates like this too, where attempts to put cycle ways down roads have caused outrage amongst car drivers. And you've had this incredible political clash between people saying well, you just got rid of one of my car parks to make this thing, or you're forcing me to open my door out into a main road, I'm going to vote against that and get rid of that councillor that did that and stop it. How do you get round that political, you know, reaction from people who are against that stuff.

- You never will. People are allowed to have opinions. And people, you know, they should share their opinions. I love the way Aucklanders do it. I love that we have conversations. In Australia you just do what you like, and then you don't worry about it. And you say, people don't get a say. But you know, lobby groups are there for a reason. They keep bureaucracy honest. So I think it's reasonable to have those discussions. And you're allowed to have views either way. But we have to build the system for everyone to use. You know I keep continue to harp about options. But it has to be safe. You know at the end of the day, if it's not safe, people won't use it, and we will have wasted our money. So we've got to make sure we get that right. You know I think that people are allowed to, people should be allowed to have views.

- It changes all, change is always fraught. There's nothing to see here particularly.
- So we've got another question from our Slido system. What do the panel think about congestion charges to come into the city centre. Abit like one of those ring type arrangements that they have in London. I lived in London for a few years, and got pinged by it a couple of times, and pledged never again to drive my car into town. So what do we think about London style congestion ring charge things.
- So my view is Auckland's not London. Auckland's a very weird shape, long, skinny, two harbours, and the CBD accounts for, we're talking about only about 16% of employment. And which means that anything that focuses just on that actually means a whole lot of people would get a completely free ride. And it won't actually necessarily address the challenge. So I'm less convinced about being able to pick up something is like that, and say we'll have one of those. If we were to go down the route of a charging system it's going to have to be a whole lot more broad than that to deliver an impact that the transport network can cope with to deliver outcomes that are equitable in terms of who is paying. And to avoid wholesale land use responses that are unanticipated. If you only charged around the CBD for instance, then suddenly doing business in the CBD becomes less attractive, but actually we want lots of businesses to be there because that is the most cost effective place to provide public transport, where we've just spent a whole lot of money getting rail and are now building CRL in order to support that kind of stuff. So you need to be quite careful as to how we think about these things.
- There's always boundary effects.
- London is starting to, London was effective for the first four years, correct me if I'm wrong, and that the effectiveness fell away after that first four years. Haven't been able to put the price up, and it's hugely expensive. In my view it is, 12 pounds is expensive for me. But you know, I think it did work for a little while. Then people changed the way they used big, you know they stopped taking big trucks in there, and now little trucks run around. The 3.5 ton trucks run around in there. So it hasn't been as hugely successful as they would like to have been. And I spoke to the lady who used to work for Boris when they put the congestion system in, and you know, people talk about a congestion system as a revenue raiser. If we're talking about as a revenue raiser, we're talking about it for the wrong reasons.
- Another question through the Slido system is around the light rail idea. Which obviously the new government in Wellington has talked about, and has been talked about here as well. Is this the solution? Do we just need to wet down two or three of these light rail projects, create a nice loop around the city. Is that the way to go, 'cause they're pretty expensive.
- Nothing is the solution. So get that out of your head.
- Yeah, look I agree with that. This is a multifaceted issue we've got to deal with. Light rail will undoubtedly make a contribution I think. When we think about light rail though, we've got to think about the urban planning that goes along with light rail. Just to put it along a corridor to go

to and from the airport as an airport connection link, actually it's probably not a particularly marvelous economic investment. But if you could do significant urban development that would enable people who might work and be employed at the airport who could live within proximity of the light rail, and the city as well. Obviously the other end of the line, and points along, then you can start to get something viable. But we've got to think about transport and land use in a connected way. And too often we talk about transport projects by themselves, or urban development by itself. And unless we join the dots between the two, frankly we're just self-defeating.

- Where's the blue ribbon for me to cut though. How do I, you know, have a big announcement and put on some high verse and cut the blue ribbon if you're talking about systems.

- The big announcement then becomes the whole story around how we're growing the city in a much more sensible and smart way. So it's not just a light rail project, it's also the housing project that goes with it. And it's the employment project that goes with it. That is a much bigger announcement, and a fantastic opportunity for any politician.

- Transport isn't an end in itself. Transport only has value in and as much as it supports land use. They're the different sides of the same coin. So Stephen's absolutely right. So the light rail programme is a great idea, and a really good plan, but it must come with up zoning along its route. And people seem to lose their mind when you say the word airport. They seem to focus entirely on then getting on a jet. It's really not about that. It's about the entire journey all the way along. All the people working there. The people in Mangere who have very poor transport options and are very severed by the motorways through there. So it's up zoning along the route. Dominion Road is already semi intense. And so it's a good place. The buses as you said before, are full. It is a good, it's an ideal route through the isthmus, but it needs to come with an up zoning again along that route.

- Right it is time now--

- The only thing I would add to that, I think light rail is a good solution for the city. The city can't pay for it. It has to be paid for by central government, rate payers can't afford it.

- That whole point of public health, maybe that's a pitch you can make to Wellington to say that improve public health in Auckland through increased use of cycling, and you know the bus through fewer car wrecks, and the like could be paid for by cheaper hospital visits that the central government has to pay for.

- Yeah it's very difficult though to ask. I mean the health systems underfunded right. So if you were to financialize all the economic benefits of public transport, you would actually have transfers from the health budget too, subsidised public transport. But you cannot reasonably expect the health budget to be paying for a light rail system instead of the dialysis machine.

- That would be quite a headline, yes. But it is interesting that maybe there needs to be a more integrated approach to funding this. And we haven't actually talked about the real elephant in the room. Which is the current governments adherence to a 20% of net debt target, which is actually stopping Auckland and the rest of the country from building the infrastructure that it actually needs for the next generation. In my view, for what it's worth, that 20% debt target is going to make whatever you want to do over the next 10 years, really difficult for no good reason. It's time now to open it up to questions from the audience. A bit like the Joseph Parker fight where we invite the audience to come into the ring. It's safe, really it is. But we are going to ask people to put their hands up. And I'm going to pick people. But I really want to ask you nicely, at the moment, ask you nicely to keep your questions tight. And they must have a question mark at the end of it. If it's got a full stop or an explanation mark, not so interested. Question mark please. So yes, we have the microphone as well, so over here, yes, we have someone. Yes, go for it.

- When I came, I stand before you as a human being, and someone interested in behaviour change. In 80's, 2017 report on a strategic theme number two, AT proclaimed 93% punctuality, when in fact real time analysis at each stop shows far lower than this, so this arguably impacts on customer satisfaction, uptick of ridership, which is sort of a detrimental top that I would achieve. So my question is two part. What data do AT use to measure customer satisfaction? And number two, why do we bother measuring punctuality for our public transport when it's measured only at the origin?

- Good questions.

- They are good questions. They're not the only person in the world that, you know, not the only city in the world that measures punctuality by a origin. For me that's just, it doesn't measure anything. So if you talk about, and we did it in Brisbane, and we started out, it's a maturity thing. You've got to start to mature your public transport system, so that people understand that reliability is not about, and punctuality is not about, you're punctual because you leave the bus depot at seven o'clock when you're supposed to. It's about the whole, you know, the whole route. We have to understand that, and work more on it. I can't speak to, you know, I've been in the job six months. So we know about it. We've got to work on it. I'm surprised about the customer satisfaction score because it's my team who actually goes out and talks to customers. And the customer satisfaction rate is hugely, I'm, I was shocked about it. And I tried to investigate it a little bit. Be you know we're talking about a 91% customer satisfaction rate. Now delving into it, it's pretty robust in what I've seen. I hear, you know, you'll hear bad stories on public transport wherever you go in the world. You know it was light, it was raining, the trains didn't run on time. We've got a strike. But you know I think, we are trying to look at that more robustly. We are starting to have discussions. Have we got all the answers yet? No we don't. But your point is valid. How do you actually measure that reliability, the punctuality based on it leaves the depot at that time. So it's a good point.

- I think there's two things. One of which is the, you can get perverse incentives. AT has bought the idea of a broad level that reliability is the most important thing. The big KPI for the public

transport providers. And the problem with this means they pad the time table. And then sit outside the station with a stop to get there on time, and then, they're really reliable right. But there's nothing more annoying on this planet than sitting on, in a train or bus with the engine off waiting. I mean, so reliability cannot be the only KPI for service because you just get big padded routes. Especially when there's a lack of bus lanes, so there's a really unpredictable length of journey. If the road's clear, ironically you may end up at a stop waiting, because the road's too clear, and the proposed time is too long. So this is a real back office operations issue and needs to be dug into.

- Cynthia.

- Just real quickly. You don't need to harp on it. Everybody's right. World's best practice talks about reliability in public transport system, so people write contracts around public transport around reliability. They will deliver a reliable service, and tell you they deliver it at all costs to the customer. You've got to change, you know, we are having that discussion at the moment about how we actually become more customer centric, and more customer focused, and what does the customer want. But world's best practice, Auckland Transport is applying KPIs that are world's best practice. We need to be ahead of the curve and think differently that's all.

- So we have another question here at the back.

- Hello, Hugh Chapman. We've had four or five speakers talking about the big picture, getting more money. But I think there are a lot of things that aren't being done, and can be done. For example coordinating lights. I know that's against the council's opinion but that helps motorists, but that's where the congestion is occurring. If you coordinate lights, and let's face it I've driven through Wellington every time I've gone there, straight through the middle of the city without stopping. All of a sudden you're going to get people coming into town earlier in the morning, getting to work, parking, and they're off the road. We're spending too long getting stuck in traffic. Federal Street coming off, I know you're talking streets, that's blocked. It should be 90% green lighted so you can get off the motorway. And then people would come into Auckland.

- So that's a good question.

- None of the people here, are the people who are going to make this decision. But I'd like to hear their comments on that.

- Sure so that's a good question about coordination of lights. Can that be done, good idea.

- I was quip on that, when there's an interesting conversation when you talk about driverless cars, but we can't coordinate the traffic lights. You know there's got to be, there's got to be a better outcome. Hugh, I'd love to give you the answer for that. But you know, how many times did we see sequence after sequence of red light changes would go down major urban arterials in Auckland. There's got to be something better we can do.

- There is a really simple geographic or geometric answer to this Hugh. Which is if you've got a green light, everyone else has got a red one. Including all of those pedestrians trying to get across Central Street. I mean I know it's a really lovely idea that you should always have the green light, or I should always have a green light. But I haven't got that magic button in my car.

- Okay we got another question at the back here.

- I'm a pedestrian mainly. Why are the pavements so awful. I also have a disability. So I'm constantly in fear as I walk from my apartment in Freeman's Bay to the library, or to the hospital, the pavements are terrible.

- Okay let's talk about walking. Patrick.

- There is one contributor to that. And that is that all local road funding in the whole country is roughly half funded by your local authority, and in Auckland's case that's Auckland Transport, and half funded from the National Land Transport Fund, as directed by NZTA, but NZTA police their little cotton socks, refuse to contribute to foot paths. So any local government member, Auckland Transport here, or all around the country has got a decision to make. They can either spend this sum on a road and get it doubled, or if they fix that foot path, they've got to fund it entirely themselves. So there's a financial incentive for local authorities to not bother fixing foot paths.

- So shouldn't that be like an ATIP, ATAP, let's build a systems thing. Because, you know.

- Yep. And I'm curious about that. Cynthia.

- To be truthful I haven't really had time to focus on footpaths, to be truthful to date. But I've been out on the network as much as I can, I've met people at intersections that have noted that it's the worst intersection in New Zealand, and needs money spent on it. I've been out to roads that, you know, well underdone, and don't help local traffic and they're not safe. I've done as much as I can. I haven't focused on footpaths. I need to have a look at footpaths obviously because I hear all the time that the local boards, and community are frustrated with footpaths. So we need to actually, I will take it back and have a look at footpaths. I honestly can't answer you today. I don't know what they have, the network for footpaths, I do know we have 7,468 or 69 plummets of roads but I can't tell you footpaths. So I'm happy to have a chat with that lady about at some stage, but I honestly, it hasn't been in my focus, but it needs to be, so I'll have to take it on notice. Apologies.

- Very briefly, we talked earlier about being fixated on the bright new shiny things and dealing with the second order of stuff, and the third order of stuff. And my sense is we tends to forget about footpaths. and we shouldn't. They are really important part of the network. Public transport works or doesn't work because of whether or not you can actually get to where you need to catch the train--

- Occasionally get out of cars.
- And they do, and the other thing that I would note, having, living in an area where Auckland Transport is a result of Auckland city council's previous decisions has been replacing foot paths with concrete. And they're only there five minutes before some developer's dug them up and replaced them with something else and made it look and behave quite differently in a way that's not safe. So it's a continuing challenge to manage.
- And the tyranny of the orange cones with all that UFB digging up of footpaths. Which great fun for Netflix, because it gets its service subsidised, but not much fun on our footpath. Yes we have one final question here.
- I'm Greg. To use a business analogy, it seems that our city operates below break-even. And some of the panelists have talked about planned urban development, and satellite cities and so forth. What do you think is the sweet spot for a population or a population density for us to be able to afford a viable public transport structure?
- Well there isn't a perfect one. Auckland is actually, surprisingly more dense than people imagine, it's the second densest city in Australasia behind Sydney. Density of course is never even. And you can see exactly where public transport is much more heavily patronised. I hate where it is. And secondly in some of our denser areas. The isthmus for example is actually quite, is really solid medium density. The central city is not only the fastest growing area in the country, it is also really dense, at about 10,000 per square kilometre. These are high levels. Auckland over the last 25 years has grown about 75% up, and 25% out. You can see those sprawl burbs. They look big, but actually more people are living in, Auckland is, people, this is choice. This is the reveal preference. People are choosing to live in apartments in the central city. People are choosing proximity. There isn't, we don't need to wait until we are Tokyo or Manhattan before we have a good public transport network, for example. But the key point is this, the most efficient journey is in fact the one you don't need to take, because you're already there. So proximity trumps mobility.
- I can't give you a number off the top of my head. But I can tell you what density doesn't work. Is when you put density, even medium density, and then you don't provide any public transport services. So many of you will be familiar with Flat Bush. Right I used to live in Botany close to Flat Bush where they reduced the sections where I was, from 650 square metres down to something like 350, and 250, and the houses went up. No public transport services of any credibility. Sort of one hour gaps between bus services kind of at peak and they didn't really go to destinations that people wanted to go to. And that's 'cause Auckland Transport didn't have the money to put the services in in the first place, and so, it's exactly what I described before. Increased density, more cars per urban, square kilometre urban than we ever had before under traditional urban sprawl. So getting the density right with the transport services, the public transport services is fundamental to doing this properly in the future. And that's the really important lesson we've got to learn.

- Right, I would like to, on behalf of the audience, I know there's a hundred more questions because this is a fantastic debate. And it's something we're all passionate about. The panelists are around, and a few people are around afterwards. And of course you've got lots of opportunities to have your say, and ask the questions on the website, which is akhaveyoursay.nz, we really appreciate your coming here tonight. We have to go. I'm sure there's a whole bunch of people watching on streaming who would love to throw questions at us too, but it is time to go. Please join with me in thanking our panel. And now we shall all use that transport system to get home. And I'm about to jump on the bus to the airport, which cost me \$15.00, it's fantastic. Go the bus.