

Wallace: Our first conference keynote this morning will be presented by Jennifer Keesmaat, Chief Planner for the city of Toronto. This keynote is hosted in partnership with Auckland Conversations and proudly sponsored by Boffa Miskell, New Zealand's leading consultants on environmental planning and design. The Auckland Conversations Programme is an Auckland Council initiative that presents international and national experts that can inspire and inform on how cities can be transformed to become liveable, well-designed and connected places where people want to live, work and play.

So we'd like to acknowledge the Auckland Conversations sponsors and give a warm welcome to the livestream audience that's joining the session this morning on the Auckland Conversations website, Conversations.AucklandCouncil.Govt.nz and also on the live Twitter feed, #AucklandConversations and #Livable. It's now my pleasure to invite Rachel De Lambert, Partner at Boffa Miskell to the stage to welcome Jennifer Keesmaat.

Rachel: We have to do that heights challenge thing, Ludo and I will about level pegging, sorry I had to do it. [Kyora Tato 00:01:34] and thank you, Wallace, my Sunday morning friend. Boffa Miskell is really very pleased to be a partner in bringing Jennifer Keesmaat to Auckland and to the RMLA Liveable Conference. Jennifer's a planner and urban designer. She's a perfect fit for the themes of the conference. I think that you're all in for a real treat in terms of her presentation this morning.

Now, Toronto perhaps isn't the city that we have tended to follow closely in this part of the World given that I think we're much more attracted to those West Coasts cities of America, the Vancouvers, San Francisco, LA. But when you look at the challenges that we face in Auckland and then Toronto's, particularly around livability, housing affordability and then the relationship of transport with housing, and land-use integration. Then also how you take communities with you in cities of record growth and change, then I think we have an incredible amount to learn from Toronto. Jennifer's perfectly placed with her roles in relation to the chief planner at Toronto, the city of Toronto and in her earlier initiatives and roles to bring real lessons for us here in Auckland.

There are certainly a lot of parallels. I think there are many insights that Jennifer can bring to us from those roles. Probably her struggles and challenges, as much as her many successes in the various roles that she's had. Very shortly, I will say welcome to the stage. Before I do that, you might see me also depart. Through a track of ill fate on my part and the environment courts, I'm actually due there very shortly. As we know, that's a bit of a non-negotiable. I'm going to be listening to the delayed feed rather than the live presentation. I'm going to look forward to catching up with Jennifer later in the day. Without further ado, Jennifer, welcome to the stage.

Jennifer : Thank you, Rachel. Thank you so much, Rachel. It is absolutely thrilling to be here. I have to tell you that when I got off the plane, of course the first thing I did was went for a walk up Queens Street. I popped in this little store. There was a map. On this map, they had in fact flipped the world around. So instead of being on the bottom of the globe, New Zealand and Australia were on the top of the globe. I have to tell you that I stared at this map for a very long time because it was really discombobulating to see the world flipped the other way. Of course, we all know the earth is round and there's no top and there's no bottom.

Of course, this idea that I'm not at the bottom of the world but as I stand in front of you at the top of the world is a very powerful one. So it's thrilling to be here in New Zealand with you at the top of the world. I'm going to have to buy that map and take it home for my kids, to give them a little bit of perspective. I'm going to talk to you today about Toronto. I'm going to talk to you about Toronto because there are things that are happening in Toronto that might have something to say of relevance to what's happening here in Auckland.

I say this in part because the comments from your Mayor as an introduction made it abundantly clear that there are tremendous number of similarities, the way we're changing, the way we're growing in fact are very similar. What I'd like to do, trusting that my slides will appear is begin by telling you a little bit about some of the transformation that's happening in the city of Toronto. Of course, it's always a good thing to talk about what you know. I am going to focus on the transformations that we see in our city as they might be relevant in order to provide some fodder for the conversation that I'm going to have with Ludo after the presentation.

Very much like Auckland, one of the things that we've learned in Toronto over the course of the past decade is that we're popular. We're in fact doing some things right. I hear that you're growing by 50,000 people on an annual basis. We're actually growing by 100,000 people on an annual basis, and all the constraints that come along with that. As we grow and change, one of the things we're committed to doing is becoming something fundamentally different than what we were. Our goal as we grow is to become more livable, to become more sustainable, to use the growth and the opportunities that we see that come with growth to become a fundamentally transformed place.

This is a slide of our city. Our city, like yours, is an amalgamated region. 15 years ago, we were seven cities. Now, we're one city. This area is 613 square kilometres, to give you a sense of scale. Right in the very centre, there is 17 square kilometres that are in fact the most urban part of the city, the downtown core. That part of the city is growing four times faster than the rest of the city. This is important because what we've seen is that it's the most urban part of the city that is in fact as a result of the transition that we've been going through, becoming the most attractive part of the city to transform. Now, of



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course, downtowns are in vogue all across North America, and you could argue across the world.

In fact, none have grown at the same scale that we're growing in downtown Toronto. You can just imagine all the infrastructure problems because you're facing some of them here that come with this rapid growth. Whereas currently, there is approximately 250,000 people living in the downtown. We're projecting that in another 20 years' time, there'll be 475,000 people living just in that 17 square kilometres, within the context of a 600 square kilometre city. One of our challenges is how we spread the growth out. I'll talk a little bit about that.

In addition, this is our employment hub. 51% of the national GDP is actually generated in this 17 square kilometres. Over 500,000 jobs are also in this core projected to be 750,000 jobs within another 20-year period. We're packing a tremendous amount of intensity into this core. Now, this is a result of an intentional shift. This is an outcome of planning policy. This is a result of trying to do things differently, to become something different from that very suburban typology that exists across the city. You can see in the bottom bar here, the city of Toronto's overall growth.

Now, you can see in the second bar, downtown's growth. You see that in the last decade, we've been attracting the growth into our most urban areas. Now, the third bar at the top of the screen is the most suburban part of our region. You can see an enormous decline in that suburban growth. I'll tell you why that is in a minute. But there's a fundamental question that every city must confront. You cannot grow out and grow up and offer a high quality of life. If you're going to be adding more people and you're going to be adding more cars, your environmental footprint will only get larger.

Your quality of life will only decline as the long commute becomes a part of everyday life. So driving growth into existing built up areas is about livability. It's also about affordability because it's pretty expensive to drive everywhere as opposed to walking and cycling. So this is a critical question that cities must struggle with. One of the transformations that has taken place over the past 15 years in Toronto is that we are now primarily building multiples, higher density housing. We're building very little suburban sprawl. That's why we see that shift on that graph, almost 90% of the new housing in 2016, 90% was multiples, condos and apartments as opposed to single family homes.

This is about reducing our congestion. This is about becoming a more sustainable city. This is about long-term livability and affordability, embracing a new kind of built form that creates an opportunity to live with a smaller, environmental footprint and a stronger sense of community. Our skyline is changing. It's becoming denser. This is what the downtown looked like just ten years ago. This is what it looks like today. This is the transformation. I'll go back so you can see that again, in just one decade.

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In the next decade, this transformation is going to happen again. The question becomes, as we become denser, can our quality of life go up? Can affordability go up? It can if we get the big moves and the smaller moves right. We have a tremendous way to go to get there. One of the hottest topics of conversation in Toronto is our infrastructure deficit, the quality and character of our public spaces, affordability, traffic congestion and investing in transit. We know we are only part way along on this journey. But I'm going to show you some of the things that we're doing to try to shift our course to become a more sustainable, livable and affordable city.

Now, this is our downtown core. Our peak density isn't too bad. We're at approximately 17,000 people per square kilometre. But our average density in the city is very low. This is a reflection of the fact that we're a spiky city, very high density in the core of the city and then very low density in our suburbs. A clue to what needs to change is actually transforming our suburbs. We are focusing on that missing middle. How do we in fact add mid-rise density to bridge that gap between the spiky, really high density parts of the city and the lower density parts of the city?

To put this in perspective, our peak density is about the same as London, England but the average density in London is much higher because it's not a spiky city like we are. Then of course, New York is way off the map. We're at 17,000 people per square kilometre. New York's peak density is 58,000 people per square kilometres. We don't actually aspire to that. That's not our objective. But the average density is approximately 10,000 people per square kilometres which is actually very reasonable amount of density. Remember, there's all kinds of great benefits that come with this level of density including the opportunity to do a whole variety of things within walking distance of home.

You only get that from density, having that critical mass that allows people to live in relatively small communities but also to have a really sophisticated transit network that allows you to get anywhere to anywhere on transit that only exists when you start getting these higher densities because otherwise, you just can't get their frequency or service or you can't get their price to provide that frequency of service that makes transit a true option.

So when we're looking at intensifying our city, we're driving our growth to our main transit corridors. I'll show you a little bit about what that looks like. So we see ourselves at a moment where we have a real massive convergence taking place at the highest policy level and at the detailed precinct planning level. That is allowing us to turn the city into something better, to make it something different from what it has been in the past. We have to start at the highest level. We have been for the past 30 years sprawling outwards.

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Ten years ago, our provincial government brought in our Greenbelt Plan. This is one million hectares of land that has been protected as agricultural land. We copied on a big scale what Portland, Oregon did 40 years ago on a small scale. We put a greenbelt in place. The objective of the greenbelt was to shift land economics in such a way that we are now driving growth into our existing built up areas. This is really important. You do not get intensification on a significant scale unless you limit what's happening on the edges of the city.

You can't grow out and up at the same time. You can't suck and blow. This policy framework is about saying, "Hold on a minute, we're going to shift the way growth happens in our region." We're going to drive those growth to those areas where we already have infrastructure. We're going to do this precisely because we want to become a transit-oriented region. We want to get those densities to a point where transit becomes the viable alternative. So this high level policy framework is really the key starting point that allows everything else you're going to see in this presentation become a reality.

We also know that young people have a very different desire in terms of their consumer preference for how they want to live in urban places. In cities that aren't attracting young people of course are going to eventually go into decline. We recognise catering the young people in transforming how we change as a city as being essential. We know that young people, they want to walk to work. We know that they want to move by bike. We know that they're no longer getting their driver's licences when they turn 16 if they have that choice. So we're trying to change the city to increase the choices for walking, cycling and living very close to where you work.

If we look at that downtown core that is seeing the bulk of our growth, a fascinating thing has happened. 75% of the population walks or cycles to work in the downtown. This is fabulous from a sustainability perspective but also from a quality of life and in affordability perspective because these young people do not need to own a car. They do not need to pay for parking. They do not need insurance. They do not need gas. They pay a little bit more for a smaller space in the core as a trade off for a higher quality of life in a more sustainable way of living.

But we've also discovered that across the city as a whole, even in our suburban areas, that people want complete communities. They want the option to do a variety of things within walking distance of home. Pembina Institute is an organisation that conducts research in Canada. They put out a survey and they asked, "Would you be willing to trade off a smaller home with a smaller yard in exchange for being within walking distance to shopping, the doctor, the dentist, transit or a larger yard, a larger home but you don't have those amenities within walking distance at a lower price point?"

86% in fact chose walking. This is really important data that gives us an input into focusing on creating those complete communities by transforming our traditional suburbs. So this is our urban structure plan. This is a really important part of the narrative that is driving the transformation that you're going to see in the upcoming slides. The downtown core is the mustard yellow piece that you see. The linear areas that are shown as brown are our avenues. Those are areas where we are adding mid-rise development as a way of increasing the mix of uses and the density in the traditional car-oriented suburbs. But they also correspond to our rapid transit corridors.

We are directing our growth to our main transit corridors because as we grow, we don't want to add cars. We simply do not have the road capacity to add more cars. In fact, we want to take away capacity for cars and add it for pedestrians and cyclists. This is a critical part of our vision of becoming a more livable sustainable and affordable city. So this is a little bit what that looks like. This is along a highway and a subway corridor. It's about adding green sidewalks. This is right in the heart of our suburbs, in our city. We are adding mid-rise development. This project is under development today. It's about adding a critical mass of housing around our main transit corridors in a green environment that is pedestrian oriented that gives people the choice of living without a car.

We recognise that affordability isn't an outcome of great urbanism, although it is necessary to it. This is a really important point because the world over, we face a great risk that as we create great cities, they increasingly become more and more exclusive. They become playgrounds for the rich. This is happening in my city. We're seeing global capital from all over the world landing in our city. This is driving up housing prices and creating a risk that people who live and work in the city cannot afford housing in the city. There's only one way in my experience to address this. It's by having intentional policy that seeks to create a city for all. It's about being explicit at the outset that our cities will be places not just for tourists but will be places where people can live and work and in particular, raise a family.

In the next slide, as I walk through some examples of changes that we've made, I'll talk about what some of those intentional policy mechanisms are because just investing in public space will not make your city inclusive. Investing in great transit will in fact drive housing prices up. It will make your city more exclusive. If that's not the goal, then thinking about affordability and policy measures to drive affordability is critical.

Now, let me be clear, we have not solved this in Toronto. But there's a variety of things that we're doing to ensure that we're adding affordable housing. We're seeking to become more and more aggressive as we do that. The first key move that we're making is urbanising our avenues. This is about embracing the mid-rise city. Going back to that map, it's those brown areas on those map, those linear corridors when we can add

linear neighbourhoods that we are currently transforming. This is the built-form typology. We have mid-rise guidelines to drive this typology.

Our goal is to create great pedestrian environments. So we don't want these buildings to be too tall because we need sunlight on the sidewalks. We need main street retail so that they function as part of an existing neighbourhood. These are all projects that are either built or currently under construction in the city. This is an example of that mid-rise typology being added right in the heart of our suburbs. But it can take a lot of different forms. This is another example of gentle intensification. You can see that the taller forms have been pushed into the centre of the block.

This is another example. This is one of my favourite examples because it conforms directly to our mid-rise guidelines. You can see the higher stories step back, that is to ensure that we maintain the sunlight on the sidewalk. But what you can also see in this slide that this is a new building in a built form that is in a state of transformation. Look at the buildings to the east and the buildings to the west, they have yet to transform to adopt this mid-rise typology. This is about adding a new form in an environment where it doesn't yet exist. This is another great slide that shows the city in a state of evolution, adding more housing, adding more housing density.

This is a street car corridor in the city. Now, this is a suburban corridor, which I like to call, Anywhere, USA although it's Anywhere, Toronto because these wide arterial roads, I suspect you've got a few of them here in Auckland as well that in fact, are faced with a tremendous amount of surface parking. They too can become something fundamentally different. So the example here I'm going to show you is a corridor that is 22 kilometres long running right through the heart of the city. Not all of it looks like this typology which is very suburban. Some of it is more urban. But the big move on this corridor is to add LRTs. We are currently building out 22 kilometres of LRT right through the heart of the city.

We're also transforming the street, adding cycling lanes, widened sidewalks and green infrastructure along the streetscape and then also adding a mid-rise typology along the corridor. Now, this is the suburbs. This is about transforming the suburbs to become walkable, linear, neighbourhoods with new levels of density. Remember that slide that I showed you of the Greenbelt Plan? This isn't possible without the Greenbelt Plan. The Greenbelt Policy framework directs growth into our existing areas.

In the absence of the plan, there's no incentive to not do the easy thing because the easy thing is to keep sprawling outward, to continue building suburbs and green fields. This is actually a little bit trickier and involves public investment like LRT. But because of that larger policy framework, we can deliver on this new vision. This is the same typology but where the LRT is below grade. It's below grade for 11 kilometres. This is that same area. This is the built-form framework that has been approved by city council.

The streetscape is currently under construction today. It's a far cry from that highway typology that it is today. This is how we are seeking to become a more livable city.

Now, this is that entire corridor right through the heart of the city. The public investment is the LRT, the new streetscape, the new sidewalks, the cycling infrastructure. It has been followed by an astronomical level of private investment. 17,000 residential units are proposed along this corridor. You know what's so powerful? Many of those projects will have their parking requirements forgiven. No parking. Because the people who live along this corridor will not need to own a car. So we're adding population density without adding more cars. We're adding population density in the places where we can provide transportation choice because of the density and the linear neighbourhoods and the mix of uses, you can walk to work. You can walk to the doctor, you can walk to the dentist.

You can walk to do your grocery shopping or you can take a cycling lane or you can connect into the broader city's transit network on LRT. This is the opportunity of creating places that are fundamentally different from how they looked in the past. This is another example, Dufferin Avenue. You can see here that there's many strip malls. This too is right in the heart of our suburbs. You can see here, what I like about this slide is you can see how it's right up against single family homes. To the bottom side of those slide, those are all single family homes. Currently, if you live in one of those homes, you get in your car to do everything because you must. You really don't have a lot of choices. But urbanising the avenue is about providing choice within walking distance of home and adding new housing typologies along the corridor.

That strip malls, those parking lots are being transformed into this, a new amenity in the suburbs. We're urbanising our suburbs to make them more sustainable places. The second key way that we're responding to this mandate of creating a livable and affordable city is by urbanising our classic suburbs by adding gentle density in new housing types. This is a typical 1950 strip mall. This is a picture from when it was originally built. This is what it looks like today.

This is right in the heart of one of our most beautiful suburbs in Etobicoke, very high-end housing. Here too, you pretty much have to drive everywhere including if you want to go to this mall. There's no pedestrian connections to the adjacent suburbs. So we are transforming this into a hub right in the heart of the suburbs, the idea being that there will be choice in terms of how you can move, the destinations that you can walk to.

This is what this new community will look like. It will include affordable housing, seniors housing. There's still parking here. But the parking has been put underground. All of the new buildings conform to our Green Roof Bylaw where we require green roofs. There's a whole variety of new housing types that have been added here. Now, I have a personal story that I'll tell you which is my husband actually grew up in this classic suburb. Four siblings, his parents had a pretty big house. When the kids moved out of the house, they

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had this great big house. They loved their neighbourhood. They didn't want to move out of their neighbourhood. But there was one pretty simple problem, there wasn't anywhere to move in the neighbourhood.

I like to tell them that this project is for them. Unfortunately, it came ten years too late. They could've stayed in their neighbourhood if this has been built because urbanising your classic suburbs is about adding choice that can respond to people at all ages of their lifespan, so young people can live here. But people who are downsizing can live here too. Now, my in-laws would never move into the downtown core of the city. That's too urban for them. But to stay in the classic suburbs in a different housing typology, now that would have been a real choice. We failed in terms of our public policy because we didn't have this choice. Now, we are going to have this choice by urbanising our classic suburbs. This is a little bit of what some of the amenity will look like in that new area.

The third way that we're responding to livability is about detailed precinct planning, ensuring that the promise materialises. It's one thing to say that we're going to densify the city. Then it's another to actually get the mix of uses right in such a way that this is a really high quality of life. In fact, for many people, one of the reasons why they don't actually like density is because there's so many high density projects in our cities that are not well done. The design detail compromises walkability, sustainability and quality of life.

On a brown field site, in our downtown core, very close to our waterfront, we have a precinct called the West Don Lands. For 30 years, almost my whole life, this has just been a brown field with some old neglected heritage buildings. Well, we've protected those heritage buildings. We've created a precinct plan. As a result of hosting the Pan Am Games in 2015, we fast-tracked the building out of this neighbourhood. Now, what's important about this neighbourhood is it's about a ten-minute walk to the downtown. We've required that 20% of all the units are affordable units. We've also added student housing.

We've added university uses. We've added housing for our First Nations communities and servicing for our First Nations community. But we've also added market housing. So this is a true complete mixed use community with really high quality public realm that becomes really the hook that all of these different uses hang on. This is in fact what it looks like today. You can see there's a couple more parcels that are now under construction. There's two more parcels that have just been released by the province for 720 new affordable housing units. Leveraging provincially owned lands and precincts where we've done our master planning for affordable housing, requiring 20% affordable housing is a key way that we're delivering on our mandate for new affordable precincts. This is what the street level condition looks like.

This is what the quality of the public realm looks like. This is a little bit different from the old model, 20, 30 years ago where we created clusters of affordable housing. We didn't mix it with market housing and where we didn't focus on a really high quality public realm. The objective here is to ensure that the high quality public realm actually creates gathering places for social interaction in the community. But we're also really preoccupied with ensuring that families can live in these dense urban places. We've just completed a study called Growing Up Vertical which is all about raising families in high rise and mid rise communities.

We work with architects, interior designers. We focused on really three scales, getting the unit design right, the building right, but also the neighbourhood right. So this precinct has one of the best children's parks in the city. Why? Because we want to make living in vertical communities a first choice for families. We don't want to force families into environments where they have to have a long commute, that compromises family life. We want families, we want parents to have the opportunity to drop children off in the daycare in their building and then to walk five or ten minutes to work so that they can walk back to the daycare if they've got a sick kid or they can walk home at lunch time to visit their child and then walk back to work.

This is the dream that we can offer in vertical communities. Today, many families get pushed way out into the suburbs to find housing that's affordable. They end up compromising time with their family. Why? Because they're sitting in a car for 45 minutes each way. We're stealing their time from their children. This is why we created our Growing Up Vertical Policies. It's about ensuring that affordable housing in the core of the city that offers excellent quality of life for families is what we are delivering on. We're also focusing on strategic site-specific infill.

Now, I don't even know if this is a challenge in New Zealand. But in the 50s, in Toronto, we did build some higher density housing in our suburbs. It's a tower in the park. The assumption was that people would drive everywhere. This housing very quickly became very poor quality housing. In fact, this housing is frequently where many immigrants will go because the housing cheap. It's cheap because it's disconnected from any kind of amenity or urban vibrancy. It's also typically disconnected from transit. So we're thinking very carefully about how we can add transit but also transform this housing into being a high quality form of housing.

There's over 2,000 of these apartment towers in the Toronto region, home to over a million people. This is affordable housing in Toronto. So the question becomes, "How do we ensure this is high quality housing?" We have a dream that every immigrant coming into our city within one generation is a part of the middle class. We don't really have significant problem with multi-generational poverty that you see in some countries that are also high receptacles for immigrants. 50% of Torontonians are foreign-born. Within one generation, most of those immigrant families actually have a university education

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and are absorbed into the professional class. That is a critical part of our democracy and of the Canadian dream.

Improving this housing and ensuring that we make it easier to integrate into Canadian society, through access to libraries, access to transit, that provides access to jobs and education is one of the key challenges that we're trying to solve. So I'll give you an example. It's called Parkway Forest. Think of the most suburban suburbia you possibly can, highway interchanges, big malls, low density. That's Parkway Forest. You can see here the ground floor before and after, for those who are urban designers in the room, buildings that were floating in the middle of the site, unowned. Park spaces that were dangerous and unused were transformed by bringing the buildings up to the street, creating a street wall in filling strategically.

This is what that looks like. We added new mid-rise buildings in order to create a street edge, to create a pedestrian realm, to make these communities walkable communities that connected into a new subway station. Also adding buildings that allowed for a mixture of uses. These buildings at the edge of the street can have not-for-profit agencies, grocery stores, a whole variety of amenities that didn't exist within walking distance before. You had to own a car if you lived in this suburban environment. This is what the infill looks like, keeping the existing affordable rental housing, adding new housing that can create a clear and legible pedestrian realm.

Now, we wanted to figure out a way to draw pedestrians into this site. So we created a public art installation. These are Beacons by Douglas Coupland, the writer of Generation X. He does a lot of public art competitions in the city of Toronto. The Beacons create a legible pedestrian realm within the heart of this new community. They start at the transit corner. They lead and terminate at a new school, a new community centre and a new pool. This was all about creating spaces where pedestrians belonged in an area where previously, it wasn't clear that pedestrians belonged and quite frankly, people didn't walk because it was dangerous. So new streets with buildings, with eyes on the street, new housing forms. So adding marketing housing where there had only been rental housing before, and also making it very clear that there is a high quality pedestrian realm and what the pedestrian realm is before.

Whereas before, there were just a lot of grass signals that no one used. But also focusing on those amenities for children and new buildings. The building that you see in the background is a new building. The building on the right is an existing apartment building. New buildings with market housing adjacent to affordable housing. Affordable housing I think is what you would call state housing here. We used a policy mechanism which we call section 37. The developer was required in exchange for this new density, to give us moneys as a city that were then used to revitalise the existing state housing or the existing affordable housing.

In this project, housing that had previously been in a state of disrepair in fact became revitalised as well. It's a win-win-win. Of course, a new community centre that everyone could share, both those living in affordable and those living in market housing can come together in this new community facility. Another example of a large scale revitalization, hundreds and hundreds of acres right in the heart of the city. This too state housing that was highly problematic, no street grid, orphaned public spaces, no mixed uses. It was very difficult for people to buy groceries who lived in this community even though it was in the heart of downtown Toronto.

We've fundamentally transformed this area by adding new street blocks and adding new uses. This is what it looked like before. This is the exact same corner I'm about to show you. This is what it looks like today. This is on a street car line. Now, there's a grocery store. There is a mixture of affordable or state as well as social housing, as well as market housing. Mixing up these uses to provide new affordable housing and to provide amenity and a mixed use community. Here is an example of what the first phase looks like that you can see a little bit to the left of the screen. The third phase is at the top of the screen which hasn't changed yet.

You can see that there's a mixture of building typologies, adding in a high quality public realm. The area to the south is now a massive park and community centre that's already been built out. But creating a legible pedestrian realm, making it very clear that people are welcome and belong in this community, spaces where people can engage with one another is a key part of the vision of creating these new mixed use high density communities. Investing in our public realm, creating quality public space for public life. The Bent Way is a project right in the heart of our downtown whereby we've taken a super highway structure which for many generations had a massive fight in the city about whether it should stay up or whether it should come down.

Under the many many generations of city council, in order to appease suburban voters, it has in fact continued to stay up. In the end, we've decided to work with it. You can see here new communities in the heart of downtown. All of these communities, you can see the population density that's been added. This is within about a ten square kilometre area. Right in the heart dividing this community is this expressway. So the question became, "How do we provide a new amenity for the community and to link these neighbourhoods together, providing linear access to the core of the city?" The core of the city is right where you see the sky dome on the right side of the screen.

So this is what that highway infrastructure looks like. We've built up the neighbourhoods right adjacent to this highway infrastructure, which is very well used. We're turning it into a dynamic new public space. We've created a new community trust. It will be a multi-seasoned programmed space that also acts as a linear parkway. What we're trying to do here is take some of the mistakes of the past and actually manipulate them and transform them to become something good, to link together areas

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of the city that are divided by using this infrastructure in new ways. We've called these orphaned spaces that we're transforming to link together and connect the city. This is what the space will look like in the winter. This space was initiated by a \$25 million private sector donation that was matched by \$10 million donation by the city. It will be opened within six months' time.

We're also investing in waterfront parks, as you are. Thinking very carefully about the amenity of the waterfront as being something fundamentally new in the city as we transitioned from an industrial waterfront to a complete mixed community. We've kept some of our industrial uses. That's a sugar refinery that you see with a blue roof. The area that you see in the foreground is now Sugar Beach. This is what Sugar Beach looks like. One of the things that we've celebrated is the bumping up of the industrial uses with the public amenities and the public uses. We've also added in new office uses, new residential uses. We're transforming the waterfront to become a dynamic public space.

This is our Wave Deck Park. The Wave Deck is about extending the public realm to cantilever over the piers to add public space in areas where pedestrians currently get squeezed. This is Wave Deck Park. We're also thinking about using infrastructure in a multitude of ways. The old model was really about public art being public art, infrastructure being infrastructure. This is an example of public art that's also a park. That's also a storm-water management feature. It's extra hardworking infrastructure. We're leading with investment in the public realm much like you are here in your downtown quarter, investing public dollars to attract private investment.

Now, the hook all of this planning hangs on is really our transit network plan. We've brought forward, I have the great pleasure as chief planner of also being responsible for transit planning in the city. We linked together intensification and growth with our transit planning. We see those two things as inseparable. If we want to add people but we don't want to add cars, we have to add the density to where transit is or where we're putting transit. This isn't just about one transit line. It's about a transit network. Just like you create a network for vehicles, transit riders should be able to get anywhere to anywhere in the city on transit using one transfer. We call it the one-transfer trip, the idea that you can travel in an L anywhere in the city, if you have a network.

What you see here on the screen is the rapid transit network. We are adding a whole variety of different technologies. We're building subways and planning two new subways. We're building 22 kilometres of LRT but we also have four more LRT projects, waterfront LRT, Eglinton East, Eglinton West. Finch LRT is LRT in our suburbs. We're also adding BRT. We've really taken approach that we have to look at the typology, the growth in the city and add the right technology in the right place in order to create a seamless system where people can move from one technology to the next to use transit as their first choice. Transit is really the hook that this entire vision hangs upon.

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The last few slides I'd like to mention to you is about the way we're doing this. We know it's important to transform the way we think about the city. We actually say in our city policy that we need to change our minds. If we're going to change the city, we need to change our minds. We need to think differently about the city. We say in our policy framework that our goal is to move people, not cars. That's a big new way of thinking in our city which is primarily suburban. We've embraced a whole variety of mechanisms to transform the discourse in order to transform the city.

We have a whole initiative called Growing Conversations which might be a bit like your Auckland Conversations. I hold chief planner round tables which are about asking the questions we don't know the answer to and to bringing voices into city hall that don't usually have access to city hall. Then we broadcast those conversations. We use those conversations to generate action plans. We also have something called PIPS, Planners in Public Space. Planners go into public space to talk to the city residents about the future of the city. We go to the places where residents already are.

We have a planning review panel. We have selected 28 residents through civic lottery to be our sounding board. This panel is representative of the incomes in the city, the ownership in the city. It's 50% owners, 50% renters. Believe it or not, they have different things to say. It's representative of the ages of the city. There's lots of young people on here because we've got lots of young people in our city. It's representative of the ethnic diversity of our city. There are hundreds and hundreds of languages spoken in Toronto. This sounding board provides us with advice on our policies that we bring forward to city council in order to ensure that we are sensitised as planners to the diverse voices, experience and perspectives that exist in our city.

We've also created a youth research team. The youth research team are youth talking to youth, advising us on how to transform the city. They've given us many many recommendations which we're implementing. As an example, I created a podcast called Invisible City Podcast. It's about cities. It's about the things that you don't see that transform and can be transformative in cities. Why? Because youth said to us, "You know what? We don't see the relevance of city planning. But we listen to podcasts. If you made a cool podcast, you might be able to get us hooked in."

The podcast has been hugely popular amongst people under the age of 40, a few older people too I think. We recognise in our city that affordability is a choice and that affordability and livability are inherently and fundamentally conjoined. The risk is that our cities get better but only for some. They get better but in an exclusive way. If we're truly committed to the democratic project, if we're truly committed to being an inclusive city, we will in fact choose to create cities that are affordable and livable for all because after all, it really is a choice. Thank you.

Wallace: Absolutely inspiring. A big round of applause for Jennifer Keesmaat. Next year, you can find me living in Toronto, honestly. The Wave Bridge, fantastic. Now, right now, we are really running out of time really fast. So I'm just wondering, who reckons we can squeeze five or ten minutes at a coffee break to keep going with Jennifer, you reckon? Yep? Because this is a one in a million chance.

So I'm going to introduce now Ludo Campbell-Reid. He needs no introduction. Ludo Campbell-Reid is design champion, general manger of the Auckland Design Office at Auckland Council. Among his achievements, he worked on the transformation of London's Canary Wharf. In 2003 was shortlisted for the London planning awards in the category of best sector planner. He's going to be hosting the small Q&A. Ludo, welcome to the podium. A big a round of applause for Ludo here. If I have time, I will get to some of your questions. Many of you have emailed me through the app. Thank you for that. Again, a big thank you to our sponsors, Boffa Miskell and Auckland Conversations. Ludo and Jennifer.

Ludo : Great. How's the ... Does everyone hear me? No.

Wallace: Can you hear Ludo?

Ludo : It's not working? Hello, mic?

Wallace: Yep.

Jennifer : Sound.

Wallace: All right. Turn it up, turn it up a bit. Little bit, all right.

Ludo : For Jennifer, it's great to be here. It's funny, you see, I've seen Jennifer for many many years on YouTube clips. We communicate via Twitter. It's always great to actually see the person and have a proper conversation. What I'm going to try to do is a little bit about some of the key tools that you have deployed to help transform Toronto. I guess just to start, as an idea, change, everybody wants progress but nobody wants change it seems. Your communication techniques were amazing. That chief planner round table conversation.

Speaker 5: Everything good down there?

Speaker 6: We can't hear.

Ludo : Why don't I stop here?

Wallace: No. We've got a microphone coming.

Ludo : Why don't I just use this for a minute.

Wallace: Okay.

Ludo : Nobody maybe heard. I was just saying that, Jennifer, one of the key things with cities is it's all about change and transformation. Everybody wants progress but nobody wants change. So there's this big issue around how you help to communicate with the constituents, the elected members, the mayor. Everybody's part of it. Your chief planner round table sounds like a really intriguing opportunity to get messages out to the public. How did that work? Was that an elected member's in the room or was it a professional conversation with the public perhaps?

Jennifer : Sure. Is this one on? It is on, okay. Chief planner round tables, I initiated them five years ago. I'll tell you the genesis of them which was that I was thinking about all these things that I had to do that I didn't know how to do. I thought oh, there are some people I need to talk to. I want to bring in some academics. I want to bring in some developers. There are some key community leaders that I would like to talk to. Then I thought, "Wait a minute. Why not make this conversation public? "

Within the committee rooms in city hall, we have tables that are set up in a semi-circle. Then there's also a gallery for the public. So the chief planner round tables are three hours long. They're on a whole variety of different topics. The very first one was on resilient cities. We had a whole series that we called Next Generation Suburbs that were on mobility in the suburbs, built form in the suburbs. Then we had one called Rival City, which was about immigrants in the suburbs because several generations ago, immigrants came into the core city. But now, immigrants tend to come into the suburbs. They don't necessarily have the amenities that they need.

We've had a round table on main streets, on our ravine system, and our ravine strategy. The round tables are three hours long. The first hour, there are ten-minute presentations by six guests who usually there's a few academics. Usually, they're some of my colleagues who are within the administration as well as other key stakeholders. I usually have a developer, someone from the development industry or the real estate industry or someone from law who will be at the table as well to talk about the issue from their perspective. Each presentation is very different. Then we have a facilitated discussion for the next really hour and a half to two hours. Importantly, we trend on Twitter nationally in these conversations.

We also live stream the conversations. The very first time I did one, we decided we would have people sign up because there's only limited amount of space in the gallery. Within 24 hours, we had to put in place an overflow room. Then we discovered that a lot of people followed live streaming as well. So I wasn't sure, will people really be interested because these are ... We have public conversations. These conversations get

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really detailed. They're sort of inside baseball. We discovered that people do really want to do a deep dive on these issues.

Then we always create an action document. There's a whole series. Growing Up Vertical is an outcome, that whole policy document which has now been approved by city council is an outcome of a chief planner round table that was on raising families in the city. The question that we asked in the round table that we didn't have the answer to was, "How can we make it more affordable and more desirable to raise families in more urban places?" That led to the whole growing up vertical initiative which has been hugely successful and has really transformed the way the development industry is now building their projects.

Ludo : It's a really useful thing. You think that people aren't going to be interested but actually they're citizens of the city. So absolutely they are. I think that's been a really great success story of Toronto is actually the city engaging with the people. We have a amazing group of advocates in this city. We're quite lucky to have them, the new generation, the new tweeters, the tweeters, the bloggers and so forth. We have a couple of groups who are pretty powerful and very helpful. How about your city? Have you got advocacies, people outside who lobby? Are they influential?

Jennifer : Yeah, sure. We do, absolutely. In fact, I would say that an enormous amount of the progress that we've made on our cycling infrastructure because ...

Ludo : That's them.

Jennifer : We put in cycling lanes and we see increases in 600%. We have truly become a cycling city. It's actually a bit astounding to go into our core. Cycling has become very normalised in a really short period of time. A big part of that is Cycle TO which started out as a cycling union that grew very slowly at first but they're a cycling lobby that came up with an amazing strategy. We have 44 city councillors. What they did was basically create lobby groups in each of the 44 wards. It's a lot of work in order to lobby individual councillors.

That, I worked really closely with them on our messaging because one of the big things that we wanted to transform the message around was that cycling was seen as being kind of this thing that radical people did and recreational people did but it wasn't really a form of transportation. So the key messaging that we worked on was making it really clear that in the 21st century city, cycling is a form of transportation. If it's a form of transportation, first of all, make it safe. Secondly, make it a real choice. Until it's a real choice, people won't do it because it's not safe. The minute you make it a real choice, the evidence is conclusive around the world, people will choose it.

Ludo : Do you have, I should know this, I don't, mandatory helmet laws for your bicycling?

Jennifer : We don't.

Ludo : Because Janet who's told us, there's safety.

Jennifer : We don't. That's such a hot topic. We don't except for children under 14.

Ludo : So that makes a lot of sense, you know? So anyway, we'll move on. It's interesting. When you listen to people like Jennifer, we do know what to do. Most cities should know by now. There's Twitter. There's Google Maps. There's Google Images. We have been undated with good ideas. The key question is how. The mayor talked about funding. I think that's one of the critical challenges for Auckland. Wallace and the team have been talking about this earlier. How are we going to fund some of the things that we need to do? If you think about London, it built its underground when its population was one million. We're 50 years after that conversation and now trying to retro shift for the city. How have you, just a couple of key mechanisms of funding, outside of the rates?

Jennifer : This has been a big debate in Toronto. It's very very contentious. We do have, as a result of lobbying the provincial government for many years, we now have a suite of financial tools that we didn't have in the past. We now have a hotel tax, road pricing is something that we can now use, parking levies as a new financial tool that we can use. We have a mechanism that I mentioned briefly called Section 37 whereby it's a section in our planning act where we negotiate with developers for an exchange in uplift in zoning, we take back moneys in order to build infrastructure.

Specifically, Parkway Forest that I showed you, that community centre was paid for by the developer. The public art, the public realm, all of that was paid for the developer in exchange for additional density. We use those kinds of tools and mechanisms. We now have a federal government which is on side, and recognises the importance of investing in transit. We just had an announcement for the transit network plan that I just showed you for some components of it that are still in the planning phases, \$4.2 billion from the federal government. This is new. They'd never really ... We weren't really on the radar screen before. We've been working really hard with them to say, "Hey. This is critical to the survival of the country is transit in our cities."

We got the federal government to realise that there has to be a federal role in delivering transit in cities. It goes back to sustaining immigration. It goes back to attracting investment. It goes back to livability and sustainability. The federal government in Canada has been very responsive to that. It's been transformational. You would never have seen that transit network planned previously without their participation.

Ludo : Great. Thank you, yeah.

- Wallace: I've got a couple of really quick questions here. One from me first and very briefly. You've been in Auckland. You're from this extraordinary city of Toronto. You've been tweeting up a storm while you're here. One of them being a snapshot of this beautiful public sculpture by Michael Parekowhai which your bright coloured quizzing ears, that which reminds the beat of those rods. You love it. So be honest, what do you think of Auckland from what you've seen? Ludo, block your ears. Be honest. Block your ears.
- Ludo : I'm confident it'll be all right.
- Jennifer : Well, let me say the first thing, the very first thing that hit me very hard when I got here, well, I'll be honest. I'll tell you the very first thing because we just built a rail link from our airport to our downtown.
- Wallace: Here we go.
- Jennifer : I have to tell you, you got to get your ass in gear on that.
- Wallace: Round of applause for Jennifer. Isn't she right?
- Jennifer : That's a very big ...
- Wallace: We've got to get our ship together, huh?
- Jennifer : Yeah, absolutely. That rail link, I felt like ours was 28 years too late but I was coming in. I kept saying to my cab driver because I was looking at the traffic in the other lane. I said, "I'm going to have to leave a day early to get to the airport, to get out of it." We have a fixed link. It's an express rail link from the downtown. It used to be an hour-long drive. Now, it's a 22-minute, very comfortable, rail link. It's been very successful. It's not without its controversies but it is absolutely critical that you do that as soon as possible. I can't say it out from that.
- Wallace: How about that? Jennifer, very good. Someone tweet that by the way. I've got one here from the audience. I think this is something that needs to be addressed as well. A question, in Auckland, the Urban Boundary Policy has been very controversial and labelled by some as the main reason for housing unaffordability. Jennifer, this has been political, this issue. How difficult was it to get Toronto's Greenbelt Policy adopted? How important is an urban boundary for a city?
- Jennifer : The first thing, let me say, is that it was really hard. It wasn't easy. I don't want to pretend it was easy in any way. It took about ten years to get it in place. It's been place now for ten years. There's an incredible myth that I'm sure gets perpetuated here because it gets perpetuated in Toronto. I've heard it from my colleagues in Australia as

well as my colleagues in London and Portland. This myth that by putting an urban boundary in place, that that drives up land prices and is a detriment to affordability.

You know why that's a myth? Because you don't have a hard boundary right now and you've got a problem with affordability. So it's an absolute and complete myth. Really the urban boundary is about a whole variety of key drivers. It is about the long-term sustainability and livability of the region. The risk is that you will continue to sprawl. You're adding 50,000 people a year? Imagine you're adding 100,000 people a year. Your commutes are just going to get longer and longer and longer. I invite all of you to come to Toronto and to see our region because you do not want to make the mistake that we've made.

We are no longer having a debate about this. We're no longer having a debate about investing primarily in transit and not building roads in part because we have already built a 16-lane highway through our region that the minute it was built, it was filled with cars. We have an expressway right through the heart of the city that was built in the 1950s. By 1960, it was at capacity, completely at capacity. This notion that you can build a region that is sprawling and people can have a high quality of life, we've actually have demonstrated that that simply doesn't work.

Wallace: Okay. We've only got two minutes, Ludo. So if you've got one more burning question, then we'll move on for a well-deserved cup of coffee, Ludo.

Ludo : Thank you. Just one question. We talk a lot about cities for people. We do this all the time. Every transport guidance document, every manual says it's all about people yet we continue to build cities that are not for people. What are your successes and learnings in Toronto around how to shift that paradigm? Because it is a paradigm shift. It's really quite a fundamental behaviour change. What are the couple of key ingredients?

Jennifer : The first one I'll say is that one of the challenges, and this is why I talked about precinct planning and delivering on the promise, and I think you're doing that. Right here, you're delivering on a promise. I think this area is breathtaking. When you deliver on the promise, you start to plant the seed that we can do things differently, that we can live differently. One of the really critical parts about our growing conversations is that we don't want to put people in camps or put people in corners. The minute you put people in corners, you can't change your mind. You have to defend your position.

Ludo : Yeah, great point.

Jennifer : That is a risk to our urbanism, is putting people in corners. We have to find what our shared interests are and then build the dialogue around those shared interests. We have a shared interest and a really high quality of life. Does anyone like a really long commute? No one likes a long commute. The myth of the long commute, I like to call it, this idea that you can live really far away, hop on a highway and how you crank up the

tunes and it'll be great travelling. You'll have your latte, whatever, your flat white. I'm trying to be culturally appropriate.

That myth has been blown out of the water. One of the really big things, I had a slide that I took out which I wish I left in, when we did our transit network plan, we called the planning process, Feeling Congested. We talked about how we're all feeling congested. Our sidewalks are congested. Our transit's congested. Our roads are congested. Part of what we did was we consulted with people we wouldn't normally consult with. We did it in different ways. I have a newspaper headline. It's written by a newspaper columnist who writes for our right-wing rag. The headline says, "I'm seeing the world differently now that I've seen it from a bicycle seat."

The first line of the article is, "I used to hate cyclists." Then the second is, "But all that has changed now that I've seen the world from a bicycle seat." What I love about this article is that that was the goal of the consultations. The goal was to say, "Hey, can we think about the city in a different way that is going to serve all of us and be in all of our interests?" If you can figure out a way to have your conversations in such a way that it's not kind of the echo chamber of all the same people talking to each other, then you can begin to implement change because people start going, "Oh yeah. This makes sense. This is a better city for everyone."

Ludo : Fabulous.

Wallace: Hey, look. We've got to wrap it up.

Ludo : Great. Thank you.

Wallace: A massive round of applause for Jennifer Keesmaat and Ludo Campbell-Reid. It's been absolutely inspiring, Jennifer. So thank you so much for that, Ludo as well.

Ludo : Are you closing?

Wallace: Aren't you close?

Ludo : Am I?

Wallace: Yeah.

Ludo : Look, thank you. I just got my list of things I'm meant to do here. Far me from me to break from what I'm told to do. Look, before we break, thank you to everybody that came along today to listen to Jennifer. Jennifer, it's really magical having you here. We've got a whole day of Jennifer on Monday and my team, Auckland Transport. We're going to be immersing you in the bureaucracy and the staff. We've got amazing people ready to mine you for information and ideas. Already today, it's been brilliant. So can I



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thank you all for coming today? Thank you, the Auckland Conversations team for putting this on.

I'd like to just thank Wallace as well for doing your great job. Also, the sponsors for the programme which are up on the board, and I guess thank you to the RMLA because we have partnered with you once before on this. It's shows you what we can do and bringing amazing people to New Zealand and to Auckland. So thank you to you for the partnership. Last but not least, Buffa Miskell who are in a way, our teams are partners-in-crime in this changing city. I want to shout out to Rachel and the team, and Stuart, and John Potter and the guys, who were really are our partners. So thank you, everybody and Jennifer. Would everyone give her another round of applause?

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