



Roundabout

Magazine of the Transportation Group NZ

Issue 178 December 2023

Why does America struggle with roundabouts?

In this edition:

- Electric ferries
- E-scooter legalities
- Of course we're gonna win!
- Walkable neighbourhoods
- New tech spying on Wellington
- NZ's most annoying streets
- Noisy 'zoom zoom' tyres

And much more...



Editorial



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We don't need to agree on the new government's direction, we just need to keep being professional and offer our professional advice as best we can

So, at long last, we have a new government and can finally see how our transport landscape may evolve over the coming years.

As I write this the dust is still settling, but certainly feels like a trip back to the early 2010s when NZTA (not Waka Kotahi) was pursuing a number of RONS (Roads of National Party Significance).

Last time around the large cost of these ended up putting financial pressure on maintenance and safety programmes, and the extent of the new 'safe' motorways was a bit underwhelming – if you hoped for a four lane motorway to Whangarei or Tauranga or wherever, it was clear that it would take decades due to the expense.

And yet the then Transport Minister Simon Bridges managed to get a significant amount of funding into cycling and the then Prime Minister John Key launched the cycle trail initiative which is increasingly bearing fruit – especially for small towns seeking tourist attention.

So I am in two minds – mostly one, but also a little of the other – about whether the new government's direction will be positive for our profession. There is definitely a theme of 'efficient delivery', which I think most people would say is great, but the issue is what the money is spent on.

One thing it won't apparently be spent on is Auckland Light Rail (full disclosure: I'm the AT rep working on the project) but it is unclear whether the project is being completely canceled, reset or just passed on to someone else.

One thing I think most people can agree on (even if they don't agree on the project) is that there are some genuine problems to be solved – city centre bus congestion, high growth potential, access to the airport, etc. It would be a mistake to do nothing.

Same with Let's Get Wellington Moving. I don't know nearly as much about that programme but, just like Auckland Light Rail, it isn't just a bunch of ideological concepts thrown together – there are serious issues that need addressing and a lot of smart transport people have been working really hard to find a way through.

Maybe that is my take-away from the change in government. A change in direction doesn't mean the work us professionals have been undertaking for the last six years was wrong or inadequate, it just means there is a change in direction. And even if you have concerns with that change of direction, as was seen with the last National government, there is likely to be some positives as well as negatives.

We don't need to agree on all of it, we just need to keep being professional and offer our professional advice as best we can, and take all the opportunities we can to achieve the best outcomes for our communities.



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Roundabout is the magazine of the Transportation Group NZ, published quarterly. It features topical articles and other relevant tidbits from the traffic engineering and transport planning world, as well as details on the latest happenings in the NZ transportation scene.

All contributions, including articles, letters to the editor, amusing traffic related images and anecdotes are welcome. Opinions expressed in Roundabout are not necessarily the opinion of the Transportation Group NZ or the editor, except the editorial of course.

here is no charge for publishing vacancies for transportation professionals, as this is considered an industry-supporting initiative.

Correspondence welcome, to editor Daniel Newcombe at:
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Roundabout is published around the 15th of March, June, September and December each year, and contributions are due by the 10th of each publication month.

A monthly Mini-Roundabout email update is circulated on the 15th of in-between months and contributions are due by the 12th of each month.

If somehow you have come to be reading Roundabout but aren't yet a member of the Transportation Group NZ, you are most welcome to join. Just fill in an application form, available from the Group website:
www.transportationgroup.nz

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John Lieswyn
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Chair's Chat

A lot has happened since our September issue!

Major changes are afoot in transportation policy and modal priorities. One thing I'm encouraged about is the new Government's commitment to addressing the creaking transport funding system.

The Ministry of Transport's [funding policy research page](#) suggests that "background thinking was undertaken in 2019" when in fact the [Future Funding report](#) was published in 2014. It should not take a decade to work this out.

The importance of reforming our transport funding is a key part of the Transportation Group's brief advice to the new Minister of Transport. [Here's the draft advice](#) – please add your comments in the document or [email me](#) your feedback by Thursday 14 December.

Our monthly national committee meetings have included:

- **Email systems:** we're aiming to reduce the incidence of multiple emails per week. We also understand that some members are not receiving Group emails at all. If that includes you, please let your branch chair know. Also check to see if you have Microsoft's new "Promotions" folder where Group emails might be going.
- **TG's website** hasn't had an update in quite some time and enhancements are on the way to make navigation more intuitive.
- **Core principles:** we've been working on a brief set of principles to outline what we stand for. The principles have been consulted on with our membership and we hope to present a final draft for member comment before our next conference.
- An evidence-based **policy paper** is also planned to support future submissions, along the lines of [Transport Australia Society's](#) policy and planning advice, the [Urban Transport Systems Report](#) (August 2023). That nine-page document is based upon a weightier report developed over more than a year of webinars and discussions across Australia.
- **Branch procedures:** we are developing a template for branches to use if they wish, covering topics such as running AGMs, electing officers, running successful events, etc.

I've also convened the leaders of other transportation sector groups in New Zealand to discuss ways we can support one another (and minimise overlaps).

It's quite amazing how many organisations we have in our small country: ITS NZ, Trafanz, CILT NZ, ITE ANZ, PTAANZ, REAAA, SAS-TA, TPS NZ, TSIG, WISTA and TransportingNZ.

So far, we've had three meetings and developed problems and opportunities statements, a contact list and a matrix of focus areas. Next, we'll develop a shared calendar and Terms of Reference.

Some of the other group leaders were surprised to learn that while we are a part of Engineering New Zealand, the Transportation Group welcomes all manner of transportation professionals and we've been active since the 1970s. Once this is up and going, it is anticipated that the sector leaders will meet once or twice a year.

The [Conference](#) is shaping up. The theme will be Tūpuna Pono – Being Good Ancestors (A Transport Network for Future Generations). If you've been innovating or have some lessons to share, look out for the upcoming call for abstracts!

As always, please let me or your branch chair know if you have any suggestions for how the Group can better support our members and advance the knowledge, planning and management of transport in NZ.



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A look into the past – How the RMA has impacted transport in NZ

The 1991 Resource management Act (RMA) has been an impactful legislation, bringing significant changes to transport in New Zealand.

In 2021 the New Zealand Government announced its intention to repeal the RMA through the introduction of three new bills. The aim of the three bills is to set out how the natural environment will be protected and enhanced, and how development can happen within environmental limits.

However, the new Coalition Government's [100-day plan](#) indicates that these bills will be repealed and replaced with a "fast-track consenting regime".

With the future of the RMA unclear, it is useful to reflect on how transport in New Zealand has been impacted and shaped by the RMA over the past few decades.

Transportation Engineer and Town Planner Malcolm Douglass explored the impacts of the RMA on New Zealand transport in his 2010 paper 'Potentials for Integrated Corridor Planning'.

'In 1991 the Resource Management Act (RMA) was introduced in New Zealand with the primary focus to 'promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources'. The passage of the Act including the limitation of the 5 year life for 'designations' and the dismantling of regional plans for both urban growth planning and transport planning was fatal to many sound proposals throughout the country. This also engendered a shortening of our planning horizons from 40 years back to only 10 years. These circumstances led directly to reduced government budgets, a lessened ability to integrate land use and a loss of skilled transportation engineers from both central and local government.

One of the most significant impacts that the RMA has on transport planning is the development of more comprehensive corridor assessment and planning. This change is due to the environmental effects of transport proposals that fall under the RMA being addressed not only at a local scale but viewed in a much wider framework at the regional level. Although the RMA is not the legislative basis for planning of future transport corridors it has led to a wider, more comprehensive assessment and in turn more planning for the future of corridors. Transport corridors are one of the best ways to match and mitigate the effects required by the RMA and achieve sustainability both within and

alongside corridors. The comprehensive assessment of corridors as a result of adherence to the RMA is useful for many reasons including the accommodation of facilities such as storm water drainage, urban tree planting, forest areas, cycleways and pedestrian routes in transport planning. It also helps to clarify what type of corridor is to be achieved in the longer term and the changes in transport function which will be required in future areas. The RMA also provided a basis for developing networks in new areas and can be used to identify problems, solutions and priorities in established areas.'

It is interesting that Mr. Douglass identified the unintended consequence of the RMA where planning horizons have been shortened.

In their [submission](#) to the previous government on the draft Spatial Plan Bill, the Urban Design Forum stated: "(the bill) recognises the growing trend by central government and councils towards more integrated and longer-term approaches to planning at a broader scale."

Will the next iteration of planning law take us back to short term thinking? The New Zealand Planning Institute (NZPI) comments that: "(the bill) would require long term plans to set out steps to implement priority actions".

These long-term planning horizons are critical to achieving an integrated planning approach.

Amy Dunn, a student member of the Transportation Group



With the future of the RMA unclear, it is useful to reflect on how transport in New Zealand has been impacted and shaped by the RMA.

TRANSPORTATION GROUP CONFERENCE 2024

Join us in Aotearoa's sunshine capital, Whakatū Nelson for the 2024 Transportation Group Conference!

Our 2024 conference is being held at Nelsons premier conference venue, the Rutherford Hotel from 9 to 12 June 2024.

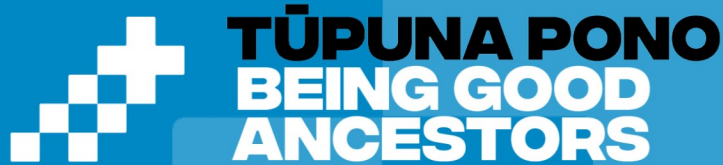
CONFERENCE WEBSITE



OUR THEME

Whakatū Nelson, like many other places in Aotearoa New Zealand, is focussed on improving the transport choice available for locals. However, the resilience of the transport network is being tested by the natural world and a growing population. Whilst we face these short-term challenges, we also need to think about how we can facilitate this accessibility and reliability in the future as well.

The theme **TŪPUNA PONO – BEING GOOD ANCESTORS** allows conference speakers and attendees to evaluate what is important to the future generations of Te Taihū and Aotearoa New Zealand – balance and regeneration, leaving a legacy that we can be proud of and contributing to a higher purpose beyond ourselves.



ACCOMMODATION

Rutherford Hotel Nelson is centrally located in the heart of the city. Special accommodation rates have been negotiated for conference participants. Further information can be found on the conference website.



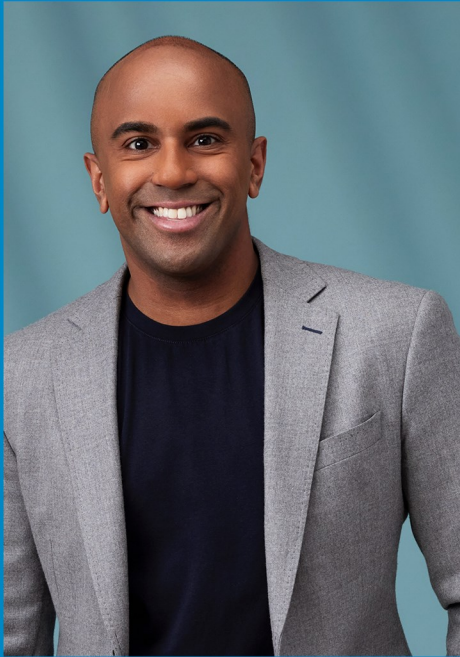
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NETWORK FOR
FUTURE GENERATIONS
WHAKATŪ/NELSON
9-12 JUNE 2024



KEYNOTE SPEAKER: JEHAN CASINADER



We are thrilled to announce our first keynote speaker!

Jehan Casinader is a leading journalist, keynote speaker and mental health advocate.

He was named “Broadcast Reporter of the Year” at the Voyager Media Awards in 2020, and “Reporter of the Year” at the New Zealand Television Awards in 2018.

In the aftermath of natural disasters, terror attacks, sporting triumphs and everything in between, Jehan has helped hundreds of Kiwis to share their vulnerable, deeply personal stories with the rest of the country.

A survivor of depression and suicidality, he is the author of *This Is Not How It Ends: How rewriting your story can save your life* (HarperCollins).



CALL FOR PRESENTERS

Call for presenters is now open!

Delegates who wish to present at the conference should prepare an abstract submission which will be reviewed for consistency with the conference theme.

A detailed overview of the theme, abstract submission process, as well as important dates can be found on the website by clicking the button below.

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Roundabouts in the Northeastern US - The struggle is real

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In Gorham, Maine in the 1990s, a particularly problematic intersection along U.S. Route 202 called for a creative solution.

When a modern roundabout was identified as a potential alternative, there were internal and external doubts about how a roundabout would work but MaineDOT proceeded with the new design anyway.

Dennis Emidy, Safety Engineer at MaineDOT, recalled it being a major hurdle to get the roundabout designed since it was brand new at the time.

Once the roundabout opened in 1997, however, the previous doubts were washed away. Agency designers and leadership then saw the potential for roundabouts throughout the state. Maine's story is not unique.

In fact, the need to see roundabouts in operation before believing they will work, is a theme that permeates the story of roundabouts throughout the northeastern U.S. And, believe it or not, one that still perpetuates even today, now into the fourth decade of modern roundabouts in the region.

In the U.S., automobile crashes annually kill over 36,000 Americans. With approximately 12 crash-related deaths for every 100,000 people, our roadways are some of the most dangerous in the developed world; more than double most of Western Europe.

Over a quarter of these fatalities occur at our intersections. Modern roundabouts have emerged as safer intersection treatment that can reduce

crashes by 35% and fatalities by 90%. Despite their benefits, resistance to roundabouts has slowed their diffusion.

In the northeastern U.S., disbelief is accompanied by a prevailing misperception that modern roundabouts are the same thing as older rotaries or traffic circles. If you do not know the difference between a roundabout and a rotary/traffic circle, you are not alone.

In the decades following World War II, large circular intersections were built across the northeast. Meant to facilitate higher speeds, these circular intersections are often over 300 feet in diameter and incorporate entry and exit ramps that mimic interstate functionality. Depending on where you are, they go by different names.

They are "traffic circles" in New Jersey and New Hampshire while called "rotaries" in Massachusetts and Maine. Pennsylvania uses both terms: most are "traffic circles" except the largest ones are "rotaries."

Regardless of name, the higher speeds are dangerous since, unlike an interstate, every vehicle enters and exits within a short distance. The immediate result is high-speed vehicular conflict and, in the long-term, a growing public resentment towards these large circles.

Additionally, rotaries often prioritize entering vehicles, resulting in congestion. Modern roundabouts were developed in the United Kingdom with elements designed to address problems with older circles. They are significantly smaller treatments (90 to 180 ft diameter for a single-lane

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roundabout) meant to slow vehicles and require entering traffic to yield to circulating traffic.

Lower speeds allow more time for drivers to respond to potential conflict, resulting in a significant reduction in collisions. The benefits are even more remarkable when considering the reduction in injury, fatality and property damage since the collisions that do occur are typically low speed “fender benders.”

Despite life-saving benefits, modern roundabouts face strong resistance across the northeast. In Maine, 1940’s era elliptical-shaped rotaries are some of the state’s top crash locations. Jeff Pulver, Civil Transportation Engineer II with MaineDOT, states it can be an uphill battle to convince people that roundabouts are not the same thing.

There are many modern roundabouts in southern Maine, so drivers in that region are more likely to understand what roundabouts are and how well they work. Some areas in Maine are greater than a 45-minute drive to the closest roundabout. Residents in these towns tend to think of the larger, less effective rotaries they grew up with.

Jeff Bucher, Chief, Highway Design and Technology Division at PennDOT, hears claims his agency is “trying to bring New Jersey traffic circles to the state.” Similarly, Howard McCulloch, Roundabout Design Specialist, Intersection Design and Capacity Analysis at NYSDOT, often hears that “roundabouts” are failing in Massachusetts and “They’re ripping them out in New Jersey.”

In the early 2000’s, as FHWA published a series of roundabout resources, public opposition was a lesser barrier compared to internal resistance at some DOTs. At CTDOT, a top administrator

was opposed to roundabouts, so the agency could not consider them until his retirement. It was at that point that NYSDOT’s McCulloch was called to CTDOT to give a training.

McCulloch is credited by many across the northeast for his significant role, especially early on, in education, advocacy and technical assistance to neighboring agencies as their roundabout programs were in their infancy.

McCulloch, unaware of the prior roundabout prohibition at CTDOT, was confused when someone hesitantly asked if CTDOT could now consider roundabouts. According to McCulloch, the room went silent until the incoming administrator confirmed it was okay.

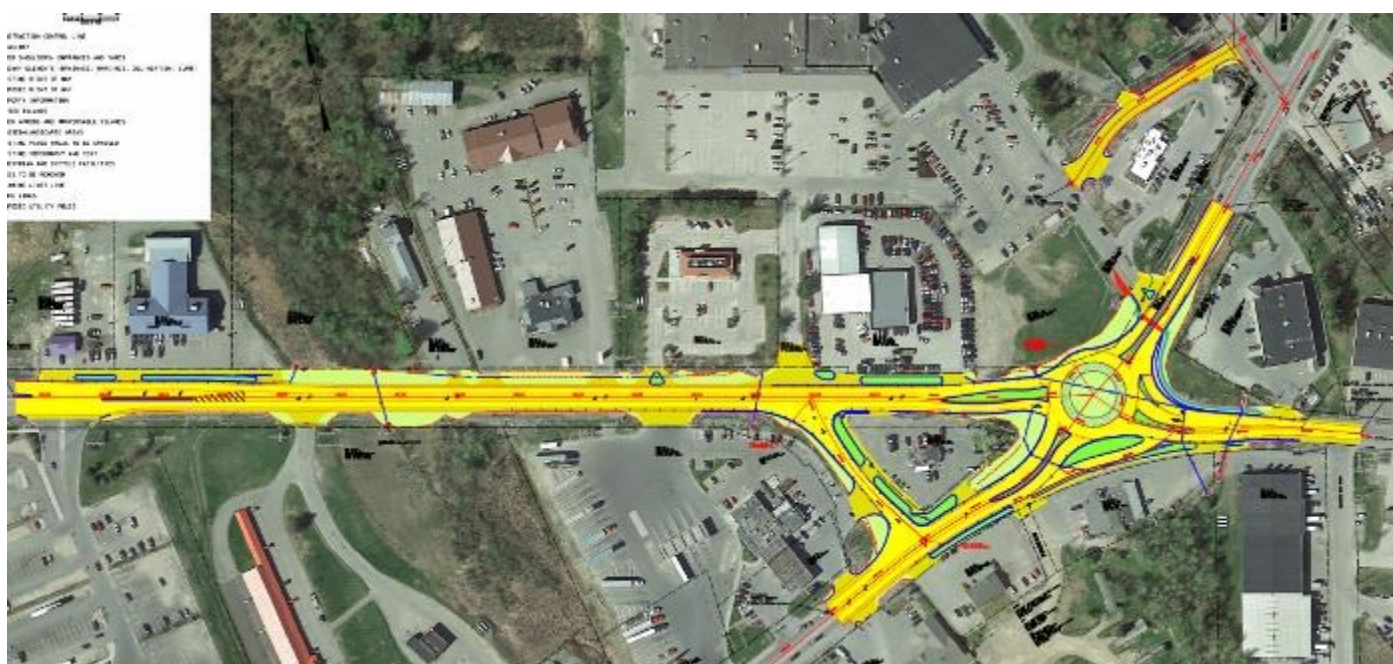
McCulloch’s CTDOT training was not an accident but rather a result of diligent efforts by CTDOT’s Will Britnell, Principal Engineer in Highway Design at that time. Scott Bushee, current CTDOT Project Manager in Highway Design, [credits Britnell as a creative and fearless visionary](#), willing to stray from the company line and unwilling to take “no” for an answer.

“The guy is a fighter,” Bushee explained, stating that Britnell knew the benefits of roundabouts and was willing to push them hard at DOT, laying the groundwork for CTDOT’s program.

At NHDOT, it took a lawsuit against a proposed trumpet interchange to force roundabouts onto the agency. To demonstrate a roundabout could work on the Keene bypass, experts like Michael Wallwork and Barry Crown testified but nothing was more demonstrative than seeing the nearby Brattleboro, VT roundabout in operation.

Built in 1999 at an Interstate 91 exit, it solved traffic that previously queued onto the interstate

He fears that roundabouts done incorrectly will make it harder long-term to bring well-designed roundabouts to the state.





Mike Dugas, State Highway Safety Engineer at NHDOT, said Brattleboro was an “eye-opening moment” as the high traffic volumes did not match up with short queues he observed.

He was blown away at how many vehicles, including highway commercial truck traffic, efficiently navigated the intersection. Rhett Lamb, former Keene Planning Director, stated that Brattleboro’s roundabout changed perspectives and was ultimately influential on the city’s lawsuit. Dugas recalls that the NH Supreme Court ruling not only dragged his agency into roundabouts but also “tossed them into the deep end” as it warranted a multi-lane design.

While some states waited for leadership changes or court verdicts, several were leaders themselves. NYSDOT began considering roundabouts in the late 1990’s, pushing for what would be the National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) 2000 roundabout study.

NYSDOT’s general approach was one of caution; studying them before large-scale implementation. By 2005, NYSDOT was ready for roundabouts as well as roundabout corridors.

In 2006, the agency pioneered a “Roundabouts First” policy. Tom DiPaolo, Assistant Chief Engineer, Highway Division at MassDOT, now agrees roundabouts should be the first solution but remembers being appalled when he first heard about NYSDOT’s policy.

PennDOT developed their own guide as far back as 2001 and today includes roundabouts in their design publications as well as their intersection

control evaluation (ICE) framework. Intersection projects requiring a highway occupancy permit are required to consider roundabouts.

While not explicitly required by MassDOT, Corey O’Connor, Traffic Operations Engineer, states that their ICE process essentially forces roundabouts into the conversation due to their safety benefits.

In the 2000s, support for roundabouts at DOT headquarters did not necessarily mean they were accepted agency wide. Instead, pushback from district/regional offices was strong, specifically from design and operations. In some states, opposition often related to snowplowing concerns.

Over time, seeing more roundabouts in action has shown that the benefits are worth any extra effort to maintain them.¹⁶ Dugas reports that all levels of NHDOT have now embraced roundabouts.

In larger states like Pennsylvania and New York, all districts/regions are now in favor of roundabouts, however the willingness to push roundabouts varies in the face of public opposition.

McCulloch notes that NYSDOT’s regional offices differ in how aggressively they push roundabouts but that the “Roundabouts First” Policy helped standardize implementation.

Michael LaCroix, Project Manager at the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VAOT), stated that Vermont’s legislature revised the state’s highway statute in 2002 to declare that the agency “must consider roundabouts.” LaCroix noted that, while well-intended, the ambiguous lan-

A traffic engineer was delightfully surprised when locals preferred roundabouts



guage caused confusion and limited the ability to be uniform in approach.

As DOTs adopted roundabouts in a region with the infamous legacy of rotaries and traffic circles, public misperceptions increasingly became a hurdle. To share knowledge among agencies, the ITE's Roundabout Standing Committee hosted the *Northeastern U.S. Roundabouts Peer Exchange* in 2010.

[Targeting nine northeastern states \(CT, ME, MA, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI and VT\), it served as a platform for sharing ideas to overcome challenges.](#)

While the direct impact of the peer exchange cannot be known, a more than doubling of new roundabouts completed annually is a sign it at least partly contributed. Prior to the exchange, 11.1 roundabouts were completed per year in the region. In the years following the peer exchange (2011-2021), 311 new roundabouts opened in the region, a rate of 28.3 per year.

From FHWA's 2000 "Roundabouts: An Informational Guide" all the way up to the fall 2021 release of the "MassDOT Guidelines for the Planning and Design of Roundabouts", the number of publications and resources continues to grow over time to help guide engineers at public and private agencies alike.

CTDOT's Bushee states that publications are great, but roundabouts are not an exact science. As such, he believes roundabouts require a lot of

"learn as you go" or learning from others through events such as the 2010 peer exchange or the international conference that occurs every three years.

He credits his own learning of the craft to Howard McCulloch's trainings as well as to Mark Lenters who, knowing how critical it was for DOTs to know about roundabouts, gave an early pro bono talk at CTDOT to spread the word.

The overwhelming consensus among the DOTs is that "seeing is believing" when it comes to roundabouts. This is true whether you are talking about police and fire chiefs, NIMBY's, truckers or commuters. The perceptions of roundabouts seem to flip once in operation. Many people simply do not realize how efficient they are until they drive them, and the usual delays are virtually nonexistent.

As a result, advocacy is growing and as Marissa Pfaffinger, Principal Engineer with CTDOT, put it "The biggest critics sometimes become the biggest advocates."

"The results speak for themselves," says MaineDOT's Pulver, so the more roundabouts that are built, the easier it will be to build more. LaCroix recalls VAOT having to force some roundabouts through, but the more roundabouts there are, the easier it has become, and people are now asking for them.

Despite slow progress in convincing the public that the new "rotaries" are not actually rotaries, there are many signs that roundabouts are here to stay





Sean Raymond, Managing Engineer at RIDOT, was delightfully surprised when locals preferred roundabouts for adjacent interstate exit intersections. At a public informational meeting where a signal was the chosen alternative, CTDOT's Pfaffinger estimated that 10% of the questions were "But why not a roundabout?"

She noted a shift at public meetings, with more people now willing to speak in favor of roundabouts. Despite strong support, Pfaffinger still sees public informational meetings as critical for educating on roundabouts (e.g. design elements, how to navigate them, etc.) and to solicit feedback for improvement.

With support growing among northeastern states, support within each state still seems limited to those geographic areas with roundabouts. Pfaffinger feels strongly that the areas within Connecticut that have roundabouts have a much higher level of acceptance and support than those that do not.

Steve Pristawa, Chief Civil Engineer at RIDOT, states that it has taken a lot over the years to sell roundabouts, but many localities are now firmly on board with it. In Maine, municipalities with roundabouts have not only been asking for more but some are willing to foot the bill locally when the DOT will not.

While municipal roundabouts are promising, Scott Bushee says it is important that municipal roundabouts are done correctly. At CTDOT, he has heard complaints regarding municipal roundabouts, often for being too small to handle truck traffic. He fears that roundabouts done incorrectly will make it harder long-term to bring well-designed roundabouts to the state.

The big picture hope for roundabouts in Connecticut is also why CTDOT has focused thus far on safer single-lane roundabouts. Similarly, several states that have previously built multi-lane roundabouts are now less likely to push for multi-lane roundabouts as a solution.

Parker O'Brien, Transportation Engineer II at MaineDOT has seen crashes go up, rather than down, at two-lane roundabouts over time. For similar reasons, NYSDOT revamped its "Roundabouts First" policy to essentially be a "single lane roundabouts first" policy.

In areas of northeastern states where roundabouts are still uncommon, confusion mixed with a lack of familiarity remains prominent. Several states report that the regions with the least success are often those with a stronger legacy of rotaries and traffic circles.

In North Kingstown, RI, there was a lot of confusion when RIDOT proposed a roundabout at a signalized intersection that had previously been a rotary. Firmly believing RIDOT's proposal was to "put it back how it was before," the newer circular design faced outright opposition.

Overcoming bad experiences with older rotaries is problematic. Retrofitting rotary intersections with modern roundabouts, however, is not necessarily helping either. In both New Hampshire and Massachusetts, such conversions have had mixed results.

NHDOT's Mike Dugas observes that when an intersection is converted from signalized to circular, drivers make wholesale changes to their behaviors. But when you convert from an older circular design to the newer one, many drivers

When an intersection is converted from signalized to circular, drivers make wholesale changes to their behaviors.



Many intersections have roadways with hard angles situated within narrow rights-of-way, so roundabouts are impossible without property purchase.

carry their prior behaviors (and speeds) over to the new design with dangerous results.

In addition to public opinion, costs are a considerable hurdle. Besides physical construction, many northeastern intersections have roadways with hard angles situated within narrow rights-of-way.

It is therefore often impossible to build a roundabout without taking private property. This not only raises project costs but can also stir political opposition.

MaineDOT tries to avoid relocating residents and businesses when possible, therefore many roundabouts have been ruled out for that reason alone.¹ While NHDOT does not rule out takings per se, influential property owners have single-handedly sunk roundabout proposals.

In the face of rising construction costs, many DOTs are seeking ways to cut costs. Scott Bushee cautions against what is sacrificed to save money up-front, however. In designing roundabouts, Bushee insists that you must make sure it is done right the first time. "Everything we build, we have to take care of. I'm not looking to deliver a problem for our maintenance," he adds.

The distinction between older rotaries/traffic circles and modern roundabouts is well-established among transportation professionals. To the public, however, the difference is less evident. Partly due to a lack of exposure but also due to the carryover of local vernacular applied to modern roundabouts.

I live in Massachusetts and hear people refer to the "rotary" recently constructed at the entrance of a school in Easthampton. I drive by a billboard directing customers to an ATM "at the rotary" in Northampton, and I periodically pass a city-issued "Rotary Ahead" street sign for a Westfield roundabout. In recent months, I have repeatedly seen local news reporting on "proposed rotaries" in Chicopee and Springfield.

Despite slow progress in the northeast in convincing the public that the new "rotaries" are not actually rotaries, there are many signs that roundabouts are here to stay. While public resistance is still an issue for many roundabout proposals, DOTs of the northeast are now in full support. From administrators to maintenance/operations division, the realization of roundabout safety benefits outweighs any concerns regarding maintenance.

As the areas without roundabouts become fewer and farther between, the awareness of and support for roundabouts continues to grow. In places where a DOT cannot justify spending its limited funds on roundabouts, municipalities are putting their money where their mouth is and building their own. Each new roundabout is progress towards a safer transport network, is a new lesson in learning how to improve roundabouts and is a step towards additional life-saving roundabouts.

And if you do not believe that roundabouts work, go out and see for yourself.

References available on request



Photo competition—Desire lines

This edition looks at ‘desire lines’, where real human beings ignore the plans of engineers and show where they would really like to go.





Bridget's Rant — Of course we're gonna win!

Three months is a long day in politics.

Since the last Roundabout we've had an election. On a Spring election day in Aotearoa winds toppled trees and cars, but that barely made the news given the unprecedented wildness our country has experienced this year.

Climate change, some say, is just one symptom of excess consumption and excess pollution.

Some say global warming and global unrest are related- that the collapse of civil society has begun.

Some also say that the cost of living crisis facing most 'developed' nations is linked to the causes of climate change: we all want to 'shop like a billionaire' as that infuriating advertisement earworm keeps reminding me.

We *cannot* all live, or drive, like a billionaire, or we will run out of fossils to squeeze energy from, and we'll run out of productive soil to feed ourselves, and we'll run out of habitable land.

Yadayada, whatever Bridget, the world keeps spinning.

The US government decided whether to fund everyday functions and hosted a days-long standoff with itself. Australians decided not to give a voice to indigenous peoples. The Middle East is at horrific war with itself, again.

I work at the overlap of climate change, equity, and government policy. Watching the Aotearoa election campaign made me think about my career, and about the people I ultimately work for.

A new government means weakening of our climate commitments at best, and a reversal towards oil and gas exploration, billions of pre-

cious dollars poured into motorway expansion, and acceleration of corporate greenwash at worst.

Watching election night results, there were winners and losers.

But cowering is not an option. The only thing that comes from wallowing in despair- or wallowing in anything- is that it consumes you. Yes, life is hard. Harder for some than others, and it's not a Just world. So what am I going to do?

Inspiration came from an unexpected place, watching the buildup to the All Blacks' Rugby World Cup semifinal match against Ireland. A Kiwi in Paris was interviewed.

"Do ya think we're gonna win?"

"Of course we're gonna win."

"The Irish have won seventeen on the trot."

"Whoop dee doo."

We won. But the result doesn't matter. The ups and downs of politics and sports tournaments are outside of our momentary control.

So a grown-up, paradigm-shifting, planet-centric political system hasn't yet assumed control of human society?

Whoop dee doo.

Being true to your values, to the belief that there is a good and just horizon ahead of us - being present in the moment right in front of you, is the way to avoid despair.

It's a hard life sometimes, but a beautiful one. Just keep going. There is work to do.

And of course we're gonna win.



Bridget Doran
Former National Committee Chair
bdoranmrcagney.com

*Yadayada, whatever
Bridget, the world
keeps spinning.*





Future Transportation Group events from the Canterbury and West Coast branch – Survey results

We had 19 responses from branch members, which is a fairly low response rate (9% of our 211 branch members), but this still provided some useful information.

We see that branch members most value technical presentations and site visits, but also a mix of event types are also valued. We note that we should keep events short and notified well in advance.

We are interested to see that midday events are preferred over evenings – so we'll aim to offer more daytime events.

We see that online and in-person events are preferred, so we will aim to consider more hybrid events – although previously we have found hybrid events to be somewhat tricky for technology / sound!

We can see that the central city is preferred locale, as expected. We can see that members sometimes are unsure whether they will know others at events or whether they can bring colleagues who aren't TG members.

To confirm - generally we're happy for TG members to bring along non-member colleagues along to their first few TG events, unless we advise that an event has limited numbers.

Some event ideas suggested include: construction-related events, rural issues, tertiary / student inclusion, and changes in industry practice.

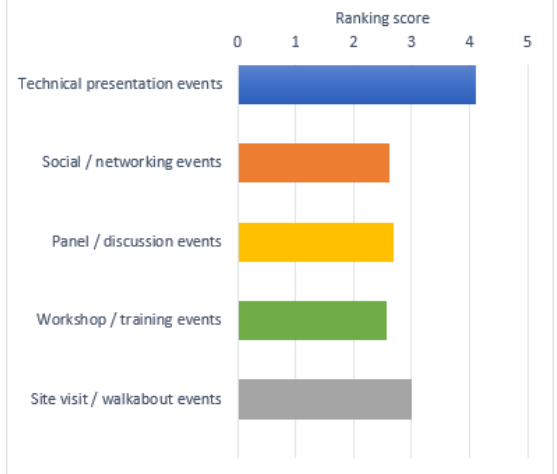
All this feedback is useful when the committee is considering event timing and formats – and we'll aim to make sure we get notices out in advance.

We've also heard recently that email notices are sometimes too many, so we're aiming to consolidate these more with the helpful team at ENZ who send our notices for us to you.

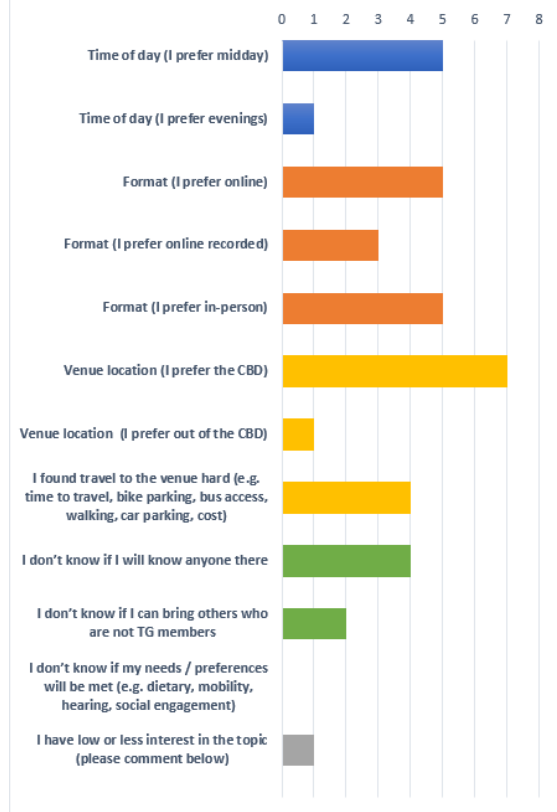
Thanks for your time in giving us this valuable input!



What type of events are you most interested in?



Have any of these reasons been a barrier to you coming to a TG event before?



Generally we're happy for TG members to bring along non-member colleagues along to their first few TG events, unless we advise that an event has limited numbers



Walkable neighborhoods associated with lower risk of some cancers – study

Living in more walkable neighborhoods can lower the rate of obesity-related cancers in women, a new [study](#) has found.

Living in a densely populated neighborhood with accessible amenities such as grocery stores and small businesses promotes walking, and women living in more walkable neighborhoods had a lower risk of at least five types of cancer, including postmenopausal breast, ovarian, pancreatic and colorectal cancers, as well as multiple myeloma.

“Urban planning is related to the health of individuals,” said Sandra India-Aldana, the report’s lead author and a researcher at the Icahn School of Medicine in New York. “Improving built environments can promote healthy habits that protect people from obesity-related disease.”

The study, published in the journal [Environmental Health Perspectives](#) found that women who lived in more walkable neighborhoods – measured by population density and access to key destinations – were up to 26% less likely to develop obesity-related cancers.

Several studies have shown that increased physical activity can [lower the risk](#) of some cancers. US health officials [recommend](#) adults engage in at least two and a half hours of “moderate-intensity” physical activity such as “brisk” walking each week. Only about 19% of women and 26% of men meet that threshold, according to government figures, and women are [twice as likely](#) as men to be diagnosed with obesity-related cancers.

Researchers at [Columbia University’s Mailman School of Public Health](#) and [New York University’s Grossman School of Medicine](#) studied more than 14,000 women between the ages of 34 and 65 from 1985 to 2016.

“This is the first study that utilizes data over an average of 24 years of walkability to associate risk of incidents of obesity-related cancer,” said co-author Yu Chen, an epidemiologist at New York University. (Though the data was collected over 31 years, subjects were tracked an average of 24 years.)

“We showed that neighborhood walkability is related to risk of obesity-related cancer, postmenopausal breast cancer specifically, in women over a long period of time.”

The study, which assessed neighborhood-level poverty, did not collect information on partici-

pants’ income level, and about 78.5% of participants were white – a much higher percentage than in the city as a whole. Researchers attributed the demographics to the population the mammography center served at the time of recruitment.

Walkable neighborhoods appeared to be especially beneficial to women in low-income areas, correlating with a 19% reduction of risk among residents of poorer neighborhoods, compared with a 6% reduction in wealthier communities. Separate [studies have shown](#) that poorer, non-white neighborhoods tend to be less conducive to walking than wealthier, whiter ones.

Roshanak Mehdipanah, a public health researcher at the University of Michigan, who was not involved in the study, said its focus on how the built environment affects women was important.

Walkable neighbourhoods appeared to be especially beneficial to women in low-income areas



“Historically, most cities were really planned by a very exclusive group of folks, which tended to be more white and more male,” she said. “When you do invest in more walkable environments, it’s not just creating sidewalks, but it’s also improving security and safety measures.”

The Federal Highway Act of 1956 spurred development of 41,000 miles (66,000km) of a highway system that reshaped the US. These projects bulldozed communities of color, making way for car-centric cities that affected [air quality](#), [divided neighborhoods](#), [demolished homes](#), [restricted public transport](#) and [depreciated housing value](#).

“The highways were strategically placed to run through neighborhoods of predominantly Black and brown people,” Mehdipanah said. “Focusing on people and not on cars, and investing in not only walkability, but also in the wellbeing, safety and security of people without marginalizing them further, is key.”

Source: *Guardian*



8-9 November 2023
Claudelands Events Centre
Hamilton



BUILDING RESILIENCE INTO YOUR ROADING NETWORK

Future Roads 2023 highlights

Over 250 roading sector professionals attended the Future Roads 2023 conference and exhibition at Claudelands Events Centre 8-9 November.

Future Roads is an annual two-day conference for the New Zealand roading sector, providing a forum for strategy, discussion, and execution. Its audience features local government at a transport team and executive level, roading contractors, consultancy services and suppliers.

A few of these include: building resilience into the network to cope with more inclement weather; harnessing smart technology to improve traffic flows and management; responding to changing travel modes and trip behaviours; decarbonising the network; exploring innovation in roading materials; adopting best-practice processes across roading maintenance and construction.

Most of the above require increased funding in what is otherwise an overall tight fiscal environment. Thankfully there now appears to be bipartisan acknowledgement of the need to get ahead of the maintenance curve around our roads, and avoid substantial additional costs (including reputational) further down the track.

This year's conference was held at a timely juncture with a change of government underway, and with the transport system facing an interesting set of challenges



This year's conference was held at a timely juncture with a change of government underway, and with the roading system facing an interesting set of challenges and opportunities - some quite complex and others less so.



This year the conference focus was on building resilience into roading networks, with new streams and sessions covering asset management, technology and innovation. Highlights included presentations from international speakers Jimmy Scott – Queensland Reconstruction Authority, Eric Ferrebee – American Concrete Pavement Association, Emma Foley – Uber, and Michael Caltabiano – National Transport Research Organisation.

Sector leadership and government priorities were discussed during the opening Leaders' Panel which was facilitated by Adrienne Miller from UDINZ. Panelists included Chris Bunny – Waka



This year the conference focus was on building resilience into roading networks, with new streams and sessions covering asset management, technology and innovation

Kotahi NZ Transport Agency, Siobhan Procter – Wellington City Council, Dawn Baxendale – Christchurch City Council, Simon Dyne – Fulton Hogan, and Darren Wu – Beca.

Additional networking and relaxing entertainment were provided at the end of day one at the conference dinner hosted by performer and MC, Greg Ward.

Other notable speakers included Dean Kimpton – chief executive officer, Auckland Transport; Nick Leggett – chief executive officer, Infrastructure New Zealand; Murray Robertson – chief operating officer, Downer.

Maurice Hoban from GHD facilitated day two including a Mayors' Forum featuring Paula Southgate – Hamilton City, Campbell Barry – Hutt City, Moko Tepania – Far North, and Jacqui Church – Waikato District.



A procurement workshop was held on day one where delegates were challenged with identifying constraints in roading procurement practices. The new stream on Smart Traffic Signals and Control Centres was supported by the Signals NZ User Group (SNUG).

As well as plenary sessions, separate conference streams covered materials, procurement, resilience, technology, regulation, and smart traffic signals.

Key sponsors included MIMICO, ConcreteNZ, Tonkin + Taylor, HG Leach, Hiway Stabilizers and P&F Global. There were 38 exhibitors in the exhibition hall.

The conference is back at Claudelands next year - 20-21 November, 2024.

www.futureroads.co.nz





European governments shrinking railways in favour of road-building, report finds



European governments have “systematically” shrunk their railways and starved them of funding while pouring money into expanding their road network, [a report](#) has found.

The length of motorways in Europe grew 60% between 1995 and 2020 while railways shrank 6.5%, according to research from the German thinktanks [Wuppertal Institute](#) and [T3 Transportation](#).

For every €1 governments spent building railways, they spent €1.6 building roads.

“This is a political choice,” said Lorelei Limousin, a climate campaigner with Greenpeace, which commissioned the report. “We see the consequences today with the climate, but also with people who have been left without an alternative solution to cars.”

The report found the EU, Norway, Switzerland and the UK spent €1.5tn (£1.29tn) between 1995 and 2018 to extend their roads – but just €0.93tn (£0.8tn) to extend their rail networks.

In the four years that followed (2018-21), the average gap in investment in rail and road decreased from 66% to 34%. During that time, sev-

en countries invested more in rail than roads – Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Italy, Luxembourg and the UK – while the rest spent more on roads than rail.

Dr Giulio Mattioli, a transport researcher at the Technical University of Dortmund, who was not involved in the study, said: “Most European countries have been actually encouraging car use by investing large amounts of public money into expanding motorway infrastructure.”

In the public and political debate, Mattioli added, small investments into bike lanes and railways were heavily scrutinised while investments in roads were taken for granted.

“This absolutely needs to change if we are to meet climate mitigation targets in the transport sector.”

The report found motorways grew most in Ireland, Romania and Poland, and least in Lithuania, Latvia and Belgium. In 15 of the 30 countries studied, the lengths of motorways more than doubled over the 25-year period.

At the same time, the report found, European governments had shut down more than 2,500

The length of motorways in Europe grew 60% between 1995 and 2020 while railways shrank 6.5%



To help people shift from cars to public transport, which is really key to cut the emissions of transport, we need to make the infrastructure fit for that challenge

train stations since the mid-90s. They also closed about 8,523 miles (13,717 km) of regional passenger railway lines. As a rough estimation, the researchers said, 4536 miles of these lines could be reopened “relatively easily”.

The EU plans to cut its greenhouse gas emissions by 55% by the end of the decade from 1990 levels but has failed to make any headway in its transport sector. Road transport was responsible for three-quarters of the sector’s emissions in 2020.

Only in 2029 will domestic transport emissions drop below 1990 levels, the European Environment Agency [found](#) last year. Emissions will continue to rise from planes and ships that travel between the EU and other parts of the world.

Greenpeace called on governments to move money away from roads and towards railways, public transport, cycle lanes and pavements. It also demanded an end to all new motorways and airports.

Limousin said: “To help people shift from cars to

public transport, which is really key to cut the emissions of transport, we need to make the infrastructure fit for that challenge. We need the government to stop closing train lines and stations, reopen those which have been closed and that we can easily reopen ... and massively increase the public funding in real solutions.”

A handful of European countries have [introduced cheaper public transport tickets](#) to encourage people to shift from cars to trains, trams and buses. In Germany last summer, the government [introduced a €9-a-month ticket](#) for local and regional public transport, which it later [raised to €49 a month](#).

Mattioli said: “The €9 and €49 German tickets have given many the impression that people would shift to public transport if it were cheaper.

But levels of service and infrastructure networks are much more important for modal shift. So I think we should be talking less about fares and a lot more about infrastructure.”

Source: Guardian





Transportation Engineering

Undergraduate and Postgraduate Transportation - Courses 2024

Dec 2023

Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering, University of Auckland

For Master of Civil Engineering MCivilEng with/without Transportation specialisation, also for Post Graduate Certificate / Diploma / [PGCertCivilEng]/[PGDipCivilEng] or Postgraduate Diploma in Engineering PGDipEng or for a one-off Certificate of Proficiency, COP.

COURSE	DESCRIPTION
Semester 1 (Mar-Jun, '24)	dates/timing changes may be made
CIVIL735 – Transport Modelling and Design (Monday and Tuesday, 3-hrs, 12 weeks)	The planning, modelling, design and operation of current and future transport systems. Topics include transport models and their applications, Intelligent Transport Systems and emerging technologies, transport planning process and travel demand modelling. Transport models are developed to plan, design and manage transport networks based on fundamental modelling concepts, New Zealand specifications and international best practices.
Civil 736 - Transport Safety and Mobility (Monday and Tuesday 3-hrs, 12 weeks)	Develop a sound understanding of safety and mobility of transport systems. Transport safety topics include safe systems, crash reduction studies, road safety audits and at-grade intersection geometric design, economic appraisal methods and transport infrastructure funding. Planning for transport mobility and sustainable transport systems, public transport systems, active modes and travel behaviour.
CIVIL 762 Transportation Planning (Block 1 - 27, 28, 29 March) (Block 2 – 22, 23, 24 May)	Provides an in-depth exploration of various components of the urban transportation planning process, with emphasis on theories on modelling. The principle behind the conventional four-stage transport planning model, namely, trip generation, trip distribution, modal split and trip assignment, is covered in detail.
CIVIL765 – Infrastructure Asset Management (Block 1 - 5, 6 March) (Block 2 - 30 April & 1 May) (Block 3 – to be advised)	Advanced theories and techniques fundamental to the management of infrastructure assets, with a primary focus on Asset Management Plans. Covers the entire spectrum of infrastructure, including roads, water networks and buildings. A major independent project incorporates a literature review and selection, and then critical review, of an Asset Management Plan from industry.
CIVIL769 Highway Geometric Design (Block 1 – 13, 14, 15 March) (Block 2 – 24, 25, 26 April)	An advanced course in highway geometric design techniques. Through the use of an independent applied project, students will apply advanced theory, methods, processes and design tools to the safe design of highway geometric alignments that includes an understanding of human / driver behaviour characteristics.
CIVIL770 - Transport Systems Economics (Block 1 – 7, 8 March) (Block 2 – 18, 19 April) (Block 3 – 16, 17 May)	Advanced specialist topics in transportation economics including, theory of demand and supply of transport, government intervention policies, and externalities and agglomeration. Two transportation infrastructure projects analysed to determine likely future social/real time benefits / dis-benefits.



Semester 2 (Jul-Oct, '24)	dates/timing changes may be made
CIVIL763 Smart Infrastructure Analytics (Tues 2-4 pm, Weekly during Semester)	Develops fundamental knowledge in the use of computer programming and data analytics to solve real-world infrastructure problems, such as reducing traffic congestion, predicting water usage and infrastructure failures. Group and independent projects are undertaken in which students study complex smart infrastructure analytics problems using real-world data.
CIVIL766 - Transportation Asset Management (Block 1 – 31 July & 1 August) (Block 2 – 10, 11 September) (Block 3 – 22, 23 May)	Focuses on advanced topics in transportation asset management. Develops a critical awareness of the key issues encountered, including those related to the evaluation of performance; risk management; predictive modelling and calibration; prioritisation and optimisation; and life cycle analysis. The core skills are extended by an independent applied project in which students undertake to solve a complex transportation asset management problem.
CIVIL 771 – Planning & Managing Transport (Block 1 – 17, 18 July) (Block 2 – 14, 15 August) (Block 3 – 25, 26 September)	An advanced course on integrating land use planning and transport provisions, including planning for different land use trip types and parking, travel demand management techniques, and intelligent transport systems. An independent project applies this specialised knowledge.
CIVIL 773 - Sustainable Transport: Planning and Design (Block 1 – 23, 24 July) (Block 2 – 22, 23 July) (Block 3 - 3, 4 October)	Pedestrian and cycle planning and facility design using best practice (network and route planning, trails, roundabouts, footways, terminals, plazas, footways, escalators, etc.); public transport (bus, rail and LRT) and vehicle operations for compact central urban areas and transit orientated developments, shared spaces and user safety in design assessments.
EngGen 726 - Climate Adaptation of Infrastructure (Block 1 – 7, 8 March) (Block 2 – 14, 15 March) (Block 3 – 21, 22 March)	Impacts of climate change on infrastructure and adaptation strategies to respond to these changes. Impact assessments, vulnerability studies, and development of adaptation strategies and techniques for whole of life asset management. Decision-making, management and climate resilience of transport, potable water provision, stormwater and wastewater systems, buildings, and other physical infrastructure systems.

NOTE: Other relevant courses at the University of Canterbury (Civil / Transportation) or at Auckland (in Civil / Construction Management) or elsewhere can be suitable for credit – prior approval is required.

For Admission / Enrolment or Course options contact: **Bevan Clement** DDI (09) 923 6181 (M) 021 022 65184

Email: b.clement@auckland.ac.nz

Further details, including the course outlines, can be found at:

<https://www.calendar.auckland.ac.nz/en/courses/faculty-of-engineering.html>



Transportation Engineering
 Undergraduate and Postgraduate Transportation - Courses 2024





ABB to deliver Auckland's electric ferry charging system

Auckland Transport (AT) has awarded ABB the contract to supply a megawatt-level charging system for its incoming electric ferries.

Over the next few years, the first two fully electric and two electric-hybrid ferries will be joining AT's ferry fleet as it works to provide low emission public transport across its network.

By 2030, Auckland is set to have the largest electric ferry fleet in the Southern Hemisphere.

The new ferries will require modern charging infrastructure which will be engineered and installed by global technology company ABB, says Nathan Cammock, AT's Low Emission Ferry Programme Director.

"Ferries connect communities and have a significant impact on the environment. Electrification is crucial and we must move away from emissions-generating technologies.

"Noise- and emission-free operations benefit both the broader and local communities, while passengers onboard enjoy improved travel comfort thanks to less vibration."

Mr Cammock says the decarbonisation of AT's ferry fleet is a part of its Mission Electric initiative to invest in low emission transport options.

"AT's train network has been electrified already and all new buses will be electric. Now we are doing the same for the ferry network.

By 2030, Auckland is set to have the largest electric ferry fleet in the Southern Hemisphere.



"Each charger will be capable of supplying over three megawatts of power, allowing the ferries to quickly top up between journeys. They will charge for five to 10 minutes during passenger boardings, meaning we can minimise the size of the marine batteries and allow high vessel utilisation without long charging periods."

ABB was a natural choice to deliver the required infrastructure, given its global expertise and local presence, Mr Cammock says.

"ABB has been providing technical solutions in New Zealand for 90 years. The ferry chargers we need in Auckland are very similar to what ABB has recently delivered in Portugal to support ten electric ferries."

Palemia Field, Ferry Segment Manager, ABB Marine & Ports, says Auckland is at the forefront of sustainability efforts in the marine sector and AT's decision is a clear demonstration of that.

"Auckland's ferries use around 13 million litres of diesel each year and make up 20 percent of public transport emissions. Our first new ferries will be powered by locally generated electricity, helping reduce fuel consumption by approximately 1.5 million litres each year, and avoiding about 4,000 metric tons of CO2 emissions," he says.

"The new ferries will also have greater passenger capacity, improved accessibility, and a more consistent customer experience compared to our current fleet. They will be owned by Auckland (via AT) for the benefit of Auckland."

While the new electric and electric-hybrid ferries are being built, AT is also having four existing diesel ferries overhauled and refitted with more fuel-efficient engines to provide an immediate reliability and emissions benefit.



New tech to take real time snapshot of Wellington

Wellington City Council is preparing to roll out a new monitoring network to collect data on active transport to better inform effective, evidence-based decision-making in a cost-effective way. Data collected by the new traffic counting sensors will include counts of different types of road users, paths of travel, and travel speeds, including cars, trucks, bicycles, scooters, buses and pedestrians.

The network will provide long-term, continuous monitoring 24/7, 365 days of the year and will enable Council to make more accurate assessments of how people are moving through the city, making use of cycleways, and monitor in real time the impact of changes made to the transport network.

This higher quality transport data will inform transport strategies and, combined with other data sets, will directly lead to tangible benefits for key Council decisions. The data will be used by Council groups including Transport & Infrastructure, Bike network planning, Community Services, Waterfront team, Behaviour Change team, and Let's Get Wellington Moving will also utilise the data.

Quality data can be used to make better decisions for events, urban design, public safety, and changes impacting the economic and retail environment, and this nationwide-first technology is an exciting step for the city, says Mayor Tory Whanau.

"As the city grows, use of space and transport become more vital to the liveability of Wellington, this kind of information is invaluable for planning and designing our future.

"These VivaCity sensors gather data around the clock with a high degree of accuracy and anonymity, providing a much more detailed picture of how our public spaces are being used."

Currently Council uses manual and bespoke pedestrian and cycle counts, electronic cycle counters, and commercial e-scooter ride data to understand people's travel patterns.

These datasets established a baseline for long-term trend analysis, but the depth of insights gained are limited due to sample size and geographic coverage.

The lack of continuous monitoring also limits understanding of impacts from unforeseen events like earthquakes, tsunamis and COVID-19 as we currently only monitor during scheduled times.

VivaCity was selected because of its privacy-by-design approach in their monitoring solution. This project has also been through a Privacy Impact Assessment and consulted on with the Office of the Privacy Commissioner.

The data does not include any identifying information about the subjects monitored, says VivaCity Co-Founder and COO Peter Mildon.

"I strongly believe that the future of the Smart City has to be citizen-centric. We have designed our solutions from the ground up to guarantee the privacy of every citizen. The system was developed using data protection-by-design principles and is not just fully compliant with but exceeds the legal requirements in data protection legislation."

WCCC will collect data on active transport to better inform effective, evidence-based decision-making in a cost-effective way



The sensors use AI-powered computer vision to detect road users and decide which mode of transport they are using.

Established in Australia, Wellington will be the first major deployment in New Zealand, and the first city in the country to access the award-winning monitoring technology.

Instalment of the new sensor network is expected to start later this month at an estimated cost of \$1 million over five years. It is funded by repurposing existing funds (including leveraging the Waka Kotahi subsidy) from the previous decentralised and often more manual methods we used to collect data.

Traffic Counting Sensors Technology

The sensors use AI-powered computer vision to detect road users and decide which mode of transport they are using.

The Traffic Counting Sensors are small devices mounted onto street light poles. The device views the street via a camera, then classifies and counts

roadway users in real-time. Video frames from the sensors are deleted nearly instantaneously, and only anonymous data is stored.

Locations of the Traffic Counting Sensors

The locations of the traffic counting sensors are [available on our website](#) and updated as additional sensors are installed.

Signage will be displayed to indicate where a sensor is mounted.

The development of the city-wide traffic counting network will be rolled out over the next few months. The initial focus will be establishing the network in key areas in the CBD, including some cycleways, and replacing the existing cordon counts (data collected) where this is required to minimise the disruption of moving to a centralised data collection approach.

Major Mistakes.
@mistakespics Follow



4:09 PM · Aug 13, 2021



DERBY



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Walking and Cycling: The Sky Has Not Fallen



'Cycleways'

With some new government personalities not seeming particularly enthused about 'cycleways', and sometimes seeming distinctly hostile, and with certain cycleway programmes already deferred in anticipation of a new government's policy direction, it may seem that the sky has fallen for walking and cycling. Not so!

In recent years, official action to help cycling has centred around 'cycleways' – dedicated and separated infrastructure – and yes, there does seem to have been (in my view) some double standards in commentators complaining about costs of these, while staying surprisingly silent about cost overruns for certain road schemes. However, there are some very popular and successful cycleway networks (I'm thinking for example of Christchurch and Wellington) which may win round even sceptical and popularist sound-bite-happy commentators (not that the arguing is over on that quite yet).

We need, however, to start with 'planning for cycling' rather than 'cycleways' (or that older term, 'cycling facilities'). Any infrastructure, and in this cycleway projects are no different from road or rail projects, has a tangibility appeal lacking in the possibly more important area of policy. As someone once said to me, "policies don't win elections, projects do".

An old lesson: it's not all about infrastructure

If we look back, planning for cycling has had different templates at different times. Back in the 1990s no one would dream of writing a cycling strategy without first genuflecting to something called "the four E's". The "four E's" haven't been in vogue for nearly twenty years now, but they were projected to the world in the seminal, and widely-copied and enormously influential 1977 Geelong Bike Plan, and for over two decades after this, they were unquestioningly seen (at least, in New Zealand, Australia and Britain) as "the" way to do cycling strategies.

They came from Victoria, Australia, which had already coined the road safety "three E's" of "engineering, enforcement and education". Recognising the new 'green' movement, the Victorian government had engaged in dialogue with the fledgling green-based cycling advocacy groups, at whose behest a fourth "E" was added, "encouragement" (what we may nowadays perhaps call promotion). After pushback from an orthodoxy which at the time portrayed cycling as "dangerous" (because of its crash and injury record), cycling was eventually (in New Zealand by about the late 1990s) widely accepted as something worth promoting. Its preventive health benefits, by then shown to be truly massive, playing a big part in this, together with a 'safety in numbers' effect of a lower crash rate correlating with higher cycling levels.

The "four E's" were a product of their time, in that they left the primacy of planning for car travel untouched, and treated cyclists rather like school children who needed to be taught how to behave, but they did illustrate an important truism: it isn't all about infrastructure.

In the early 2000s the NZ National Walking and Cycling Strategy represented a big push on cycling. Although work on this started in 2002, it wasn't until 2005 that the Strategy was launched. It was authored by the Ministry of Transport, who following the 2000 'Making Cycling Viable' conference had engaged in a very steep learning curve. It was then another year before what official Gerry Dance at the time called the Strategy's 'flagship' the Hastings and New Plymouth Walking and Cycling Model Communities, received funding, in 2006 – again, a mix of infrastructure and non-infrastructure measures. And then came a change of government in 2007, and a new Minister of Transport, Steven Joyce, sceptical as to whether spending motorists' petrol tax money on walking and cycling would deliver benefits to those who paid the tax. Walking and cycling initiatives were 'on trial'.

There has some double standards in complaining about costs of cycleways, while staying silent about cost overruns for certain road schemes



The new government came to refer to the Model Communities Programme as if they were a stand-alone project, rather than the 'flagship' of a wider Strategy which they might have preferred didn't exist, because of its perceived 'green' political associations. However the localised concentration of both infrastructure and non-infrastructure actions represented by the Model Communities Programme did indeed show some benefit to local motorists through an increase in cycling (and thus mitigated road traffic congestion) when compared by researchers with the 'control' similar local authorities (for example, Hastings was compared with Masterton).

Funding consequently survived; the sky did not fall. There was always some cycling funding, administered by Gerry Dance (who has proven to be something of a 'great survivor') focused in the larger centres. Then, apart from the 2008 NZ Cycle Trail initiative, things went quiet for walking and cycling until the 2014 Cycling Safety Panel, the subsequent 2015 Urban Cycleways Programme, and appointment of a whole new National Cycling Team to oversee the biggest injection of Crown funding cycling had ever seen in NZ.

Just why all this money was voted mystified officials, but 'a source' implied to me that John Key, the Prime Minister, saw it as a vote-winner, to 'out-green the greens'.

A lot of institutional knowledge was lost, however. Amidst the gung-ho rhetoric of the breezy new confident National Cycling Team, the "four E's" were nowhere to be seen, and the Urban Cycleways Programme focused on a small number of large and very visible cycleway projects, backed up by promotion of their use. A colleague of mine, with I think very prescient accuracy, described this to me as "the RoNSs approach applied to cycling" (remember those? 'Roads of National Significance').

'Walking and cycling' conflation

Another thing lost was walking. Reena Kokotailo, author of the 2005 National Walking and Cycling Strategy and before that the National Pedestrian Project, had warned strongly against conflating 'walking and cycling' together, because the rather 'pedestrian' walking, she said, would inevitably be eclipsed by the more iconic cycling. The two modes' needs and clientele are crucially different.

Most notably, although cycling has over the last few decades shed its 'low income' image (e.g. 'those who can't afford a car'; compare this with the more recent up-market 'new golf' tag), walking remains (so its advocacy groups will point out) disproportionately associated with those most marginalised, including seniors and people with disabilities.

Conflation happened, however, and the reason seems to have been bureaucratic convenience, as the up-until-then separate walking and cycling conference streams were similarly combined (although in recent years a 'Walking Summit' has stepped in – no pun intended – to fill this gap).

Walking, I would suggest, has been on the back foot (again, no pun intended) ever since. Although Waka Kotahi's best practice guidance advises that walkers and cyclists need paths separate from each other, a great many of the 'cycleways' subject of attention today are in fact 'shared paths'. Despite protestations from the disabled, seniors' and walking advocacy sectors, research seems conspicuous by its absence on the deterrent effect the potential presence of cyclists (and e-devices, another bone of contention) on shared paths may have on the uptake of walking.

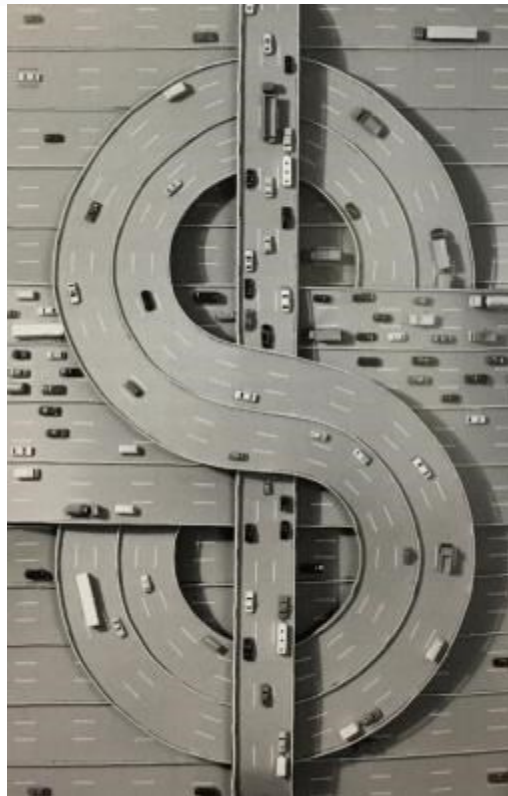
Cycling has over the last few decades shed its 'low income' image (e.g. 'those who can't afford a car')



Even if crash and injury numbers are low (and on shared paths they do tend to be – noting of course under-reporting issues – especially compared to cyclists' crash and injury risk on roads), people's perception (maybe especially among the already marginalised seniors and disability sectors) of the risk to themselves of the possible presence of cyclists may have a bigger effect. That's another story.

Demises: National Cycling Team and Transport Choices Programme

The National Cycling Team, after a few years' blaze of glory, bit the dust in a restructure; I had said to a colleague at the time that in a bureaucracy, teams which are seen as 'advocates' for a particular interest (and this was even by its title) do not usually last long. Since then, however, programmes have survived, and Waka Kotahi even launched a 'Cycling Action Plan' in 2022, followed by a 'Transport Choices' programme funded from climate emergency funding.



It is at this point that readers may feel the sky has fallen – because Waka Kotahi's board has put the 'Transport Choices' programme on hold pending the new government defining its priorities. However, take heart.

Helping cycling without a 'cycleways' focus

Meanwhile, going back a few years, a breakthrough had come in 1996, from an embarrassing investigation into reasons for the Netherlands' very high cycling levels compared to Britain's 'underwhelming' levels, despite rather similar 'cycle network' plans and 'cycling facility' designs. The seminal report "Cycling Friendly Infrastructure: Guidelines for Planning and Design" (Institution for Highways and Transportation et al, 1996) was scathing about what it called the 'cycling facilities approach': the idea that what gets people cycling is dedicated cycling infrastructure (often 'separated' or 'protected'; an idea which, by the way, is not new). No, the evidence strongly pointed to traffic volumes and speeds as the determining factors, with dedicated cycleway infrastructure, good and necessary though it may be, providing a supplementary support role to this.

The findings of this report were duly taken note of, and they have been incorporated in official NZ guidance ever since, but there's a problem: it is far easier to build cycleways than it is to reduce traffic volumes and speeds; and as I said, infrastructure has a tangibility appeal lacking for more complex policy application.

That's why I'm glad that one of the keynote

speakers of next year's 2 Walk and Cycle Conference (18th-19th March in Wellington) is talking about Barcelona's Superblocks. These are a good example of a road and path pattern which is a lot easier to get around by foot or cycle than it is by car. The network links are direct and plentiful if you are walking or cycling, but if driving a car you use the classic road hierarchy progression of local-collector-arterial-collector-local roads, which is rather less direct.

And here's the twist; there doesn't necessarily need to be a cycleway anywhere in sight.

We're talking about patterns of, primarily, roads with some closure exemptions for walking and cycling, and if path connections then generally short and supplementary ones; not extensive 'networks' of dedicated, separated 'cycleways'. In a situation where it's easier to walk or cycle than to drive, more people do so. This means less motor traffic, and a road environment somewhat more conducive to cycling. This type of road pattern design, 'filtered permeability', is also a key factor in the Netherlands' very high cycling levels.

We need to break the mindset that 'the cycle network' only, or mainly, comprises separated paths. It doesn't have to. Roads lightly trafficked may not need cycleways, even if they haven't received the 'greenway' landscaping and associated treatment; the road is the cycleway. The reason they are lightly-trafficked may have more to do with the overall road network configuration (for example, if travelling by car, they may end in a cul-de-sac or road closure, but a connection beyond this by bike or foot) than any 'greenway' treatment. Even that old 1977 Geelong Bike Plan includes the phrase "every street is a bicycle street".

Planning for cycling not cycleways

This is particularly pertinent in 'small town New Zealand'. Let's face it, Waka Kotahi's 'cycle network guidance' is commissioned and written by professionals who work in the major centres, and it talks of a 'cycle network' suited to major centres. Most walking and cycling government funding (until this year's 'Transport Choices' projects, which broke this mould somewhat) has been only or overwhelmingly for major centres. Some of the guidance doesn't fit 'small town New Zealand' well (I know, I live there), where in many settlements most roads have hardly any traffic, and there isn't a rating base to pay for widespread separated infrastructure anyway.

Another idea which used to be in vogue but is less so now, which derived from the 1996 'Cycling Friendly Infrastructure' guidelines I mentioned, was a matrix-based template used to determine whether dedicated cycling infrastructure was needed, and if so which type. Basically, a greater degree of separation was needed the higher the traffic volumes and speeds. Although

We are more in danger not only of providing 'cycleways' where they aren't needed, but also raising a generation of cyclists ill-equipped to keep themselves safe among motor traffic



‘separated’ or ‘protected’ paths have come to the fore more since 1996, this truism remains. Versions of this template varied between jurisdictions (a flurry of them were prepared in the late 1990s and early 2000s, whereas they seem to have fallen by the wayside since then), and they rubbed home the truism than on most roads (and more so in the ‘small town New Zealand’ I mentioned) dedicated ‘cycleway’ infrastructure isn’t needed for people to feel safe taking up cycling.

In passing: a word about ‘vehicular cycling’

In passing, I want to scoot around (no pun intended) a sometimes fierce debate about ‘vehicular cycling’. This is the idea of upskilling cyclists to know how to negotiate motorised traffic situations. Bearing in mind that most cycling has always been on roads mixing with motor traffic, and probably always will be, this is vastly neglected.

It’s one thing to have the advanced end of a ‘Pedal Ready’ school course venture out on a few of the kinder roads, but quite another thing to equip adults to negotiate average or heavy traffic volumes and speeds on more complex roads. The debate can get fierce because, so it is alleged, ‘vehicular cycling’ may be used as an excuse not to provide (separated or protected) ‘cycleways’ where they are needed – and indeed this has been true, from some of ‘vehicular cycling’'s fiercer advocates.

However, ‘vehicular cycling’ remains a skill much needed for which, I’d suggest, there is a yawning gap in cyclist education (especially for adult cyclists). I suggest we are more in danger not only of providing ‘cycleways’ where they aren’t needed (i.e. on those quieter roads I mentioned), but also raising a generation of cyclists ill-equipped to keep themselves safe among motor traffic.

Engage: There’ll be a new GPS coming up

There is some way to go before we see how transport policy develops under the new government. I hope, however, I’ve said enough to assure readers that if they hear scathingly negative remarks about ‘cycleways’, not to lost heart. We need to get away from the mindset that the only ‘network’ which serves cyclists’ needs is one comprising separated paths.

I mentioned the Barcelona Superblocks. They aren’t the only example of an overall – not dedicated and mode-separated – transport network designed around walking and cycling rather than the car, which doesn’t have to include cycleways, and even if it does, doesn’t have to feature them centrally. Others include the circulation plans of Ghent, Belgium, and Birmingham City Centre, UK. It may also be useful, when talking to sceptics, to point out that those who benefit from

more people cycling aren’t just the cyclists, but everyone else as well – even motorists, from less congested roads.

We should also take heart from the right-of-centre’s track record of producing cycling advocates. A particularly vigorous advocate in past years for cycling in the UK was Steven Norris, guest speaker at the 2003 North Shore Cycling Conference and one-time transport minister under Margaret Thatcher. It was National Prime Minister John Key, supported by his also enthusiastic Transport Minister and successor Simon Bridges, who injected the biggest funding boost New Zealand had ever seen (Urban Cycleways Programme in 2015) as well as launching the NZ Cycle Trail (in 2008). And even this year, many may have taken heart at Auckland Mayor Wayne Brown (not a particularly left-wing politician) embracing a form of road pricing for Auckland, out of a realisation that we cannot ‘build our way out of congestion’ with more motorways.

No, the sky has not fallen. Let’s work with the new government. They will no doubt be working on a new Government Policy Statement (GPS) on Land Transport some time soon, and will no doubt value our input. Let’s be constructive.

And since cycling clearly delivers such strong and widespread benefits, I can’t see it being the subject of negative media sound-bite stereotypes for long.

It was National Prime Minister John Key, supported by his Transport Minister Simon Bridges, who injected the biggest funding boost New Zealand had ever seen

This is what sand looks like under a microscope





Papakura to Pukekohe: Auckland's \$870 million rail project to lure tens of thousands of new residents onto trains

Papakura to Pukekohe Electrification



In the tranquil countryside outside Pukekohe, mountains of gravel are a sign that something is up.

That something, alongside the North Island Main Trunk line, is work on a railway station at Paerātā where homes are expected to spring up on paddocks within the next couple of years.

The early earthworks for the new station are part of an \$870 million programme by KiwiRail to electrify the rail line between Papakura and Pukekohe, build three new stations along the 19km route, and replace the century-old wooden station at Pukekohe with a shiny new one.

The job is broken into two - the \$375m electrification of the rail line and Pukekohe station works, and building three new stations at Drury, a second station at Drury West called Ngākōroa, and Paerātā station at a combined cost of \$495m.

At Paerātā, Wesley College is moving away from dairy farming by setting aside 305 hectares for what will eventually be 4500 new homes at Paerātā Rise - one of several large-scale housing developments along the rail corridor where another 130,000 people are expected to live over the next 30 years.

All around Drury, big housing developments are popping up, including 800 homes at Hunua Views, 1000 homes at Aurunga and Kiwi Property is eyeing up a city the size of Napier and another Sylvia Park at Drury East.

Chris Johnston, who heads Grafton Downs, the developer of Paerātā Rise, said more than 500 sections have already been developed and 350 homes built in the northern area, and now that the location of the new railway station is known on

the eastern boundary, planning can begin for more intensive housing next to the station. He said it made sense to have the track on the boundary of Paerātā Rise to create a transit-oriented development to allow residents to get into the habit of hopping on the train.

“Having a good transit corridor with both roads and rail is a ‘plus, plus’ for us,” said Johnston, who supports greater intensification in urban areas but believes greenfield development is also important if the location is right and there’s investment in infrastructure.

Grafton Downs has invested \$17m on new water and wastewater infrastructure linking through to Pukekohe, he said.

The development boss has moved from the city to Paerātā Rise, saying interest in buying sections has picked up in the past 10 weeks after a lull in the property market with people able to buy a section for between \$500,000 and \$700,00 and build a three-building home for between \$600,000 and \$650,000.

The half-billion-dollar cost for three new stations appears excessive when compared to the expanded Puhinui train station with a bus interchange which opened in 2021 at a cost of \$69m.

Andrew Swan, programme manager for the three new stations, said reasons for the high cost include the designation and consenting processes, buying land and, in the case of Paerātā, building a road over rail bridge, constructing roads, park and ride facilities, as well as rising costs and contingencies.

“Whenever you are building railway stations there is an inherent cost in them because they are designed to last 100 years. They have to be really robust structures, easily maintained and durable,” he said.

At Paerātā, the ground conditions are soft and mountains of gravel are waiting to be laid to provide a solid platform to build permanent structures. The station has a park-and-ride area for 350 parking spaces able to grow to 500, parking for 200 bikes, a bus turnaround area, a wetland, and landscaping.

KiwiRail’s plans for park and ride have come in for criticism from Franklin ward councillor Andy Baker, who believes the state-owned enterprise has under-cooked demand from the wider Franklin area and northern Waikato, saying they should be starting in Paerātā with 500 spaces with the ability to crank those numbers up.

“The reason I say that is we are trying to get those people who drive from areas that have no

Another 130,000 people are expected to live along the rail corridor over the next 30 years.



other transport option to get to the station. There is a huge number of people so if we are going to be successful at getting people out of their daily commute they are still going to have to drive to the station,” he said.

Baker is not the only person having issues with the project. Auckland Transport bosses expressed concerns in a letter to Mayor Wayne Brown and councillors in August, saying the new stations will be fine for trains but lack interconnections and “below standard for passengers”.

Asked to expand on these concerns, AT said in a statement that KiwiRail is committed to delivering all three stations as requested and funded by government ministers, but it had a preference to consider reducing the number to two should there be issues in future with options for future up-grades.

Work started on the stations during Covid, but the project has faced challenges acquiring land, design work is almost finished, and construction is expected to start on the Paerāta and Drury stations next year for completion by 2025. A completion date for Ngākōroa station is still to be set following a judicial review in the High Court over the location.

For the new Drury station, the acquisition of nine commercial and residential premises has been challenging with negotiated sales with all but one, and the project also requires the purchase of three commercial units on South Great Rd.

“This area of Auckland is the fastest growing region and is predicted to grow by 130,000 people over the next 30 years so providing stations here is really important.

“It will get people out of cars and onto trains. You’ve only got to sit in your car on State Highway 1 trying to get into Auckland every day ... I think we will see a really big shift once the stations are operational,” Swan said.

Work on the electrification project is well advanced after starting in 2020 and on track to be completed in March next year for the resumption of passenger services by the end of 2024.

Auckland Transport says when the line reopens, the train trip from Pukekohe to Papakura will take 19 minutes, knocking two to four minutes

off the previous time, and not having to change trains at Papakura will make the journey faster for those continuing on.

The journey from Papakura to Pukekohe will also be 19 minutes, but this was previously 23 to 30 minutes in the peak and up to 43 minutes in the interpeak because of the extra time waiting for fewer services on the non-electrified section, AT said.

Programme manager for electrification Doug Carter said the main benefits of the project allowing for electric trains from Auckland to Pukekohe are twofold - not having to stop at Papakura for passengers to change from an electric to a diesel train, and reduced carbon emissions.

It’s been a straightforward project, he said, but made complex by having to build it while maintaining freight services and the Te Huia (Auckland to Hamilton) and Northerner (Auckland to Wellington) passenger services.

That has meant replacing all local rail passenger services with buses since 2020, and having to shuffle freight trains between different sections of track, which creates big safety challenges. Swan said KiwiRail worked with Auckland Transport to try and maintain some local passenger services with freight, even some peak services, but it was just not possible.

Other challenges have been Covid, although KiwiRail received permission to work at Level 3 and bring critical workers across the border with the Waikato, keeping energy levels up with the team and keeping on time, and budget, said Swan.

So far, more than 85 per cent of new overhead masts and bridges between Papakura and Pukekohe have been installed, and more than 40 per cent of overhead lines.

The old Pukekohe station has been acquired by businessman and history enthusiast Harry Mowbray and moved to his Matangi dairy factory near Hamilton to be restored, leaving a blank canvas for a modern revamp.

The new station at Pukekohe will have two platforms able to accommodate up to nine-car passenger trains, modern facilities for passengers and staff facilities, and train stabling capacity.

There will also be rail tracks to allow the through-running of freight services while future-proofing for potential third and fourth main lines. Swan said the electrification project, construction of the new stations, and a third project to build a third rail line between Wiri and Quay Park are all working to support the opening of the \$5.5 billion City Rail Link, due in 2026.

If you look at that, all combined, the benefits will be massive, he said.

Source: NZ Herald

Work started on the stations during Covid, but the project has faced challenges acquiring land, and design work is almost finished.

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Our 2024 conference is being held at Nelsons premier conference venue, the Rutherford Hotel from 9 to 12 June 2024.

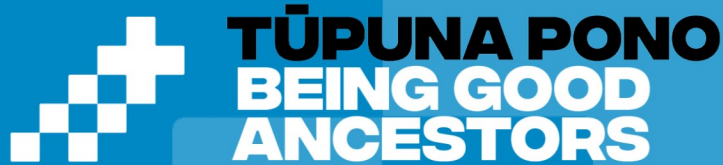
CONFERENCE WEBSITE



OUR THEME

Whakatū Nelson, like many other places in Aotearoa New Zealand, is focussed on improving the transport choice available for locals. However, the resilience of the transport network is being tested by the natural world and a growing population. Whilst we face these short-term challenges, we also need to think about how we can facilitate this accessibility and reliability in the future as well.

The theme **TŪPUNA PONO – BEING GOOD ANCESTORS** allows conference speakers and attendees to evaluate what is important to the future generations of Te Taihū and Aotearoa New Zealand – balance and regeneration, leaving a legacy that we can be proud of and contributing to a higher purpose beyond ourselves.



ACCOMMODATION

Rutherford Hotel Nelson is centrally located in the heart of the city. Special accommodation rates have been negotiated for conference participants. Further information can be found on the conference website.



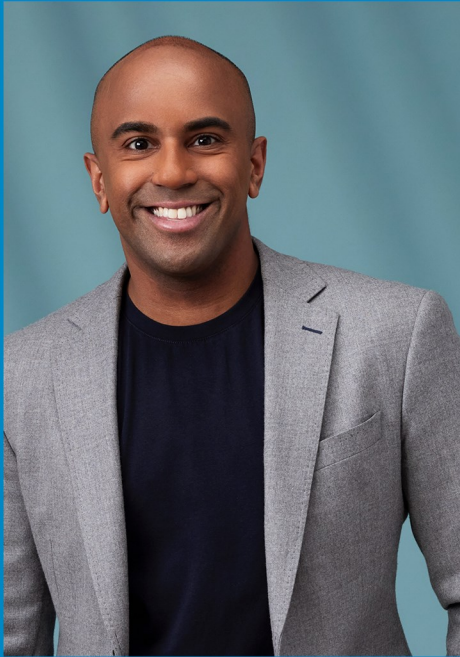
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KEYNOTE SPEAKER: JEHAN CASINADER



We are thrilled to announce our first keynote speaker!

Jehan Casinader is a leading journalist, keynote speaker and mental health advocate.

He was named “Broadcast Reporter of the Year” at the Voyager Media Awards in 2020, and “Reporter of the Year” at the New Zealand Television Awards in 2018.

In the aftermath of natural disasters, terror attacks, sporting triumphs and everything in between, Jehan has helped hundreds of Kiwis to share their vulnerable, deeply personal stories with the rest of the country.

A survivor of depression and suicidality, he is the author of *This Is Not How It Ends: How rewriting your story can save your life* (HarperCollins).



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‘Bottom of the food chain’: e-scooter riders push for reimagining of Australia’s bike lanes



Rodney Ali, an avid e-scooter rider in Melbourne’s eastern suburbs, has clocked up 2,750km on footpaths and bike tracks on his Veloz X1, with Penny the kelpie racing alongside him. Ali loves his marathon scooter rides, except for one thing: his interactions with cyclists.

“Ninety-nine per cent of people on foot are great. I always ring my bell so they are warned. I always slow from 15-20 metres away and pass just above their speed,” he says.

“But cyclists on bike paths are by far the worst. They often travel around 50km/h and pass without warning. I’ve had many encounters with cyclists and many of them escalated the situation by acting so entitled.”

Carol Cooke, a former paralympian and regular trike rider in inner-city Melbourne, sees it differently. To her, e-scooters are something of a menace in bike lanes.

“I have had scooters going the wrong way in the bike lanes. Other times they fly by me – there is no warning, no bell or voice to say passing and that is annoying.”

As the use of e-scooters increases across Australia, so too does the friction on our footpaths and bickering in our bike lanes as a new transport hierarchy is negotiated, often with very different rules in different states.

Elliot Fishman, who heads Melbourne’s Institute for Sensible [Transport](#), recently carried out an experiment of riding a scooter instead of a bicycle to his office in Melbourne’s CBD every day.

“My advice to any cyclists feeling defeated by road problems – all they need to do is hire an e-scooter for a week and they will discover e-

scooter riders are currently at the bottom of the food chain on our roads,” Fishman says.

Where do e-scooters belong?

In April, Victoria joined Queensland, Tasmania, Western Australia, ACT and the Northern Territory in allowing private e-scooters in public places.

While there is a nationwide ban on scooters that can go faster than 25km/h, there are different interpretations of where e-scooters belong and what speed limits should apply.

In Canberra e-scooters are only allowed on footpaths but not roads, but in Victoria the opposite rules apply, with scooters outlawed on footpaths as well as roads with speed limits over 60km/h. Other jurisdictions allow their usage on both.

One of the common complaints against rental scooters is from disability groups who say they often block footpaths and inhibit the movement of people in wheelchairs.

Shane Hryhorec, the managing director of disability support organisation Push Mobility, has taken Yarra city council to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal, alleging hire scooters and e-bikes breach disability access rights when left on footpaths.

“The big problem now is that governments aren’t giving scooter riders a safe place to ride or a safe place to park,” he says.

“In many places, like Adelaide and Brisbane, scooter riders don’t feel safe using the road so they go on the footpath and then people like me in wheelchairs don’t feel safe using the footpath.”

These problems are, of course, not unique to Australia. [Paris has recently banned e-scooters outright](#), while Rome has a 6km/h speed limit in pedestrian areas and Oslo has banned e-scooter rentals late at night.

Fishman says there are some fundamental safety issues with scooters that lead riders to seek out safer spaces. Scooters don’t have the capacity to indicate, for example, and their small wheels and narrow handlebars mean it is not possible for riders to use their hands to indicate without losing stability.

“These issues would be fairly easy to fix from a technical perspective and such changes may become mandatory as scooters become a regular, permanent part of our personal transport matrix,” he says.

Ninety-nine per cent of people on foot are great. But cyclists on bike paths are by far the worst.



The end of bike lanes?

In Queensland the speed limit for e-scooters was reduced in November from 25km/h to 12km/h on shared footpaths, with hefty fines for rule breakers.

Andrew Demack, the director of advocacy at Bicycle Queensland, says the speed of some scooters has presented problems on bike paths.

"Bicycle Queensland members have regularly expressed concern over rogue e-scooter riders who travel at speeds up to 60km/h on bikeways and shared paths, but those riders are very much a minority," he says.

However, many cycling organisations see e-scooter riders as potential allies in the push for more bike lanes, at a time when they are getting ripped up in [Melbourne](#) and [Sydney](#).

"Bicycle Queensland supports more high-standard infrastructure which separates bikes from motorised traffic – and the rise of e-scooters certainly gives more impetus to that push," Demack says.

Peter McLean, the chief executive of Bicycle NSW and a councillor on Camden council in [Sydney](#), agrees.



He believes it's time NSW legalised the use of private e-scooters, so they can be properly regulated.

"The horse has well and truly bolted in NSW with thousands of illegal e-scooters being used on our streets, so it's time to simply regulate and legalise them just like e-bikes," he says. "Everyone is welcome on bike lanes and the more people who use them

the greater the case for expansion."

Not all fellow cyclists see it that way, however. Rohan Wightman, who rides around Castlemaine in regional Victoria, says many cyclists still have a long way to go before they accept that bike lanes are no longer their exclusive domain.

"There is still a sizeable cohort of cyclists who feel entitled to bike lanes and are arrogant. With the increasing use of cycles and scooters to commute and the ageing population getting into mobility scooters, we need something to accommodate all these alternative modes of wheeled transport," he says.

Fishman believes the very concept of bike lanes needs to be revisited by urban planners.

"Our advice to governments now is to call new paths 'micro mobility lanes', not 'bike lanes', and to incorporate slow speed, light, small foot-print transport that includes anything from a motorised wheelchair to bike and e-bike riders to people riding e-scooters and regular scooters as well," he says.

Hryhorec says micro mobility lanes would be a "wonderful idea" that would overcome some of the problems facing wheelchair users.

"Having a separate lane for scooters, e-scooters, bicycles and wheelchair users would be a huge advance on what's happening now," he says.

Whatever we call them, paralympian Cooke believes the key is more infrastructure and more cooperation.

"I have ridden all over the world and a lot through Europe," she says. "Everyone just needs to learn to share."

Source: *Guardian*

Mcycling organisations see e-scooter riders as potential allies in the push for more bike lanes.



Raymond Siddal's legacy

Raymond Siddalls sadly passed away recently. Raymond played a critical role in saving rail in Auckland so we thought it was worth once again running [this post from April-2014](#) in his honour (with a few minor updates).

Next Monday will be a historic day for transport in Auckland as for the first time the city will have electric trains carrying fare paying passengers.

Electrifying the rail network is something that has been talked about for 90 years, mostly in conjunction with some version of the City Rail Link.

While Britomart was undoubtedly a turning point for rail in Auckland, it wouldn't have been possible without some key events and a whole pile of luck that occurred just over a decade earlier, without which it is unlikely we would have a rail system today. One man was at the centre of it all and this is the story of how he saved rail in Auckland.

The story starts in the late 80's where the Auckland rail network is in serious decline. The trains were being run under the name of City Line which was part of NZ Rail Ltd and also ran a number of bus services.

Unlike Wellington which had just fairly new electric trains, the trains running on the Auckland network were decrepit and consisted of former long-distance carriages that had been converted for suburban use.

They were originally built in 1936 and had steel frames but the bodies were made from wood. They were also hard to access, requiring customers to climb up into the trains from what were basically oversized kerbs that masqueraded as

station platforms. Also note: to change ends there was no driving cab like today, the locomotive had to be uncoupled and moved to the other end of the train at a station with a passing loop.

At the time Auckland had also seen numerous grand plans for new public transport networks but none ever saw the political support needed to actually implement them.

At the time the latest idea was convert the western line to light rail using a tram train from Henderson then send it via a tunnel under K Rd before running down the surface of Queen St. The problem was the idea couldn't get political support.

The City Council didn't want trams on Queen St and the regional council saw it as competition to the Yellow Bus Company which they owned 90% of. That left Auckland with its near derelict trains and not much hope for the future.

It's now the early 90's and enter Raymond Siddalls. With a year to go before the regional council took over the contracting of services he was in charge running the suburban fleet. His bosses had also tasked him with shutting the Auckland network down.

With an aging fleet, falling patronage and little political support (both locally and nationally) no one thought it could be made to work. After looking at the operations Raymond was surprised to find that with a restructure, he was able to cut down the costs and actually have the company start making a profit on the gross contracts it held.

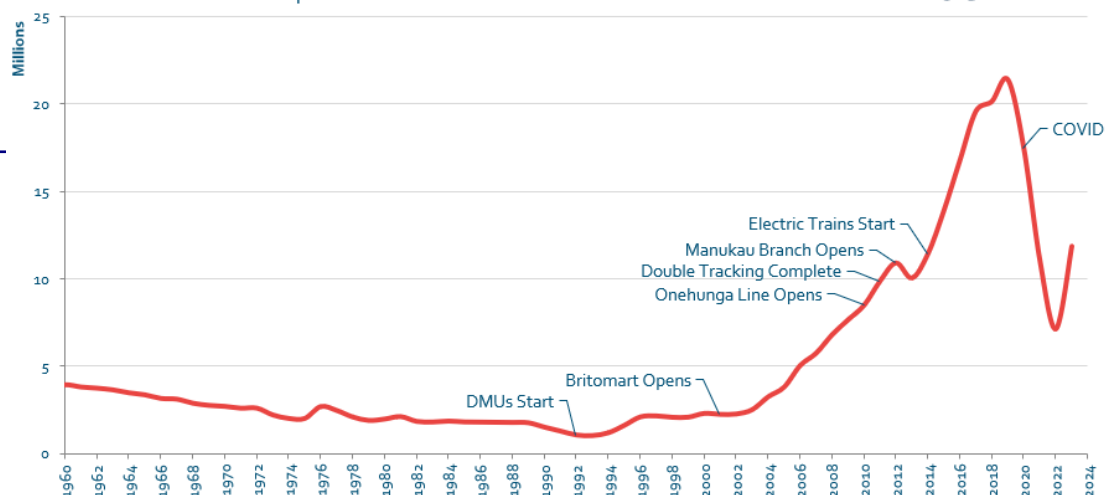
The critical time came in 1991 when a decision needed to be made on how to move forward. New legislation controlling how public transport

With an aging fleet, falling patronage and little political support, no one thought it could be made to work—except Raymond.

Historic Auckland Rail Ridership

Source: Auckland Transport

GREATER
AUCKLAND





Left: One of the ADLs as they looked before being refurbished in the mid 2000's.

services would operate was coming into effect and basically changed everything. No longer could PT be treated as a social service and the focus was on making PT stand up commercially.

The legislation also didn't allow for any distinction between rail and bus services which meant bus companies could tender for rail routes. Note: this legislation is still in effect today and has had a significant negative effect on the planning and provision of PT for over two decades. The new PTOM legislation should address most (but not all) of the issues it caused.

With the network actually making a profit the operation was kept going and the operating company tendered for the 120 services a day that they were already running (today there are something like 365 services per day).

One problem though was each service had to take on the full cost of running the network. They subsequently were able to re-tender for the services as a combined timetable which allowed the costs to be shared across all services.

The councils started to get on board and the company was awarded the contract in the South for three years while in the west it was for four years.

They were then able to successfully argue that with a 4-year contract on the entire network there was a chance to look at new rolling stock which would boost and the councils agreed to this. The contract was due to start in June 1992.

Around this time, it just so happened that one staff member was about to go to Perth to attend a wedding. Perth was just about to finish electrifying their rail network and so the staff member was asked to drop in to find out what they were planning to do with their unneeded DMU's (Diesel Multiple Units – the ones that don't have a locomotive).

It turns out there were no plans for them and so subsequently Raymond flew over to inspect and value the trains. He made a call that there were no other buyers interested in them and so put in an offer for them at scrap value. All up he was aiming for 20 trains and his hunch about no other buyers being interested paid off, managing to secure 19 of them.

With a new fleet of trains seemingly secured it wasn't the end of the problems though. Perth is flat and the steepest track has a grade of 1:200 while Auckland is far from flat with trains needing to be able to handle grades of 1:36.

This meant many needed their engines and transmissions overhauled to be able to handle the Auckland conditions. They also wanted to refurbish the trains by re-upholstering the seats and replacing the floor coverings.

Lastly they had to raise the platform heights around the network so that people could actually get on to the trains. To make things even more difficult in Auckland the rail unions were striking trying to reopen the workshops and re-employ some of the staff who had been laid off by the earlier rail restructuring.

To fund the overhaul, refurbishment and raise the platform heights it was determined that the only way they could make it viable would be if the rail contract was extended to 10 years. Due to the confirmed availability of rolling stock this was considered a good deal.

As such the regional council ended up voting unanimously to support the proposal with one person abstaining – the abstention was from a light rail advocate.

In another stroke of luck all of this happened just before the rail network was privatised, something that could have put the whole idea in jeopardy.

At around the time the DMU's were introduced patronage on the rail network reached its lowest point ever of just over 1 million trips per year.

Within a couple of years after their introduction, the DMU's were responsible for a reverse in the in the patronage decline that had been witnessed over the previous decades.

It then continued to grow and reached about 2.5 million trips before Britomart was opened. It was also that growth that helped give the political courage needed to get Britomart built.

Raymond also happened to table the idea of Britomart all the way back in 1990 and he was instrumental in ensuring that a corridor was left to the site of Britomart as the initial plan had been to sell off the old rail yard land entirely.

Put simply without the actions that Raymond took we almost certainly would not have a rail network today that is about to served by modern electric trains. He has been a hero to PT in Auckland that I think the city should be eternally thankful for. Thanks Raymond.

Source: Greater Auckland

Put simply: without the actions that Raymond took we almost certainly would not have a rail network today



Like a high-sodium diet: traffic pollution can cause rise in blood pressure – study

Getting stuck in traffic is one of the most common stressors that millions of Americans face every day. The bumper-to-bumper traffic can come at the cost of wasted gas, environmental pollution, and as new research shows, even spikes in blood pressure.



Air pollution from traffic can cause a significant rise in blood pressure that can last up to 24 hours, according to a [study](#) via the University of Washington. The spike is comparable to the effect of a high-sodium diet and can contribute to cardiovascular problems. Long-term exposure to vehicle exhaust has been widely linked with respiratory problems such as [asthma](#), especially in children.

“Traffic air pollution increases blood pressure within an hour of being in traffic and it stays elevated a day later,” said author of the study Joel Kaufman, a physician and professor of environmental and occupational health sciences at the University of Washington.

Sixteen healthy people between the ages of 22 and 45 underwent three separate drives as passengers through Seattle rush hour. Two of those drives were “unfiltered”, meaning the road air was allowed to enter the car, as is the case for many drivers on the road today.

On the third drive, a Hepa (high efficiency particulate absorbing) filter was installed in the car, with participants unaware which drive had filtration. The researchers measured the blood pressure of the passengers before, during and after the two-hour drive.

Breathing unfiltered air resulted in blood pressure increase of more than 4.5mm Hg (millimeters of mercury) compared to filtered air. Most of the pollution came from tailpipe exhaust or the fossil fuel combustion, as well as brake and tire wear. The filters were most effective in reducing ultrafine particles (86% decrease), black carbon, which is mostly from diesel (86%), and PM2.5 (60%) while gasses like carbon dioxide and nitrogen oxide were unaffected.

“The clue here is that these tiniest particles are probably what’s responsible for blood pressure difference,” Kaufman said.

In the US, people of color are more likely to live in close proximity to highways. The Federal Highway Act of 1956 spurred construction of 41,000 miles (66,000km) of the interstate system that [bulldozed](#) communities of color, [split neighborhoods](#), and [devalued property](#) – all while perpetuating [air pollution](#).

“Historical practices of disinvestment have resulted in pretty strong racial disparities in traffic-related air pollution in the US,” said Sara Adar, associate professor of epidemiology at the University of Michigan School of Public [Health](#), who was not involved in the study.

“Neighborhoods that were redlined were more commonly disrupted by highway developments than white neighborhoods.”

Improving traffic and reducing driving with fossil fuel vehicles are among the societal solutions that Kaufman sees as effective. On an individual level, avoiding these exposures by spending less time in traffic is the best possible action. If that’s not possible, closing windows, getting a car filter, and putting air on the recirculation setting can also help. If you can’t control the ventilation system – for instance in public transport – wearing an effective respirator mask can offer protection.

“If you live in an area that has heavy traffic-related air pollution, you want to keep your windows closed and have air filtration capability in your home,” Kaufman said.

Source: *Guardian*

The first Fast and Furious movie



If you live in an area that has heavy traffic, you want to keep your windows closed and have air filtration capability in your home



Legal exemption for e-scooters extended



E-scooters are growing in popularity and are proving to be a useful new way to get around, thereby contributing positively to emissions reduction.

E-scooters (with a maximum power output of 300 watts) will be exempt from being classed as motor vehicles for a further five years, with the intent to identify improvements and enhancements of scooter safety for both users and non-users, during that period.

In practice this means that riders are not required to have a driver's licence, e-scooters do not have to have number plates on them, and they can be used in different spaces, including on footpaths.

Waka Kotahi reviewed the exemption carefully and made the decision based on engagement with key stakeholders and an online public survey.

E-scooters are growing in popularity and are proving to be a useful new way to get around, thereby contributing positively to emissions reduction.

Safety concerns will continue to be considered with Waka Kotahi saying there is scope for improvement, particularly in regard to safe speeds in urban areas, through a collaborative approach between agencies, local authorities, police and others.

[More information about E-scooter declaration renewal decision.](#)



"You can come down now, Everett. The children have grown up and left."





Cornwall Park's magical sunken roundabout

Right: Circus and Pohutukawa Drive planting 1935, Auckland Weekly News



In the middle of Cornwall Park, in Auckland's One Tree Hill, is a large roundabout with a sunken middle and an intriguing backstory.

The sunken roundabout was an idea by architect Austin Strong, who designed the original park layout.

In 1927, the centre of the roundabout was excavated to create a 'hidden' garden which visitors

could look down into when arriving on horseback or in a carriage.

These days, park visitors need to dodge traffic to get to the edge on foot and see the spectacular garden the park's horticultural team plants annually (see below image from Google Streetview).
Source: Facebook

The roundabout was excavated to create a 'hidden' garden which visitors could look down into when arriving on horseback or in a carriage.



Above: The same location at Circus and Pohutukawa Drive in February 2023





Fly in fly out MPs urged to save money and the environment with Metlink's Airport Express



Greater Wellington chair Daran Ponter has sent new Members of Parliament a Snapper card, pre-loaded with \$20, to jump on board Metlink's Airport Express as they travel between the Beehive and boarding gate.

The Snapper cards are accompanied by a letter from Cr Ponter, gently reminding MPs that over the coming parliamentary term their expenses will be scrutinised to the last cent.

"Everyone is expected to be doing more with less at the moment, so this a great opportunity for MPs to keep costs down and use a sustainable form of transport that doesn't add to the carbon footprint from flying up and down the country each week," says Cr Ponter.

Metlink's Airport Express runs seven days a week from Wellington Airport to the Wellington Railway Station every 10 - 20 minutes. From there it is just a short walk to Parliament.

"Like a cheaper yet equally comfortable Koru lounge on wheels, there's free WIFI on board so MPs can do their work on the go. A one-way trip using a Snapper card takes less than \$8 from the taxpayer's coffers - far better value than \$40 or more on taxi fares. MPs that forget their handy Snapper card can also use cash and contactless credit and debit cards onboard.

"The Airport Express also uses the Hataitai bus tunnel to miss the traffic that continues to build up around the basin while debate on Let's Get Wellington Moving and State Highway 1 continues," Cr Ponter says.

Patronage on Metlink's Airport Express exceeded forecast demand during its first year of operation. 364,191 trips have been taken on the Transdev / Mana Newlands operated bus service since take-off on 1 July 2022 – 128% of the number expected.

The all-electric fleet has saved 300-400 tonnes of CO2-e emissions when compared to what a diesel fleet would have produced.

"The Airport Express is a vital transport link for the region and a fully integrated part of our public transport network. We are pleased that Wellingtonians and tourists have embraced the service and now we hope MPs will follow suit," says Cr Ponter.

"While Metlink doesn't allow political campaigning on its services, travelling with the public may just give MPs an edge when it comes to their next referendum," adds Cr Ponter.

A copy of the letter to MPs can be found [here](#)

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Auckland's new electric buses to go up a level - double deckers



Auckland's [electric bus roll-out](#) will this year go up a level - literally - when the first battery-powered double decker joins the fleet.

The global quest for a full-sized 90-seater double decker has been a long one, but Auckland Transport said new models from manufacturers meant one in the right format would soon be trialled in Auckland.

The electric double decker will be based at operator Kinetic's new, purpose-built electric bus depot in New Lynn, which was officially opened recently, nine days after dispatching the first of its 43 new single-deck electrics.

Wellington operator [Tranzit has some smaller electric double-deckers in service](#) in the capital, and [a diesel double-decker, converted to battery power](#), but Auckland's will be the first with the same capacity as the existing diesel double deckers.

Auckland now has 133 zero-emission buses in its fleet, [the biggest fleet in the country](#), and the agency's Edward Wright told the crowd at the depot opening, it may also be slightly ahead of Sydney – making it Australasia's biggest fleet.

While the prototype electric double decker will hit the roads later this year, Auckland Transport (AT) said large numbers may not follow until long-term contracts for high-capacity routes are renewed from 2027.

The New Lynn depot is the second dedicated to electric buses to be opened in Auckland this year, following Kinetic's 35-bus [Panmure depot going live in January](#).



The impact of charging so many big buses after a day on the road, was made clear by Kinetic's co-

Auckland now has 133 zero-emission buses in its fleet, the biggest fleet in the country



The city's passenger trains are all-electric, and there are four low-emission ferries under construction, two pure electrics and two hybrids, for AT's own fleet

CEO Calum Heslop, who said it draws as much power from the network as 1,000 homes.

Heslop said there were limits on when it could charge, meaning it had to avoid peak demand on the network, and management technology made sure it could provide “the right charge at the right time”.

The existing buses do around 220km a day, with a range of 320km, and charging systems at New Lynn would be upgraded in 2024 when a further 42 electric buses arrived.

The initial fleet from the New Lynn depot serves route 24 along Sandringham Road, with next year's additions going onto the 22 route along New North Road.

[Auckland Transport's "Mission Electric"](#) will

spend a \$620m premium [buying only electric buses](#) over the next decade, rather than diesels, with the goal of being fully zero-emission by 2035.

The city's passenger trains are all-electric, and there are four low-emission ferries under construction, two pure electrics and two hybrids, for AT's own fleet.

Source: *Stuff*





All aboard! Can Luxembourg's free public transport help save the world?

In 2020, in a bid to cut carbon emissions, Luxembourg made all its public transport free. But what is it like to use? And why are there still so many traffic jams? Steve Rose took a trip to find out ...



It's not quite John o'Groats to Land's End, let alone Florida to Alaska, but undertaking an end-to-end expedition across [Luxembourg](#) has its advantages.

The first is that you can do it in a morning: it's about three hours by public transport. The second is the journey won't cost you a cent. That's right – total cost for two buses and two trains, travelling about 60 miles: zero euros.

Since March 2020, all public transport in Luxembourg has been entirely free to use. While elsewhere in Europe rural bus routes are disappearing and train travel can be more expensive than driving or even flying, Luxembourg has taken things in the opposite direction: improving its transport services and dispensing with fares altogether, with a view to easing traffic congestion, reducing inequality and meeting climate targets.

As a very small and very wealthy country – the richest in the world if you look at GDP per capita – you could say Luxembourg has it easy, but could this initiative work in other parts of the world? Does it even work in Luxembourg?

I set out on my trans-Luxembourg odyssey one summer's morning, with not a euro or a care in the world. All I really need is the journey planner on the government's easy-to-use Mobilitéits Zentral app.

Even the tram from my hotel to the central train station feels different. The line through the centre of the city, which opened in December 2020, is clean, modern and frequent. Each stop has

its [own little jingle](#) when it is announced over the speaker, and, in a gesture to urban rewilding, there is grass growing between the tracks in some sections. And you can just jump on and off at any stop you like.

After 24 hours in the country, in fact, the thought of paying to use public transport ever again feels like an affront. No need to book or reserve seats, no fumbling around with cards or phones or cash, no confusing ticket zones or price structures.

This is just as well, as almost everything else in Luxembourg is incredibly expensive – with one key exception, as I shall discover.

My journey begins in Rumelange, a small, leafy town at the southern border with France. Much of Luxembourg is leafy outside the main city, which is a mix of orderly mitteleuropean grandeur and arid corporate and institutional architecture, such as the European court of justice.

From Rumelange, it's a 10-minute bus journey to the train station at Esch-sur-Alzette, where I head north via two double-decker trains – which, like the bus, feel almost brand new and are virtually empty. It is almost gratifying to discover that not everything is running smoothly: the first train is delayed, which threatens to undermine my entire app-generated itinerary. I have to sprint to make my connection or else I'll have to wait an hour for the next one. Then it's another short bus journey from Troisvierges station to Schœlcher – at the northern border.

People I meet along the way seem generally happy and proud of their newly liberated public transport, although many point out that it was already pretty cheap before – a go-anywhere day pass for trains was just €5 – and fare-dodging was apparently rife. But, for unemployed people or low-income workers, free travel amounts to a substantial saving.

It has also made a difference for young people, says Marie, a graduate in her 20s. "When we were students, a lot of people went to school by car instead of bus and train," she says. "And now it's easier for young people to hang out after school or on weekends. If you want to go to a certain village, there's always a way to get there by bus."

Parents Philip and Elspeth are returning home to south Luxembourg after a cycling holiday in Germany with their daughter – there's dedicated space for their bikes on the train. "It's very convenient and easy because we don't need to pay anything," says Philip.

Since March 2020, all public transport in Luxembourg has been entirely free to use.



"Before, it was a big mess, because at small stations usually there were no ticket offices, so sometimes it was not easy to find the appropriate fare." When the trains became free three years ago, adds Elspeth, for many of her children's friends, "it was the first time in their lives they were taking a train, at 16."

Schmëtt is not billed as "Luxembourg's northernmost point" or anything like that; I just looked it up on Google maps (to be precise, the very northernmost point is the corner of the Lidl car park). With more time, I could head south-east from here to go hiking in [Mullterthal](#).

"Luxembourg's little Switzerland", or south-west to the Upper Sûre lake for a swim – all for the price of nothing. But there's nothing to detain me in Schmëtt itself, apart from the Lidl. It's not even really a town, just a strip of roadside retail. The only remarkable thing about the place is the fact that it has four petrol stations.

This is Luxembourg's dirty little secret: while basic amenities are prohibitively expensive (a pint of beer costs €7.50, or about £6.50), petrol prices are the lowest in western Europe. There are four petrol stations at the border because people in Belgium drive over to fill up. "This kind of behaviour is not helping for a change to a fossil-free future," says Frédéric Meys, Greenpeace's local campaign manager.

"There is inside Luxembourg a culture of the car," says Meys. "We have one of the highest levels of cars per inhabitant: it's just below 700 cars per 1,000 people. And the average age of the cars is quite low compared to other countries in Europe."

Luxembourg also has the highest number of luxury cars per capita – dealerships for the likes of Ferrari, Lamborghini and Bentley appear to be everywhere. Luxembourg is a small, rich country, Meys explains. "So people are spending their money on cars."

Many Luxembourgers I spoke to admitted as much. "Most of the people I associate with, the fact of making public transport free hasn't really driven them to use it," says Damon, a young lawyer who lives about 25 minutes' drive outside the city centre. Most people still drive to work, he says, especially if they have somewhere to park at the other end.

"It's just faster. And if you're leaving work at like six or seven in the evening, the frequency of the buses is reduced. So, instead of maybe every 10 or 15 minutes, it might be every 30 minutes or an hour. I can't control when I finish work, so I might have to wait an hour for the next bus."

Luxembourg's car problem was part of the motivation for the free public transport initiative in the first place, explains François Bausch, the

deputy prime minister and minister for mobility and public works.

"Luxembourg is a country where the population was told by political officials for decades that the best way to move around is to buy or to have a car," he says.

"But, due to the development of the economy, and the specifics of Luxembourg – we have 630,000 inhabitants but also each day 230,000 commuters commuting from Belgium, France and Germany to Luxembourg to work – the congestion problems became terrible."

Up until a few years ago, Luxembourg's city centre was routinely gridlocked. It's not quite so bad today, says Meys, but it is still a problem.

Prising Luxembourgers out of their cars has not been easy, says Bausch, a Green party member. When he took over as transport minister in 2013 as part of the coalition government, he set about implementing a "paradigm shift", he says.

Making public transport free was a small part of that – "the cherry on the cake". The real work was improving the transport infrastructure: building new train lines, upgrading stations and rolling stock, building the new tram line, adding cycle lanes and improving connections between different modes of public transport. "Nobody believed at the beginning that it would be possible in such a car-loving country," he says.

Ahead of the launch of free public transport in 2020, there was a public campaign to change attitudes. "You must sell public transport in the same way cars have been sold in the past," he says.

"The success of the car was not only to be able to go on an individual basis from A to B, but also the way of life that was being sold. We tried to do this now. In the same way."

We have 630,000 inhabitants but also each day 230,000 commuters commuting from Belgium, France and Germany to Luxembourg to work.





There was a jokey advertising campaign counting down to the big day – “like the first step on the moon!” – and on the day itself local bands played in railway stations and there were free public concerts.

The loss of income from abolishing fares was small, Bausch explains: about €40m a year, when the overall cost of running the system is about €800m, not including new investment.

Unfortunately, the launch coincided with the arrival of the Covid pandemic (Luxembourg’s first recorded case was the day before the launch), which has made the success of the scheme difficult to assess. In 2022, the [number of rail passengers](#) was actually slightly lower (22.1 million) than it was in 2019, although tram journeys increased from about 22,000 a week in 2018 to 88,000 a week in 2022.

Some of the problems Luxembourg cannot fix by itself. The army of commuters from neighbouring countries, for example, who still have to pay to get to Luxembourg on their own country’s rail systems. Rush-hour commuter trains to and from Luxembourg are notoriously overcrowded, so many expat commuters still find it more convenient to drive, despite the longer journey times. Combined with those Luxembourgers who enjoy driving, it means the traffic jams have not really gone away.

But the next phase of Luxembourg’s transportation plan, which goes to 2035, will hopefully address these problems, says Bausch. He reels off his targets: 50% more seats on commuter services to France; trains to and from France every seven minutes by 2028 (Luxembourg is even investing €225m in modernising French rail lines to its borders).

The central tram line is being extended to the airport in Findel. All buses will be electric by 2030. And a carbon tax on motor vehicles was introduced in 2020 and is increasing year by year. It is now €30 per tonne of CO₂; in 2027 it will be €45 per tonne.

Electric cars are now heavily subsidised. Last year they made up 20% of new vehicle sales; this year Bausch expects it to be about 38%.

“It’s not that we’re against cars,” he says. “Cars will remain a major part of the mobility chain in the future. So maybe for your daily business, you go the first five kilometres by car, then park it and the main part of your journey to work is by train, and then maybe you ride a free bike the last mile.”

Car fixation notwithstanding, Luxembourg is setting the standard. “In the past two years, I’ve had interview requests from everywhere in the world,” says Bausch. “I’ve even been on South Korean television.”



In Greenpeace’s [recent survey](#) of European public transport, based on simplicity, affordability and accessibility, Luxembourg was the only country to score a perfect 100 (next came Malta, Austria and Germany).

Transport “accounts for 25% of the EU’s greenhouse gas emissions and almost 70% of all oil used in the EU,” says Greenpeace. “Shifting from car and air travel to public transport is a crucial strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and oil demand in Europe.”

Other countries and cities are waking up to this. Public transport is now free in several cities including Tallinn, Estonia (since 2013), Valletta, Malta and several French cities, including Dunkirk and Montpellier. Free transport is harder to replicate on a larger scale, but Spain, Germany and Austria have all experimented with free or reduced ticketing – to meet climate targets and ease citizens’ mounting living costs.

In October 2021, Austria introduced its Klimaticket – as in “climate ticket” – an annual pass offering unlimited travel on regional public transport within the country for just €3 a day. Germany introduced a similar deal last summer, for [just €9 a month](#).

It proved wildly popular – attracting 31 million passengers in June alone – and there were calls to extend it. This May, Germany introduced a permanent travel pass for €49 a month. Similarly in Spain, in 2022 the socialist-led coalition government reduced all public transport fares by 30%, and certain rail routes by 100%.

To many countries this still seems like a distant fantasy, however. In the UK, which privatised its railway system 30 years ago, train fares are expected to [increase 8%](#) this year – the largest increase in decades. Meanwhile, fuel duty for British motorists has been frozen for the past 13 years.

“It’s a question of priorities,” says Bausch. “For me, a public transport system is really the first thing that the government of the state has to do, especially the infrastructure – the heavy investments ... The car industry is not responsible for the financing of the road system; the road system

“It’s not that we’re against cars,” he says. “Cars will remain a major part of the mobility chain in the future.”



is funded by the public. It should be the same for the public transport system. The basic idea is that you must invest. You must invest in infrastructure, in a mobility system, in a public transport system that is high quality, and only the public can do this. Believing or dreaming that private investors would do this, that's ridiculous."

"The costs may be daunting, says Bausch, "but I'm convinced that today, if you are an important economic hub, giving access to mobility to everybody, on an equal basis, and having an efficient public transport, that's an important factor. If we had continued like we were before, in 2013, it would have slowed down our economy."

National politics are often the stumbling block

(and Luxembourg has a general election next month), but the popularity of discounted public transport schemes across Europe shows that the public is crying out for solutions such as Luxembourg's – to help with cost of living crises, traffic congestion, pollution and climate emergency targets.

"This is the way we need to go," says Meys. "We don't have many other choices. Electric cars are better but they are expensive, and there are pollution issues related to their production. The solution is really a shift in mobility: to walking, cycling and public transport. If we continue what we are doing now, we are headed for a brick wall."

Source: *Guardian*

It's a question of priorities, For me, a public transport system is really the first thing that the government of the state has to do.





‘Unique in the world’: why does America have such terrible public transit?



“North America really is unique in the world in the lack of good public transit,” the author Jake Berman told me while discussing his new book, *The Lost Subways of North America*.

The oversize, map-laden volume is a slickly designed deep dive into the mass transit stories of 23 major cities in the US and Canada. Packed with fascinating histories and tons of absorbing information – ever wonder why elevated trains went out of style, or why monorails just don’t work? – the book is a lively and compelling examination of how mass transit has succeeded and failed across the continent.

“European cities never decided to build the kind of copy-and-paste suburbs that we built in North America,” said Berman, explaining why transit has fared so much better across the Atlantic.

“The other part of that is, American cities do not make particularly good use of the land near their transit systems. For instance, many stops on [the Bay Area’s Bay Area Rapid Transit] Bart is surrounded mostly by strip malls, or single-family homes or gigantic parking lots.”

While talking with Berman, the misuse of land around transit hubs was a recurrent topic, a common pitfall that undermined the design of subways, light rail and streetcars in many major cities.

In one of multiple examples, Berman shared that Dallas’s many miles of light rail doesn’t necessarily equal a valuable transit system.

“It’s crazy to think that Dallas has about as many miles of rail as Barcelona,” he told me.

“The difference is, there’s not a whole lot near Dallas’s rail stations, whereas in Barcelona there’s apartments, there’s stores, there’s businesses, there’s churches – basically everything that you need for daily life.”

Surprising winners emerged from Berman’s research for *Lost Subways of North America*. While Dallas may conform to stereotypes about gas-guzzling Texans and their lack of good mass transit, the neighboring city of Houston proved to be one of the locations that is doing transit right.

As Berman explains, Houston’s light rail within the city’s core took advantage of reforms in laws reducing mandatory parking lots and increasing housing density – the result is that transit in the city’s core functions far better than similar light rail in places like Dallas and Los Angeles, which don’t give access to major infrastructure and employment hubs, and which don’t supply adequate housing.

In addition to commenting on contemporary situations, Berman’s book is also a rewarding look into the history that informs our contemporary transit mess. For instance, he does an apt job of retelling the oft-told defeat of Los Angeles’s streetcar system by freeway – including a strange moment in which an LA monorail almost took hold.

It’s crazy to think that Dallas has about as many miles of rail as Barcelona.



This retelling makes for the perfect prologue to Berman's discussion of LA's decades-long pursuit of a viable light rail system, which continues to this day. The idea of such a venture took hold because of a rivalry with San Francisco's Bart in the 1960s.

"It really is an interesting thing seeing how municipal rivalries played out in the transit space," he said. "LA put a subway system on the ballot in 68 because the Bay Area had approved Bart six years prior."

LA's light rail would remain a dream for decades, but eventually that city did come to develop about 110 miles of track (favorably comparing to the Bart's current 131 miles).

Unfortunately, Berman laments that all those Southland metro miles are for naught, as the city still conceives of itself as "a horizontal city, not a vertical one". With the failure of LA to pursue high-rise housing developments around metro hubs, Berman argues the city's mass transit system will remain unsuccessful.

While LA is widely talked about as a mass transit hard case, lesser known is Berman's treatment of Rochester, New York, at 211,000 inhabitants the "smallest city to ever build a subway" and "the only city in the world to build and operate a full-blown subway system, then abandon it entirely".

Completed in 1927, the problem with Rochester's subway was that, in the words of a city newspaper, "it starts nowhere and goes nowhere". After some successful years, the system fell into insolvency after the second world war, eventually entering a ridership death spiral that saw it shut down in 1956, making way for free-ways.

Whether it's Rochester or Los Angeles, Berman argues that making a successful mass transit system isn't overly complicated, as most successful systems are so for the same reasons.

"There's that line from Anna Karenina," he said, "all happy families are alike, and every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way. And the adage definitely applies to transit. There are a whole lot of things that cities with good transit systems do

correctly, and most of those things need to come into place for the system to work."

That would include building apartments and businesses around stations, as well as other kinds of amenities that people would be willing to ride transit to reach. "There's been a sort of forgetting that transit doesn't exist in a vacuum," he said.

If there are common factors in mass transit success, there is also at least one common factor in mass transit fails – bureaucracy, which often prevents the creation of transit routes, as well as the creation of the necessary amenities to make said routes thrive.

Berman writes that in San Francisco, along the major transit corridor Geary Street, "it took from 2000 to 2011 to replace the bankrupt Coronet Theater with rent-controlled senior apartments ... All the while, San Francisco keeps adding more jobs." Berman argues that the continued creation of jobs throughout the Bay Area – without a similar rise in housing stock – is one of the key drivers of the homelessness crisis.

He contrasts the current failure to create housing in a timely manner to the can-do attitude that originally made San Francisco's Muni bus system develop many key routes quickly and efficiently.

"A lot of what I talk about in the book is related to very deep questions about transit planning and why cities can't build infrastructure quickly," Berman said.

"The Geary Boulevard subway in San Francisco has been planned since the 1930s. It's very hard to get things done these days like they could in the old days. When Muni built the Geary Boulevard streetcar in 1912, it took six months to do it. There is a lot to be talked about regarding making the perfect the enemy of the good."

Although Berman sees much to critique in contemporary transit, he remains hopeful that a book demonstrating everything that was once done right – and those things that still are being done correctly – might inspire a transit turnaround.

One of the reasons he wrote *Lost Subways of North America* is to share his belief that it's not too late for cities across this continent to get with the program.

"I would hope that people have a certain sense of optimism that we were able to do this once and we can do it again. Back in the day it was normal for people to build apartment buildings near train stations. We can do this. Providing perspective of the past is what I hope to give to the reader."

Source: *The Guardian*

Rochester, New York, is the smallest city to ever build a subway and the only city in the world to build and operate a full-blown subway system, then abandon it entirely



A list of New Zealand's most annoying and frankly stupid streets

New Zealand has its fair share of confusing roads. If we're being honest, many of them are not only difficult to navigate but quite frankly stupid.

Kiwis are being forced to navigate intersections with dozens of turning combinations, busy and confusing roundabouts, and countless other baffling road-related situations.



1. The most confusing intersection ever?

This small residential street in Wainuiomata just [might have had the most confusing intersection](#).

Sure, the Basin Reserve and the Te Aro one-way system might be multiple lane scuffle where multiple modes of transport fight for dominance. But at least the signs make sense.

Back in April, outside Arakura School on Norfolk St, two give way signs stood either side of a yellow painted line and the word STOP painted on the tarmac.

So which one was it? Stop? Give way? Some strange mix of the two never performed in the history of motoring?

Hutt City council rectified the signs when they were alerted to it.



2. Wellington's Basin Reserve roundabout

While we're on the topic, how many of us have fought for our lives trying to swap lanes while attempting to head around the Basin Reserve? It's a traffic choke point where cars, buses, electric scooters and e-bikes compete to get into one of the numerous lanes around the iconic cricket ground.

[It's apparently the country's biggest and busiest signalised roundabout](#), and where large amounts of state highway traffic squeeze into a constrained (and somewhat confusing) road layout.

It features two, three and four lanes depending on which part of the roundabout you find yourself, with three major entry and exit points and one major exit only route.

It clogs up traffic heading to the CBD, Wellington Hospital, to the Eastern and Southern suburbs of Wellington and the airport.



3. The Auckland intersection with 55 different turning combinations

That's right – Warkworth's Hill Street intersection has 55 different turning combinations.

The cluster of five intersections within 30 metres is one of the country's worst. It's complex and confusing and the community has been begging Waka Kotahi for a permanent fix for years.

Transport designer Roger Williams, who previously spoke to the Transport Select Committee at Parliament, said it was "the worst, most difficult intersection I have ever seen."

He described it as an eight-legged dog, [the Herald reported](#).

"On some legs you have to give way to five different directions at the same time. That level of confusion is really bad."

[A re-design has finally been proposed](#) after decades of [lobbying from the local community](#).

4. The street in Queenstown with no left turn except to KFC

A road sign that says a left turn is illegal "except access to KFC" in Queenstown popped up a few years ago to the amusement of passersby.



"On some legs you have to give way to five different directions at the same time. That level of confusion is really bad."



Not stupid, possibly annoying, definitely funny. The sign is on the corner of Athol and Ballarat streets in Queenstown. A turn-off lane leads to the fast food chain's drive-through entrance before it turns into a one-way road.



5. Blenheim's roundabout with a rail crossing in the middle

Blenheim's Main Street/State Highway 1 roundabout is a particularly complicated roundabout of five roads with a railway line running through the middle. And that's as dodgy as it sounds.

There have been reports of railway barrier arms regularly hit cars as drivers try to speed through the roundabout, and [trains having to stop because cars didn't make it across in time](#).



6. Is this Auckland's shortest bus lane?

Picture this. You're in one of the two lanes heading down Khyber Pass Rd, one of which turns into a bus lane.

So you merge into the right lane, like a good law-abiding road user, only for the bus lane to end two-bus-lengths later.

If you get stuck, or find yourself thinking it's not worth the merging hassle for such a short distance – you are wrong.

There is a camera, and you will find yourself the recipient of a fine. This is your friendly warning.



7. Tauranga's roadworks from hell

While not a confusing road as such, Tauranga's roadworks are not only difficult to navigate but fall into the blood-boiling category.

It's been over a year of roadworks on Cameron Rd, and they're still on stage one. Lanes change frequently, so you can never predict where you will be diverted. Buses stop in the bike lanes, and you can't stop outside shops or dairies any more – [so local business is suffering](#).

Some of the diversions have you running in circles, drivers end up sitting in long traffic delays, and people are executing illegal u-turns and iffy manoeuvres to get where they need. Last month, [when television breakfast host Matty McClean visited](#) the Bay of Plenty, he was "shocked at how bad the traffic was, how awful the road closures were and how utterly chaotic the city was".



8. Wellington hair pin corner

The Devon St hairpin bend eats long vehicles. People relying on GPS might innocuously head that way, thinking it's a shortcut. Wrong. Don't fall into the trap.

There are signs at the top and bottom warning drivers of long vehicles that the road is not suitable. [But on one occasion](#), the sign was blown into an unnoticeable location and a bus got stuck. Like, really stuck.

As a result, the road was closed for several hours while a 15-tonne crane was brought in to tow it. An embarrassing mistake.



9. An endless game of giving way

The Wellington intersection on Cuba and Abel Smith streets is like an endless game of give-way. With signs and yellow stop lines on the tarmac at each of the four entry points, drivers sit befuddled. If everyone is stopped, who goes

People relying on GPS might innocuously head that way, thinking it's a shortcut. Wrong. Don't fall into the trap.



first? It's a never-ending game of giving way to your right.

According to Waka Kotahi if you're turning, you give way to traffic that is not. If you're turning right, you give way to all vehicles coming towards you who are turning left. But otherwise, give way to your right.

Does that make it easier to understand? Didn't think so. The game of waiting and/or making a dash for it and hoping for the best continues.



10. Is Auckland's Royal Oak roundabout the country's worst?

Cars enter the Royal Oak roundabout from five entrances and it's a challenge for drivers attempting to pick their moment.

The roundabout links Manukau Rd, Mt Smart Rd, Mt Albert Rd and Campbell Rd – and is one of those roundabouts where the volume of cars entering either makes you freeze, or forces you to put your foot down and race into a small gap in the traffic.

Despite an upgrade at the end of 2021 that changed the roundabout's shape and replaced existing zebra crossings with raised speed tables, it's still a scary fight for your life with too many cars coming from all directions.



11. Why is Manchester St in Christchurch so hard to navigate?

Manchester St was redesigned after being named a priority bus route, but the result was a frustrating congestion problem for motorists.

A two-year, \$20 million upgrade to 850 metres of the street was finished in August – with widened footpaths, new bus lanes and super stops. It features right-turn restrictions ([that drivers seem to straight-up ignore](#)), lots of traffic signals and [bus stops that trigger stop signals for other vehicles](#).

Changes had to be made to the timing of the lights to make them less soul-destroying, as well as terminating the bus stop lights at times when bus numbers were low – but [the council was still looking at more tweaks to ease congestion](#). Regardless, it's still a sore-spot for Cantabrians.



12. The seemingly never-ending roadworks on Wellington's Haywards Hill

Residents of our capital city are annoyed about congestion and constant roadworks on Haywards Hill (SH58).

State Highway 58, also known as Haywards Hill, connects the Hutt Valley to Porirua, and was previously described as the most dangerous road in the Wellington region. Waka Kotahi [proposed the highway safety improvements back in 2018](#), with work beginning in October 2019.

Ever since, there's been what feels like a never-ending stream of lane diversions, stop-go traffic management, [overnight closures](#), and a maze of cones.

People often report 20 and 30-minute delays, crawling along in bumper-to-bumper traffic. And it's not going to be over anytime soon; according to indicative construction dates, stage 2 of the road works won't be completed until 2026.

Waka Kotahi said, while annoying, it's an existing route where businesses and residents need access – so progress is slower than on a newly-built road.



12. A 900m state highway in Timaru

This one isn't annoying or hard to navigate, but it's definitely weird. Nestled in a [South Canterbury](#) township just off State Highway 1 lies a stubby, looping road of "nationally strategic purpose".

"If you want to ruin your day simply drive along it any time between 7.30am and 7pm," one local said.



[At just 900m, Timaru's State Highway 78](#), also known as Port Loop Rd, is the country's shortest state highway.

The highway opened in 1972 and begins off SH1, over the [South Island Main Trunk Railway in Timaru](#) and then turns anti-clockwise around and passes itself before entering Ritchie St, which leads straight to [Timaru's PrimePort](#).

This looping route means it is believed to be the only state highway to cross over itself, without including motorways on and off ramps. A Waka Kotahi spokesperson said SH78 met the threshold of a state highway because of the port the road leads to.

To put the fleeting 900m highway into perspective, Auckland's Harbour Bridge is 1020m, Christchurch's Lyttelton tunnel is 1970m and the Rakaia River Bridge on SH1 is 1757m long.



13. One of Wellington's steepest streets?

Orangi-kaupapa Rd in Wellington is not for the faint-hearted. It winds from the very heights of Northland - about 300 metres or 1000 feet - down to Glenmore St, opposite the Botanic Gardens.

Not only that, but [it changes from a wide two-way street to a precarious one-way section](#). Cars on the side of the road make it all the more narrow (and honestly, a bit scary). Not surprisingly, there are many accounts of traffic accidents, with cars sliding out of control on the descent. Slips and erosion have also been constant problems.



14. Tauranga's new signalised roundabout

Underneath Tauranga's new Bayfair Flyover is a new [two-lane signalised roundabout](#). Now, if you're like me, you hadn't heard of a roundabout with traffic lights. Apparently, it's as confusing as it sounds.

Not only was this a foreign concept, it also featured "a maze" of pedestrian crossings that took you through the centre of the roundabout, one local said.

"A simple, regular intersection with lights would have achieved the same without the confusion." Pedestrians crossed over the roads just prior to where cars entered and exited the roundabout before crossing into the middle.

"There's so many lights that it's possible to think you have a green light to go because you are looking ahead and miss the one right in front of you."

Waka Kotahi's regional manager infrastructure delivery for Waikato/Bay of Plenty Jo Wilton noted that drivers needed to make sure they think ahead and chose the correct lane early.

"The signals and the new lanes will be a major change for all road users, making it even more important to be patient with other drivers and people walking and cycling."



15. The one-way bridge that causes endless traffic queues in summer

People who head to the Coromandel in summer are all too familiar with sitting in their boiling car as traffic inches closer to a one-way bridge on the outskirts of Tairua.

The Pepe Stream Bridge, on State Highway 25, has been the talk of the town for over a decade with traffic lines easily [stretching back 20km from the bridge come peak summer days](#).

It was built in 1942 and traffic management on the bridge costs Waka Kotahi between \$35,000 - \$45,000 a year. It's the topic of [holiday-goer grumbings](#) every year, despite Waka Kotahi's acknowledgement that it needs replacing, [funding hasn't yet been sourced](#).



A roundabout with traffic lights? Apparently, it's as confusing as it sounds.



16. Eight sets of traffic lights in a 1.5km stretch

Picture this: you're in Paraparaumu, a small-ish town in the Wellington region, attempting to get to the train station that takes you into the capital city. You have to take Kapiti Rd, a main route in the beach town of about 30,000.

You're not facing the traffic of Wellington city, or central Auckland – but you are instead looking at an excessive number of traffic lights.

There are eight (and yes I counted) down a 1.5 km stretch of road, and then a railway crossing. Don't fall into the trap of looking too far ahead and thinking you've got a green light when the set in front of you is still red. We've all done it. "If you want to ruin your day simply drive along it any time between 7.30am and 7pm," one local said. Another word of warning: leave early.

If you get stopped at too many sets of traffic lights, the rail crossing barrier arms will come down before you've made it across to the train station carpark. Those of us who managed to get a ride to the station, have all had to jump out and gap it before the train departs.

Honourable mentions



They might have been remedied, but I can't not mention the 20-pole traffic light intersection in Christchurch and the planter boxes in Palmerston North that were supposed to protect cyclists but instead caused crashes.

The intersection of Tuam and High streets [was the home of 20 traffic light poles](#), which were installed by Christchurch City Council in October 2016. At the time, locals and an urban designer criticised the site for being [unnecessarily busy and confusing](#), with one local calling it an "appalling eyesore".

They've since reduced the number to six. Meanwhile, in Palmerston North, coloured planter boxes that temporarily protected a cycle lane were on their way out last year after [the mayor declared them "a disgrace"](#).



The line of plastic containers on Pioneer Highway supposed to protect cyclists just confused motorists and raised worries that someone [would be left seriously injured](#).

Some of the boxes had blocked parking spaces and were being clipped and crashed into by cars, which adjusted their placement and caused more risk to those on bikes.

Source: Stuff



RS Archer
@archer_rs

In the UK right now a train is delayed as a cat is sitting on the roof and refusing to come down.







Coromandel's State Highway 25A to open before Christmas - three months early

"At the same time we've invested an additional \$25 million to enable multiple crews to clear slips, replace an undersized culvert, and undertake crucial road maintenance work along the rest of the length of SH25A."



State Highway 25A between Kōpū and Hikuaui will reopen to traffic in time for Christmas - a full three months earlier than anticipated.

The news brings a welcome economic boost to the beleaguered [Coromandel Peninsula](#), an area heavily reliant on tourism, which has suffered severe economic downturn on the back of last summer's [cyclones](#) and [weather events](#).

Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency regional manager of infrastructure delivery for Waikato/ Bay of Plenty Jo Wilton says the route will reopen by 20 December 2023, now that the decking is complete on the new 124-metre viaduct bridge, which spans the abyss that severed the highway in late January.

"Our team has done an amazing job, not only constructing the new bridge in record time, but at the same time we've invested an additional \$25 million to enable multiple crews to clear slips, replace the original undersized culvert, and undertake crucial road maintenance work along the rest of the length of SH25A to ensure the whole corridor is up to scratch, safe and more resilient," Wilton said.

"Getting this maintenance work completed now also means we can avoid further work and disruption for drivers during the busy summer period."

The bridge is being constructed to plug a 124-metre-wide expanse that was created after Auckland Anniversary Day flooding was the catalyst for a section of the highway to be washed away, closing a main arterial route to the Eastern seaboard.

Construction began in June after the Government committed to fund Waka Kotahi an initial cost estimate of \$30-40 million in May, which was later revised to be closer to \$50 million. Transport Minister at the time, Michael Wood, said the money for the project would come from the Government's \$250m top-up to the National Land Transport Programme fund, set up to support the recovery.

The closure of the highway has added to the economic woes experienced by many business and tourism operators in Coromandel, who have seen a significant decline in business.

Visitor spending in the Coromandel plummeted in the first half of 2023, with electronic card spending decreasing by \$60 million, and total regional spending was down 25 per cent in the January-June period, usually the busiest time in the region when compared with 2021-22.

Destination Hauraki Coromandel general manager Hadley Dryden said in October: "The storms in early 2023 and ongoing bad weather and road closures left Hauraki-Coromandel communities in a demoralising situation."





Wilton said while there is still a lot of work to do to finish the bridge by Christmas, getting traffic across as soon as possible has always been the aim for Waka Kotahi.

“We’re thrilled to be able to announce that the two sides of the Coromandel Peninsula will be reconnected once again in time for the summer holidays, with traffic able to cross the SH25A bridge by 20 December.

“We know how difficult the highway closure has been on local families, businesses, schools and communities and the impact it’s had on visitors to the region. That’s why, along with our builders, McConnell Dowell and Fulton Hogan J.V., we’ve pulled out all the stops to deliver the fastest and most resilient solution for the Coromandel.

“With the build beginning in June, getting it open in less than seven months is a huge achievement given a bridge of this type would normally take 12 to 14 months to construct.

“We’ve built the bridge in record time by accelerating our work programme, with teams working 24-hour shifts both onsite and offsite at Eastbridge in Napier, where the steel girders were manufactured.

“In addition, we used a bridge design we already had and repurposed steel plates which had been purchased for the Minden Bridge on Tauranga’s Takitimu North Link project, meaning we didn’t have a lengthy wait for steel to come in from overseas.”

With finishing works still ongoing, the bridge will open under traffic management at a reduced speed. The project team will be completing drainage and planting, so the project won’t be fully complete for a few more months. This work won’t require the road to be closed, though traffic management will be required from time to time. The cost of the bridge, once everything is finished, is expected to be approximately \$43m, under the \$50m estimate.

“We’d like to thank everyone who is working so hard to get this bridge open by Christmas and our special thanks to the Coromandel community for their patience and support. We know it’s been a tough year and we hope this new bridge is the gift that helps get the Peninsula back on its feet,” Wilton says.

A timelapse video of the Taparahi Bridge construction can be viewed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EKjtpCyPDmQ>.
Source: NZ Herald

“We’d like to thank everyone who is working so hard to get this bridge open by Christmas and our special thanks to the Coromandel community for their patience and support.”



Sprinkler test causes Sydney tunnel traffic chaos

Workers turned on the sprinklers to test them just before the tunnel was due to reopen at 5am, only to find out they couldn't turn them off again.



There was peak-hour chaos for thousands of Sydney motorists recently, due to a sprinkler malfunction in the M8 tunnel.

The routine test of fire sprinklers in the tunnel went awry, blocking the tunnel and causing a 26-kilometre traffic jam on the M5 that stretched back to the M7 interchange at Prestons.

Workers who were carrying out overnight maintenance in the tunnel turned on the sprinklers just before the road was due to reopen at 5am, only to find out they couldn't turn them off again, the transport spokesperson said.

"Multiple [system] failures came up, which caused quite a significant amount of water go on to the road," the spokesperson said.

"They expected it would be a quick routine test." Technicians managed to shut off the sprinklers, but the tunnel did not reopen until 7.45am and one lane remained closed in each direction because of water on the road. All lanes were reopened just before 2pm.

One commuter told 2GB's Ben Fordham Live that he was frustrated he was going to be an hour late for work and would have to pay a toll regardless.

"All three lanes heading towards the city are bumper to bumper," he said. "There's going to be a lot of angry people."

Roads Minister John Graham said the government would not be refunding commuters caught in the traffic jam. The toll costs \$5.54 per car from the M7 interchange to King Georges Road.

"We want the private toll operator to do its job," Graham told 2GB's Ben Fordham Live, deferring to the government's contractual obligations with M5 and M8 operator Transurban, which have not been made public.

"I'm tied by the contracts and I don't really want taxpayers to end up paying, footing the bill, for something that should have operated in the first place. I'm very sorry for the impact it had on people's commute."

Graham said a fault in the M8 tunnel's fire suppression software system showed the sprinklers were operating in one section of the tunnel when in fact they were operating in another.

"Now that's fine during the testing. If that had happened in real life in an emergency that obviously could have been a big problem."

Transurban also apologised for the delays and said its priority was "the safe operations of Sydney's motorways".

Speaking on 2GB Radio, Transport Minister Jo Haylen said Transurban should refund tolls for affected travellers.

"They caused the disruption, we think it should be on them to make it right," she said.

"It's absolutely on them, and there are a lot of angry motorists who would agree, I'm sure."

More maintenance is scheduled for the tunnel, but Transport for NSW said it was not expecting a repeat of Tuesday's problems.

Source: SMH



Auckland Transport proposes re-design of ‘notorious’ Hill Street intersection



*Public consultation
on the proposed Hill
Street intersection
improvements closes
on Sunday 17
December.*

Auckland Transport (AT) is planning to make the Hill Street intersection in Warkworth safer and easier to use.

The intersection at the junction of the old State Highway 1 has been a congestion bottleneck for decades, and the wider intersection layout incorporates five roads heading to the Warkworth town centre, Matakana and the Kowhai Coast.

“The Hill Street intersection is complex and confusing”, says AT’s Group Manager Infrastructure Project Delivery, Mark Banfield.

“Since the Ara Tūhono – Pūhoi to Warkworth motorway and Te Honohono ki Tai (Matakana Link Road) opened in June of this year, traffic volumes at the Hill Street intersection have halved. However, Warkworth is a growing area and local traffic using the intersection is expected to increase.

“As AT prepares to take over the management of the old state highway – a process called revocation – now’s the time to confirm an improved design to make the intersection easier and safer to use.”

“The current layout has little in the way of safe walking and cycling facilities, it doesn’t fit with future plans for the area, or create a welcoming connection to the Warkworth town centre,” he says.

The proposed new design features:

- A five-arm roundabout at the Brown Road/ Great North Road intersection
- A three-arm roundabout through the Sandspit Road and Matakana Road intersection

- A free turning lane from Matakana Road to Elizabeth Street
- Safe and comfortable cycling and walking facilities, including two boardwalks
- Safer pedestrian crossing points.

“A number of different designs were considered and this option struck the right balance to provide access to key locations, reduce congestion, minimise environmental impact and allow safe access for active modes,” Mr Banfield says.

Co-chair of One Mahurangi Business Association, Dave Stott, says the proposed final design for Warkworth’s “notorious” Hill Street intersection is the culmination of decades of lobbying from the local community.

“The community, through the Business Association and community groups, has worked collaboratively with Auckland Transport over a number of years and we are delighted that a solution has at last been achieved, and that subject to funding, construction could commence within the next 12 months.”

“This successful outcome has only been possible through the positive engagement of the community with Auckland Transport firstly through the Business Case development phase and then later through the active participation in the final concept design phase.”

Public consultation on the proposed Hill Street intersection improvements opened on Friday 17 November and closes on Sunday 17 December 2023. AT will then consider feedback, complete a detailed final design, and apply to Waka Kotahi for construction funding.



Auckland man claimed tyres on his new Toyota were too noisy and made a 'zoom, zoom' sound

A man has failed to get traction over a claim that the tyres on his new Toyota were too noisy. Syed Haider bought the 2017 Toyota C-HR in May for \$28,870 but wasn't happy about a "zoom zoom" or humming noise from the tyres when he was driving at between 40 and 55 km/h.

He took his complaint to the Motor Vehicle Disputes Tribunal, seeking an order that the Auckland company from whom he bought the car replace the tyres, plus compensation for what it cost him to diagnose the noise.

The company that sold the car, New Zealand Car Limited said it didn't believe the vehicle made any unacceptable noise, that the tyres were safe and complied with warrant of fitness requirements.

The tribunal dismissed Haider's claim - a ruling he told NZME was "absolute rubbish". He had planned to appeal the decision but missed the deadline because of a family matter that had diverted his attention.



New Zealand Car general manager Gorjan Sidorovski told NZME it wasn't the strangest complaint he's had in his 10 years in the business, but it was the strangest he's had progress through the justice system.

"I've had complaints about the size of a car after it's been purchased. I've had my fair share of all sorts of strange things asked but I believe this was the strangest court case I've been to."

Haider told the tribunal he noticed the "zoom zoom" noise during a test drive and pointed it out to a vehicle inspector who conducted a pre-purchase inspection. The inspector checked the wheel bearings and found no issues, but that the noise may be coming from the tyres.

Haider said he noticed the noise on the day he bought the vehicle on May 12. Two weeks later he returned the vehicle to NZCL where Sidorovski test-drove it with him. The tribunal was told Sidorovski accepted that there was a noise from the tyres but it was "extremely minor" and only evident at particular speeds on smooth roads when no other traffic was nearby.

Sidorovski told NZME that "the long story short" was that the car was fairly new with low mileage (about 13,500km), but they had made an effort to try and pinpoint the sound.

"We had to go on an absolutely empty road that was very smooth and only when the vehicle was travelling at 50km/h, with closed windows, could we hear a minor sound.

"I explained to Mr Haider that this was normal," Sidorovski said.

Haider told NZME he felt he had been let down, and after detecting the noise at the initial pre-purchase test drive, claimed he had only bought the car on the grounds the problem would be fixed.

He said the dealer claimed it wasn't a defect, and that it was because they were driving in wet conditions and that the noise - which he describes as "annoying" would go away on a dry road, but it hasn't.

"I can hear it, my wife can hear it, the mechanics can hear it, so it's not only me."

After the test drive, Sidorovski then told Haider to take the vehicle to another business to have the tyres rotated.

The business refused to rotate the tyres after a mechanic test-drove the vehicle and told Haider that the noise from the tyres was okay.

Haider then took the vehicle to a mechanic at another business, who found what it said were flat spots on the tyres due to uneven wear. The tyres were rotated but the noise remained. Haider was then told that the noise might be due to worn wheel bearings, but an inspection report found no fault.

Different wheels were then placed on Haider's vehicle, and no noise was present. The business



Only on an absolutely empty road that was very smooth and only when the vehicle was travelling at 50km/h, with closed windows, could we hear a minor sound.



then advised that the tyres needed replacing, and charged Haider \$287.50 for the assessment.

Evidence from a warrant of fitness inspector at the company that did the assessment said the tyres met the warrant of fitness requirements, but they made a “rough” noise like the sound of a worn wheel bearing.

Haider also had the vehicle assessed by a tyre service specialist firm that found “minuscule flat spots” on the tyres, that “may be resulting in a noise frequency emitting which may sound like a bearing fault”.

The tribunal’s assessor said that small flat spots on tyres could cause a “cyclical humming noise” as described by Haider.

The tribunal ultimately found that the minor intermittent noise from the vehicle’s tyres when it

was driven on certain road surfaces at speeds between 40 km and 55 km/h was likely caused by minor flat spots on the tyres.

It said in dismissing the claim that although the vehicle had low mileage, given its age a reasonable consumer should understand that the vehicle may have minor wear and tear issues that would not be present in a newer vehicle.

Haider said the Consumer Guarantees Act highlighted matters around acceptable quality, which Haider believed meant it had to be acceptable to him as the consumer, and not the tribunal.

“I’m now paying \$200 a week in finance and I’m still not happy,” Haider said.

He said he would change the tyres if he could afford to do that.

Source: NZ Herald

The assessment said the tyres met the warrant of fitness requirements, but they made a “rough” noise like the sound of a worn wheel bearing.





New services added to Te Huia timetable

Te Huia is regularly meeting, if not exceeding, its targets for weekday patronage



Additional off-peak services will start running in February 2024 as part of the “exciting” next stage of improvements to Te Huia announced by Waikato Regional Council and KiwiRail.

A third daily return service will run on Thursdays and Fridays, where demand has been highest, and a second return service on Saturdays.

The new timetable will come into effect from Thursday, 8 February 2024.

Waikato regional councillor and Future Proof Public Transport Subcommittee deputy chair Angela Strange said it was an exciting step-change for passengers.

“Te Huia is regularly meeting, if not exceeding, its targets for weekday patronage. The additional service will offer commuters greater travel flexibility – something they’ve asked for. They’ll be able to take a later morning train from Hamilton, and/or an earlier train home from Auckland.

“It will also double the number of Saturday services and enable passengers to have shorter stays in Auckland and get home at a more reasonable hour. We believe this flexibility will encourage increased weekend patronage, beyond the already very popular school holiday periods,” Cr Strange said.

The improvements were intended to start in April this year, but had to be shelved due to delays in receiving an approved safety case variation from the regulator Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency and low train driver numbers.

KiwiRail had signalled the additional services might not be able to start until June 2024 at the earliest due to train driver shortages, but after monitoring attrition rates and continuing the training of 82 new drivers, it will have appropri-

ate numbers available in early 2024.

“KiwiRail is proud to now be able to run additional Te Huia services, making transport between Hamilton and Auckland even more convenient,” GM Scenic Journeys and Commuter Rail Tracey Goodall said.

“Adding to this, we will also have completed upgrades to The Strand station customer centre in time for the launch of the new Te Huia services, which will improve the overall travel experience for passengers.”

At the moment there are no facilities for Te Huia passengers, except for some undercover seats which are only available when the train is at the platform.

KiwiRail is transforming its old signals building, further along the platform, into a station building for Te Huia and the Northern Explorer. It will have check-ins for each train, a café, comfortable waiting area, toilets and showers, and free WiFi for passengers. There will also be some fencing improvements around the platform.

The upgrades are designed to meet accessibility standards.

Separately, other work is being done by the City Rail Link to build a permanent wheelchair access ramp between Ngaoho Place, which runs directly behind the platform, and The Strand (road).

There will also be some trackside work to improve accessibility between Platforms 1 and 2 and some wayfinding improvements to the car park area.

For timetable and other information, visit tehuiairail.co.nz or call 0800 205 305.



Community outrage over planter boxes



Planter boxes installed in the settlement of Māpua appear to have raised the ire of the community, who have responded with outrage on social media at the seemingly innocuous street furniture.

Commentary on the Tasman District Council's Facebook post about the 18 boxes ranged from those worried about the loss of parking spaces for local businesses to accusations of the traffic calming measure being part of the "2030 agenda" in which individuals will "own nothing".

"The World Economic Forum loves planter boxes," wrote an angry commentator, one of over 150 whose views were on the whole disparaging.

"They have issued direct instructions to all city council members via their secret agents."

"Why is the TDC doing this?" demanded another.

"Where is the democratic assent for the destruction of our roads?"

"We saw what they did in the UK," wrote a suspicious resident who saw sinister motives.

"I can assure you that Tasman District Council isn't doing anything in the UK," replied a council social media manager in response.

It wasn't just democracy and the future of road-
ing in general that were somehow under threat by the wooden street furniture – but also flora and those on two wheels.

"Plants will die getting hit by cars. Cyclists may die hitting these," wrote one man.

"Bet that drain won't get clean for some time now," opined one person, while another was of the view that maintaining and watering the boxes would lead to water restrictions.

One person suggested someone with a forklift could "move that crap off the road" if the council wouldn't. The boxes were alternately described as "an accident waiting to happen", and "stupid". Transportation manager Jamie McPherson

told *Stuff* [Streets for People](#) was a fund Waka Kotahi created to enable low cost temporary piloting of new street layouts to make it easier for people to walk or cycle within key town areas. Māpua will see a reduced speed limit on Aranui Rd, and the installation of several raised crossings and shared pathways.

"We've got an opportunity to try something different to how the layout used to be, gauge people's reactions to that new layout, and then determine what the street might look like on a more permanent basis," he said.

The planters were intended to achieve clear sight distances for those using the new crossings, gave a sense of narrowing the road to help keep speed down, and introduced more greenery.

"A lot of our streets are quite stark, it's all asphalt, all concrete, and adding a bit of green in there is a good thing," McPherson said.



The 18 planter boxes may require a bit of "handwork" from the company that did the street sweeping, but they had used plants that didn't require a lot of maintenance or attention.

Parking was a concern of some, so staff would be undertaking observations through the pilot period, and wanted to hear from those who genuinely could not park near or within a reasonable proximity of the business they wanted to visit, he said.

Surveys of Aranui Rd prior to the design process showed there often was "very, very low" use of all of the on street parks.

McPherson said the view that some in the community had that the council "just haven't been listening" was not a fair one.

"We have been at pains to have quite an extended engagement period," he said.

Asked if he was a secret agent of the World Economic Forum, McPherson said: "no".

Source: *Stuff*

Asked if he was a secret agent of the World Economic Forum, McPherson said: "no".



Certificate to own car in Singapore rockets to \$106,000

The total number of vehicles on the road in Singapore is capped at about 950,000.



To own a car in [Singapore](#), a buyer must bid for a certificate that now costs more than \$106,000 (S\$145,000), equivalent to four Toyota Camry Hybrids in the US, as a post-pandemic recovery has driven up the cost of the country's vehicle quota system to all-time highs.

Singapore has a 10-year "certificate of entitlement" (COE) system, introduced in 1990, to control the number of vehicles in the small city-state, which is home to 5.9 million people and can be driven across in less than an hour.

The quota, offered through a bidding process, has made it the most expensive city in the world to buy a car, with the certificate for a large car more than quadrupling from 2020 prices on Wednesday to a record S\$146,002 (\$106,376.68).

Including COE, registration fees and taxes, a new standard Toyota Camry Hybrid currently costs S\$251,388 (\$183,000) in Singapore, compared with \$28,855 in the US. A small, government-subsidized flat in Singapore costs about S\$125,000.

In 2020, when fewer people in Singapore were driving, the price of COEs dropped to about S\$30,000; a post-Covid increase in economic activity has led to more car purchases while the total number of vehicles on the road is capped at about 950,000. The number of new certificates available depends on how many older cars are deregistered.

The rocketing price puts cars firmly out of reach of most middle-income Singaporeans, putting a dent in what sociologist Tan Ern Ser said was the "Singapore dream" of upward social mobility – having cash, a condominium and a car.

The median annual household salary in Singapore is S\$121,188.

Singaporeans have been hit by persistent inflation and a slowing economy, and some [are selling the cars](#) they bought when certificate prices were low to make a profit.

"There is a need to lower one's aspiration from achieving the 'good life' to settling with a 'good enough life'," Tan said.

Jason Guan, 40, an insurance agent and father of two, said he bought his first car, a Toyota Rush, for S\$65,000 in 2008, including the price of the COE.

Now Guan lives without a car, focusing on other perks that Singapore offers for his family.

"As a family man, it doesn't affect me much as Singapore still has a good and stable education system. In terms of security, it's still one of the safest countries," he said.

Source: Guardian



Contributing to the Conference

The Convenors of the 2024 AITPM Conference call presenters and practical session leaders to come forward.

This year we invite traditional presentation abstracts, together with proposals from people keen to lead practical or interactive sessions during the conference.

The theme '*navigating together towards shared transport goals*' emphasises the idea of collaboratively working towards common objectives in the industry.

It highlights the importance and relevance of co-operation and harmonisation among industry professionals to achieve shared goals, including improving transportation sustainability, safety, accessibility and efficiency.

For example, how do we navigate towards a common understanding on the following:

- How are we influencing the direction of transport towards a more sustainable future for transport?
- How do we better integrate data-driven evidence into our decision making?
- How can our transport systems approach climate resilience?
- How are emerging technologies transforming our transport networks?
- How can transport design influence the quality of life and work opportunities in the regions?
- How might we reimagine our approaches to land use and transport planning to prioritise inclusivity and community wellbeing?

Abstracts and Proposals for Practical Sessions will be considered for the main Conference program, Modelling Workshop, and/or other workshops and program elements. There will not be a separate call for abstracts for the Modelling Workshop.

Abstracts for Presentations

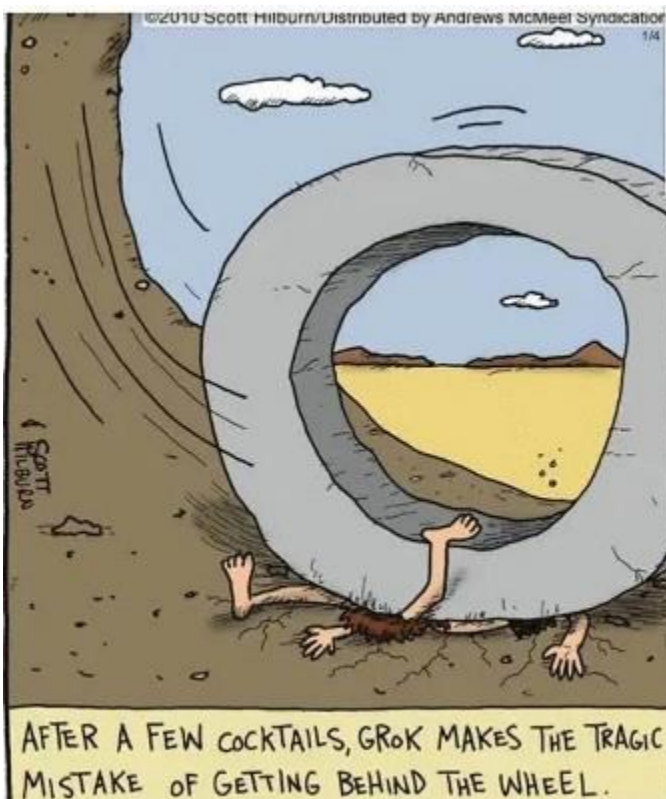
We seek abstracts broadly related to the conference theme and key topics but remain open to proposals on any topic of contemporary relevance to AITPM members.

Full technical papers are not required for this Conference, however if you wish to prepare one, this can be published post-conference (non-peer reviewed).

[Submit an Abstract](#)



Cave men cartoons





Nissan to go all-electric by 2030 despite petrol ban delay



Nissan will accelerate plans towards electrification by committing that all vehicles sold in Europe will be electric by 2030.

The announcement comes despite the UK postponing its 2030 ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel cars to 2035. Nissan's boss said the firm's move was "the right thing to do".

Car trade body the SMMT has voiced concerns that the postponement of the ban would see consumers delay the switch to electric vehicles.

Nissan will also introduce new battery technology by the end of the decade that it said will reduce both the charging time and cost of electric vehicles (EVs).

"Nissan will make the switch to full electric by 2030 in Europe. We believe it is the right thing to do for our business, our customers and for the planet," said Nissan's chief executive Makoto Uchida.

In an interview with the BBC, Mr Uchida said the company was aiming to bring down the cost of electric vehicles for customers, so that they were no more expensive than petrol and diesel cars.

"It may take a bit of time, but we are looking at the next few years," he said.

"We are looking at it from the point of view of the technology, from the point of view of cooperating with suppliers, and of course working with the government on how we can deliver that kind of cost competitiveness to the consumer," Mr Uchida added.

Will that price parity happen by 2030? "That's what we're aiming for," confirmed Mr Uchida.

Mr Uchida also said that the company was fast-tracking a different kind of battery technology, known as all-solid-state batteries (ASSB), which are lighter, cheaper, and quicker to charge.

"We are going to have a pilot plant for ASSB in Japan from next year, and we want to ensure they can be mass produced by 2028," he said.

"There are a lot of challenges with this, but we do have a solution, and we are on track [to meet that target]", he added.

Nissan is the only car company to have its own battery manufacturing capability in the UK.

Last year, it announced plans to invest £1bn in expanding the facility that sits next to its Sunderland car plant. The government contributed £100m towards the project.

That gives Nissan an advantage over other car-makers who import the vast majority of their batteries from China.

Post-Brexit trading rules due to take effect in January next year require vehicles made in the UK or EU to source 45% of their components by value from the UK or EU to avoid a 10% tariff when exported either way.

As batteries are the most expensive part of an electric vehicle, some manufacturers in both the UK and EU have said they will be unable to hit that threshold and have called on the requirement to be deferred until plants are ready and able to supply the batteries.

Business Secretary Kemi Badenoch recently told the BBC the government was optimistic that a deferral could be secured.

Source: BBC News

Nissan will also introduce new battery technology by the end of the decade that it said will reduce both the charging time and cost of electric vehicles.



Roundabout of the Month

OK, this month's winner is nowhere near a roundabout, but it kind of has curves, so its close enough.

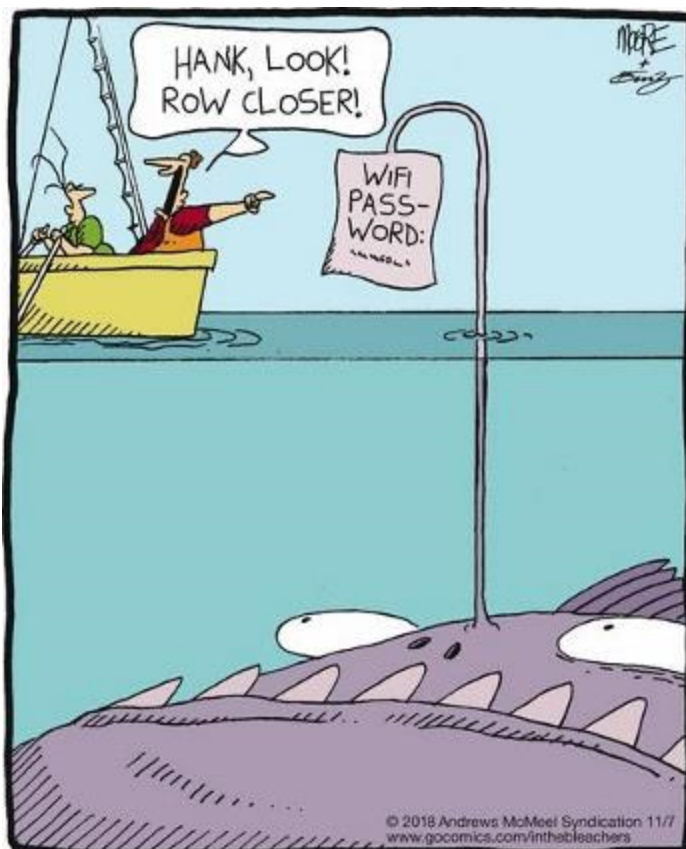
There are a probably a number of bridges that could benefit from a 'loop de loop' (if that is the correct engineering description).

I know someone who calculated the speed that they would have to be doing in order to go around the loop on their motorbike, but let's hope they never have to put that into fruition.

If you have any other interesting images to share, send them to Daniel.newcombe@at.govt.nz



Benedictine punks



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Active Modes Infrastructure Group (AMIG) Update

We've reached the end of another year for AMIG. After an online meeting held on Sep 14th, the AMIG team gathered in Palmerston North for an in-person meeting in mid-November, including some site visits the day before our main meeting (see photo below). Thanks Michael Bridge (PNCC) for being our tour guide and host! Here's a few of the things discussed at the most recent meetings:



- More industry **multi-modal training** options are being planned for 2024, with a mix of online webinars, in-person workshops, and short topic videos likely – watch for some programme details in the New Year. Meanwhile, the first Bus Infrastructure Design workshop was held in Christchurch last month, and there is strong interest in having it in other locations like Auckland and Wellington next year.

- Inspired by observations from Europe, Wellington City Council is leading the charge to trial **low-level near-side cycle signals** here in New Zealand. These are small signals placed at about eye height, so that riders can more easily determine whether it is their turn to go. Several Councils around the country have expressed interest in this trial, and work is now underway to prepare a proposal for selecting sites and undertaking before and after observations.



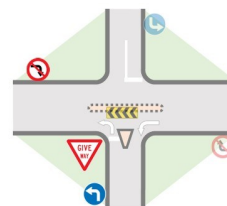
- Some work is going on behind the scenes in the Traffic Control Devices committee to introduce a few new **active mode signs**. These include “EXCEPT PED’NS & BIKES” subplates for NO EXIT signs, and “MERGING” & “CROSSING” subplates for cycle warning signs. We might also see some Rule changes in the New Year to ratify directional cycle signals and maybe two-aspect ped/cycle signals.

- Another piece of work being developed and about to be released is a **Practice Note for Temporary Traffic Management of Vulnerable Road Users** (i.e. people walking, cycling, etc). This was initiated by a tragic cycling fatality at a work site in 2019, and should hopefully help to improve providing safely for active mode users around road works.

- As mentioned previously, some new **traffic filtering guidance** is being prepared to help RCAs to implement the recent “Reshaping Streets” legislation (aka the Streets Layouts Rule). Draft content was presented to AMIG for their feedback; it covers details about legislative context, delivery approaches, network planning considerations, treatment options, and design features to use (including signs, markings, traffic calming devices, and street amenity features). An interesting by-product of this guidance is the potential to introduce some new signs in NZ covering various vehicle prohibition and exemptions situations not currently captured here.



Partial Closure (Out Only)



Left In/Out Only

- The 2024-27 transport programme is expanding to include **low-cost PT infrastructure on State Highways**. Examples might include bus stops lacking nearby crossings, signage, shelters, or having very poor footpath access. Interested RCAs can talk to Waka Kotahi about potential projects they have; once these have been received, they will be prioritised with the available budget.

- New material to land very soon in the Cycling Network Guidance (CNG) is guidance on **Cycle Wayfinding signs, Barriers & Fences, and Cycling on Rural Roads**. Also very soon, the old CNG website layout will be converted to a new “tile” layout, similar to other Waka Kotahi sub-sites, hopefully making it easier to navigate.

Other topics discussed at the recent AMIG meetings included priority cycle lane markings at intersections and crossings, sharrow marking placement past angle parking, and planned improvements to driveway visibility guidance near pathways. Detailed minutes about all these topics can be found on the AMIG website:

<https://nzta.govt.nz/walking-cycling-and-public-transport/active-modes-infrastructure-group/>

AMIG meetings return in 2024 on Feb 22nd, with five meetings planned next year (probably another in-person session in mid-November). If your RCA would like to be part of these meetings, contact Wayne Newman (wayne@cresmere.co.nz) or Gerry Dance (Gerry.Dance@nzta.govt.nz) to get on the circulation list. I am also happy to discuss with you any ideas or issues that you'd like to raise at AMIG.

Glen Koorey (Trptn Group AMIG rep), ViaStrada
(glen@viastrada.nz, ph.027-739-6905)



Submissions close on October 6. Read more at the conference [website](#).

Keynote speaker Salvador Rueda, one of the world's most significant urban placemakers will be sharing his experiences in the field. His work focusing on different aspects of the urban environment has resulted in incredible outcomes, namely Barcelona's Superblocks which have opened up street space there to multiple usage.

E-bike library pilot kicks off in Auckland

Aucklanders wondering if purchasing an e-bike would be a good move for them now have the option of trying it out for up to two weeks, for free.



The Go e-bike Loans scheme project, run by Auckland-based charity EcoMatters, will offer a range of commuter and cargo bikes, as well as child seats and bike bags, if needed. It will operate from two EcoMatters bike hubs, based in Glen Innes and Queens Wharf.

Enabling people to borrow a bike could give them a sense of how it could fit in with their lifestyle and contribute to greater confidence in purchasing a bike of their own, EcoMatters chief executive Carla Gee says. Read more at the EcoMatters [website](#).

This project is part of a wider e-bike library pilot programme funded by Waka Kotahi. Contributing to wider uptake of more active forms of transport can help our towns and cities shift to more sustainable and climate friendly ways of moving around.

Planning is also underway for an additional three e-bike libraries to be delivered across the motu over the summer in partnership with local community organisations.

Street change impacts analysed in new Wellington report

The first report looking at the effect on retail activity from street changes has been released by Wellington City Council, showing a generally

Wellington to Lower Hutt link cycleway completed

The Pito-One to Melling cycleway was officially opened recently, marking a huge achievement for Te Ara Tupua.

The cycleway will deliver more sustainable transport options between Wellington and the Hutt Valley, making it significantly safer for those wanting to travel in ways that are good for the health of themselves and the planet.



The cycleway is an important step forward for Hutt's growing cycle network, providing many more people with healthy ways to get to the train, to work or just to get out and enjoy the outdoors. Learn more about Pito-One to Melling at the Waka Kotahi [website](#).

People power: the path to low carbon transport

The next 2Walk 2Cycle conference has been confirmed for March 18-19 2024, in Wellington. Active transport has a central role to play in contributing to society's health, wellbeing and climate objectives. The event will showcase inspirational success stories as well as offer a chance to learn from experts and connect with others in the field.

Conference organisers are calling for abstracts for presentations around various sub-themes including behaviour change, equity, innovation, leadership and change.

Streets for People is designed to support councils to create people friendly streets that are safer for people on bikes, scooters and those walking or taking public transport.



neutral effect in the short term on retail spending across five specific locations in the city. The Changing Lanes report used customer spending data to measure the effects on specific local retail areas.

The council has said that local retailers and businesses had asked for a more complete understanding of the impacts of street layout changes. This report, conducted every six months with each focused on different areas, aims to fulfil that need. Data will be regularly shared with businesses to provide an overall picture of spending before, during, and after street layout changes.

Read more at the Wellington City Council [website](#).

Adaptive urbanism lectures at Auckland University

Breanna Greaney, an Emerging Professional in the Urban Mobility team, recently delivered two lectures on Adaptive Urbanism to urban planning and design students at Auckland University in August. The lectures were an opportunity for students to learn about the project methodology used by projects in the Streets for People programme. Students then apply what they've learnt in an assignment where they propose improvements to sites in Auckland.

Adaptive urbanism involves implementing temporary interventions to test live versions of designs with local people in real time. This approach puts people first, designing with the users of the space affected, rather than for them. The designs are then implemented as trial interventions in a low-cost, low-risk way to test designs and gather feedback. Trials are monitored and assessed for effectiveness to inform planning of future permanent changes.

More information about Adaptive Urbanism is [here](#) at the Waka Kotahi website.

The Aotearoa Bike Challenge is back for 2024

The Aotearoa Bike Challenge is returning in February and [registrations are now open](#). Last year, more than 23,000 people took part despite the weather, which was a fantastic result.

The challenge is all about empowering more people to fall in love with cycling. For those who are already hooked and would like to help share the love, we have lots of handy resources available - from tips and tricks, to a promotional toolkit with pre-written messages, social media posts, images and GIFS - it's a one-stop-shop to help promote the challenge. And what's more it's free. Contact [Tammy](#) about getting your organisation involved.

There are many benefits to getting involved including contributing to making a difference, health and wellbeing, great prizes, and the opportunity to provide information to city planners on how streets can be improved for cycling.

Signing up early puts you in the draw for an early bird prize, so get [registered](#) now.

Waka Kotahi education portal resources

We have new road safety education resources available, linked to the New Zealand curriculum, for anyone working with schools or kura in road safety, active travel or school travel planning.

This page is set up to be used as a toolbox, where you can pick and choose bite-size activities, lesson plans and videos to use with the school group you are working with, along with a new filter function to help you find what you are looking for.

Alongside the Waka Kotahi resources, you will also find a wide range of useful resources from local councils and authorities available for all to





use. Educational resources will continue to be added to this site on an ongoing basis.

[Coordinator resources](#)

We are also planning to send out a newsletter each school term starting in 2024 to teachers and educators who have signed up to our subscription list. In the newsletter we will highlight new resources and upcoming events related to road and rail safety. Once you have signed up, please forward this link to any schools that you work with.

[Newsletter sign up](#)

If you have suggestions of other activities you would like to see on this page, please [email](#) us.

Christchurch's Streets for People trial gets underway



Last month, work began on Christchurch City Council's Streets for People project on Gloucester Street. Contractors have been installing paint, speed cushions, planters, seating, and other street furniture, as well as lowering the speed limit to 10km/h in the section between Colombo and Manchester Streets.

The trial will use low cost and rapid roll-out changes. Once the implementation is complete in mid-December, community feedback will allow for continual improvement of the design. How the design works in practice and feedback from local people will then inform future permanent street changes.



Gloucester Street already houses the Isaac Theatre Royal and Tūranga central library and the project aligns with the aim to make the area a performing arts precinct alongside the construction of the new Court Theatre.

Over the summer, the improved Gloucester Street will become a hive of activity as the council encourages people visiting the city centre to utilise the space. Make sure to check it out if you're nearby!

[Find out more about Streets for People.](#)

New topics tabled to support stronger public transport systems

Waka Kotahi has released new Public Transport Design Guidance and wants your feedback to help move us all towards better public transport.

The draft [Public Transport Design Guidance](#) supports designing high-quality, accessible public transport with people at its centre and now includes new topics on public transport priority and optimisation, as well as interchanges and stations.

Formal feedback can be made on these topics from now until March 2024 (before a final review and ratification process) through this [simple survey](#).

The Gloucester Street trial will use low cost and rapid roll-out changes





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**TRANSPORTATION
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City Rail Link update



Zealand, installed the track on what is one of the steepest sections of railway in New Zealand. From Waitematā, which sits below sea level, the track climbs around 70 metres to Maungawhau.

At its deepest point, the track runs 42 metres underneath Auckland's busy Karanga-a-Hape. The newly laid track will carry trains south from the downtown station.

Laying the track successfully is one part of a complex tunnel fit out underway that includes the installation of electrical, mechanical, hydraulic, safety and communications systems.

We have our head down with construction stuff to get it all finished but we hope one day to let you see it for yourself. In the meantime, click on the image for an imaginary train trip of sorts down the tunnel!

You asked for it. We have made it happen. So enjoy!

We sent a drone through the City Rail Link tunnel so you can get the feel of your future train journey underground from the redeveloped Maungawhau Stations to the familiar downtown Waitematā (Britomart).

The first of those two 3.45-kilometre-long tracks for Auckland's newest railway line – the City Rail Link – has now been laid connecting, underground, Waitematā (Britomart) and Maungawhau Stations. That newly laid track will carry trains south from Waitematā Station (Britomart).

CRL Ltd's main contractor, Link Alliance, and railway infrastructure company, Martinus New

Plaza Announcement

Auckland Council and City Rail Link Limited (CRL) are delighted to announce that they will be reinstating the plaza behind the Waitematā Station (Britomart), with work starting next year. The plaza will function as an entrance and exit to the station, while also providing a relaxed place for people to meet, with easy access in and out of the central city area.

The station plaza will be constructed in conjunction with the upgrade of Tyler Street, matching the design of Galway Street, completing the section between Te Komitanga and Commerce St.

We sent a drone through the City Rail Link tunnel so you can get the feel of your future train journey underground





Roundabout



This is the next key piece in creating a high-quality network of public and shared spaces, encompassing the Britomart precinct, the Waitematā Station, Te Komititanga, Commercial Bay, Tyler, and Galway Streets and Takutai Square.

This is another big milestone and will mark the end of the City Rail Link's work at the station, as part of the major City Rail Link infrastructure project that will transform Auckland's public transport network.

City Rail Link Ltd's Chief Executive, Dr Sean Sweeney, says the temporary station buildings will be removed in the new year, making room for the reinstated plaza. "The temporary station buildings allowed us to successfully complete some amazing world-class engineering work inside the Chief Post Office to get the Waitematā Station (Britomart) ready for CRL.

One job done and we are now delighted to clear the way for the plaza as the next big step for one of Auckland's most historic buildings that will play a big part in the city's transport future," Dr Sweeney says.

The plaza design was developed with mana whenua and finalised following engagement with neighbouring properties, stakeholders, and the station community. It reflects the history of the Waitematā foreshore, both past and present. Design elements include the mingling of salt with fresh water, where Te Waihorotiu meets the Waitematā, and the abundance of life.

It also acknowledges that this place welcomes people from many types of waka, arriving by sea, by train and by bus. The pavement design is inspired by the rich abundance of shellfish, mimicking the shallows of the Waitematā Harbour with dappled light and reflective qualities.

Eight native trees will be planted around the edge of the plaza. There will also be a large central seating area and station 'lid' designed in partnership with mana whenua which will support the meeting of people. The plaza is designed to be for people, with no vehicle access. Along with the trees, seats and bicycle racks, bollards will be installed around the plaza edge to prevent unauthorised vehicle access.



City Rail Ltd's Design and Delivery Manager, Simon Lough says, "Designing the plaza presented a unique challenge as it serves as the roof of Waitematā Station, with the platforms situated below. This has posed limitations, particularly in terms of plant growth and water leakage from the fountain above. Despite these challenges, our design teams, in collaboration with mana whenua, have developed a design that honours the rich history of the Waitematā foreshore, incorporating both past and present elements."

CRL will begin removing temporary structures sitting over the station early in the new year. Auckland Council is aiming to begin construction of the plaza and Tyler Street in April 2024 with likely completion early-mid 2025. The council group is committed to managing the impacts of construction on people who are living, working, and travelling through the area.

The plaza is designed to be for people, with no vehicle access. Along with the trees, seats and bicycle racks, bollards will be installed around the plaza edge.





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GROUP NEW ZEALAND

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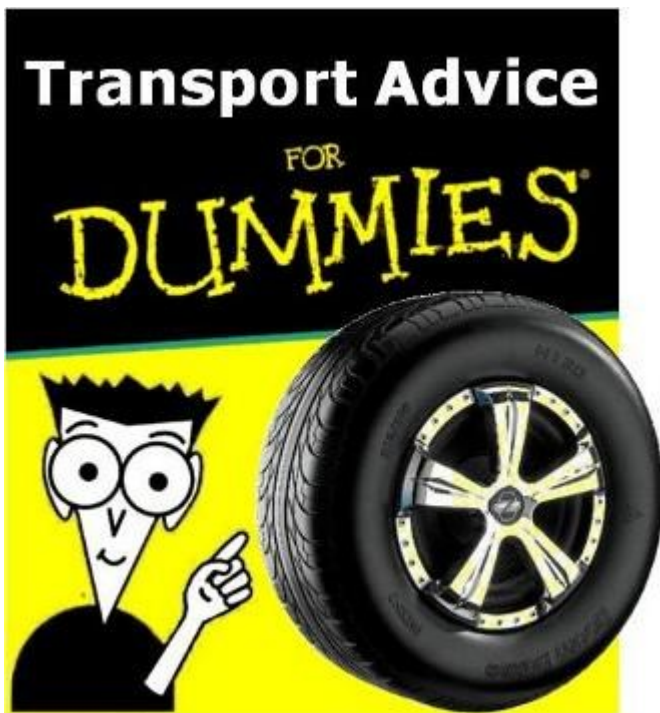
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*"How else would I keep my solar panels
in the sun all day?"*



"You'll have to get behind me and push."

**Dear Transport Guy**

I'm in two minds about the new government. I mean, the rhetoric from the election period was pretty disappointing, as political parties played to populist tendencies and promised free-flowing traffic everywhere or demonised cyclists and public-transport users.

There were all these promises that just could never be realised, and I don't know if voters really believed them or not. But at the same time, the new government will be advised by the same professionals and be presented the same data and evidence, so it would be amazing if some different recommendations came about.

Maybe it will just be a different way of playing with the funding, but lives are lives, and emissions are emissions, so surely we're still heading in the same direction?

Dave, Taupo

Dear Dazed

The first thing is—you are right that no-one believes the promises made during the election campaign. Even the political parties may not recall what they promised.

And you are also right that physics and evidence doesn't change—there are only so many people you can fit in any space. So the resulting recommendations shouldn't change. But sadly the decision-makers see it differently. And they were elected to do so. Based on promises people didn't really believe, or remember afterwards.

So it all comes down to funding. Where does the money go? Who gets it and when? And for what purpose? I don't have a clue, but the right thing to do is wait and see. And then complain vociferously.

The Transport Guy

A tongue-in-cheek column on transport matters by The Transport Guy. The contents do not represent the views of the Transportation Group, or anyone else for that matter. Follow the advice at your own risk. If you have a question for The Transport Guy, no matter how stupid, email it to transportfordummies@gmail.com and he'll do his best to answer.

Dear Transport Guy

I'm so glad we got rid of the last government, spending all our hard-earned money on cycle lanes no-one uses and half-million dollar speed bumps.

This new government will cut that wastage and focus on really important transport projects, like super-safe motorways connecting all parts of the country.

Get on with it!

Craig, Invercargill

Dear Cringe

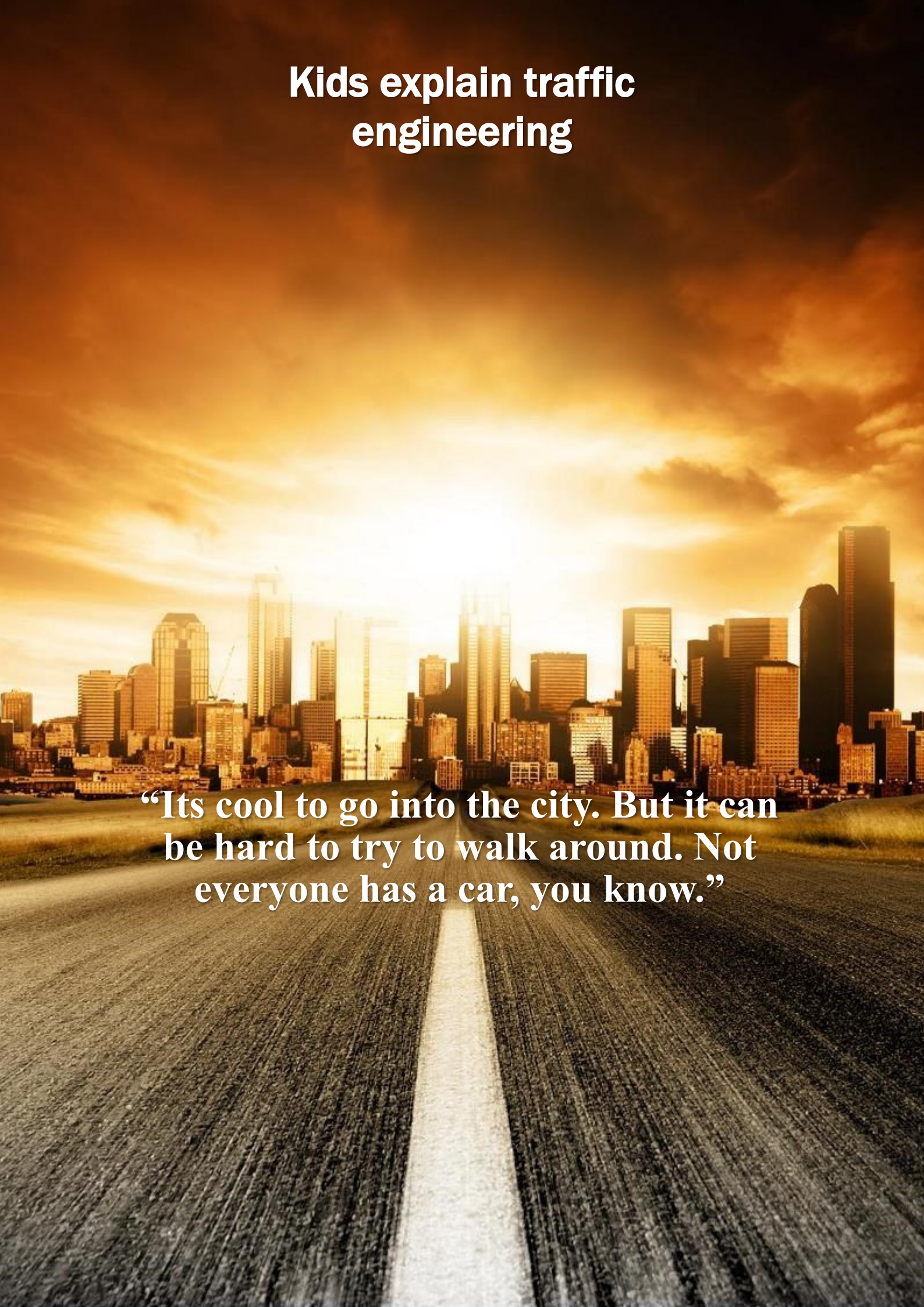
I just checked the per-kilometre cost of the 'super-safe motorways' and how long it will take to afford to do all the countries motorways and get to Invercargill.

Based on the current available transport funding, hell, even if we double it, we won't be building a motorway any time near you until the year 2300. But we look forward to your taxes going towards the hefty design and planning consultancy fees for motorways near Auckland.

The Transport Guy



Kids explain traffic engineering

A photograph of a city skyline at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright orange and yellow glow that fills the sky and reflects off the buildings. A road with a white center line leads from the foreground towards the city. The text is overlaid on the lower half of the image.

“Its cool to go into the city. But it can be hard to try to walk around. Not everyone has a car, you know.”