NZ is already 80% urbanised and we have some of the most congested cities in Australasia. NZ has the highest rate of car ownership in the OECD and a very high degree of car dependency. In the last 70 years NZers have become increasingly reliant on private vehicles. This means:

- congestion
- poor quality urban environments
- pollution and carbon emissions
- poor public health
- high travel costs

Future population growth will exacerbate this. Why are we so reliant on cars?

- Cities prioritise travel by cars
- A lack of good alternatives for shared and active travel due to historic under-investment
- Limited incentives and disincentives for people to change how they travel
- Poor integration between land use and transport decision-making has often led to mismatches between where growth happens and where travel choices are better.

Increasing the wellbeing of New Zealand’s cities by growing the share of travel by public transport, walking and cycling.

Mode share of total trip legs in some New Zealand cities:

- Auckland: 15%
- Wellington: 20%
- Christchurch: 27%
- Hamilton: 30%
- Tauranga: 35%

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Environment
Reducing emissions and negative ecological impacts

Creating a more multi-modal transport system can also help to shape compact and well-connected urban forms that better conserve productive land, maintain green spaces and avoid degrading natural habitats.

Lower levels of car use increase community cohesion - people are more sociable on streets with less traffic. Transport-related greenhouse gas emissions are growing worldwide. Ongoing transportation growth threatens climate goals.

Economy
Efficient resource use and more productive businesses

Moving and storing cars requires a lot of space.
Improving pedestrian and cycling facilities in shopping streets means more people which can increase overall spend, while effective parking management increases the attractiveness and economic vitality of a city centre.

A well-connected, multi-modal transport system can offer greater choice in home and work locations, and can help people reduce the amount they travel by car.

Public health
More physical activity and less pollution and noise

A lack of exercise causes nearly 13% of all deaths in New Zealand, with nearly half of adults not meeting recommended daily physical activity levels, and the average person walking for less than 10 minutes per day.

Overseas the relationship between mode share and obesity patterns reinforces the importance of creating an urban form and transport system that supports people to regularly exercise as part of meeting their daily travel needs.

Air emissions play a role in shortening the lives of more than 250 people per year, while many thousands are exposed to harmful levels of noise from roads.

Safety
Fewer traffic crashes, safer shared and active modes

The less people drive, the lower the likely number of injuries and fatalities. When mode shift occurs on a larger scale in a city with safe and attractive infrastructure, safety improves considerably - the ‘safety in numbers’ effect.

The substantial, long-term health benefits from walking and cycling generally outweigh any additional safety risk from these modes.

Public transport is a very safe mode.

Transport costs make up, on average, the third largest part of household budgets, costing an average of $190 per week.

Providing cheaper alternatives means people do not need a car (or two) which will ease that financial burden.

An efficient transport system creates time savings across all modes, and enables commuters to be relaxing, social and productive.

Access
Better connections and affordable choices

18% of NZ's total 90% road transport 75% of which is from light vehicles

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