

Trouble in paradise

Auckland is a stunning place, but ask Aucklanders about their key issue and the response overwhelmingly 'the traffic'¹. This brochure outlines FAST's approach to solving Auckland's transport issues.



The world's worst public transport...

Of all the OECD cities with populations over 1 million, Auckland is regarded as having the worst public transport system in the world² and has the reputation on being one of the worst cities in the world for walking³.

As a result, Aucklanders are highly car-dependent, travel delays stifle the economy, communities are degraded, it is unsafe to cycle, air pollution is prematurely killing hundreds of Aucklanders each year, and transport is our largest and fastest growing source of climate change emissions.

In order to solve the traffic problems, the over-riding approach has been to focus on building bigger roads, but this has only encouraged more people to drive more often and congestion has worsened.

It is time for a new approach

In April 2007, the Auckland Transport Strategic Alignment Project identified "**the need for a substantial shift to public transport... starting immediately**" Auckland needs a transport system that maintains mobility and...

- **reduces congestion** to allow commercial traffic better access and reduce travel times
- **is more environmentally friendly**, so that air pollution and climate change emissions are reduced
- **allows Auckland's economy to grow**, reduces the exposure to rising oil prices and pending carbon taxes, whilst moving people and freight more quickly and freeing up road space.
- **improves road safety**, particularly for vulnerable road users, such as school children who wish to walk or cycle

The 6 Point Action Plan

1. **Auckland requires central and regional government to have a robust policy framework and greater funding to enable a world class public transport system for the region. This requires:**
 - strengthened central government legislation to enable the provision of better public transport (eg: to implement integrated ticketing and coordinated service provision).
 - a Regional Land Transport Strategy that firmly directs priority to building public transport infrastructure and services before roading projects
 - diverting funding from new roading projects to world class public transport

"It's time to recognise that we cannot pave our way out of traffic"

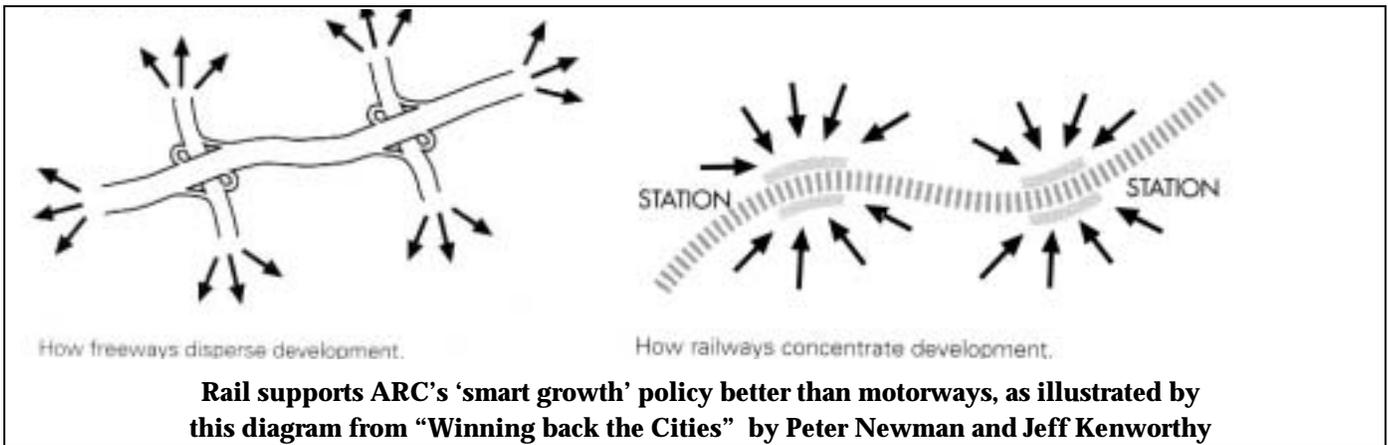
Robin Dunlop, ex-CEO
Ministry of Transport.
Press Release, March 2006

"Building more roads is not the solution to Auckland's traffic woes"

Joseph Flanagan, Transit's
Auckland Network Manager.
NZ Herald, August 2007



Transport plans for Auckland typically ignore the critical looming issues of declining oil supply and climate change



2. Expand Auckland's rapid rail network. Electrified rail is the most effective mode of mass commuter transport;

- it is quiet and zero emissions
- preferred by commuters over buses
- not affected by rising oil prices or traffic congestion
- it can move the same amount of people as a 16 lane motorway

Light rail and heavy rail trains provide different levels of service which complement one another, international cities such as Auckland need both.

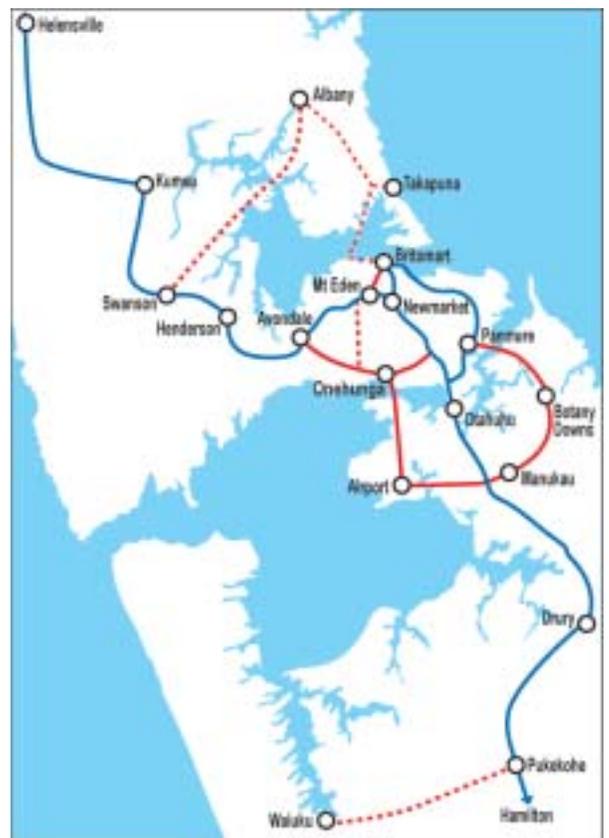
Light rail trains have the flexibility to travel on either light rail or heavy rail and can operate at up to 100 km/h.

3. Improve the bus services: Auckland buses service must be frequent, quick and pleasant. Journey times can be improved with bus/bike or High Occupancy Vehicle lanes, eg: Onewa Rd in Northcote.

By converting existing traffic lanes or removing car parking, a substantial amount of bus lanes can be provided to improve bus journey times.

Combined with time saving "signal-priority" technology and integrated ticketing, taking the bus in peak hour traffic should be quicker than driving - resulting in a significant increase in bus patronage.

Further improvements necessary to attract greater bus patronage include; low emissions buses, customer service training for drivers, synchronising bus services to connect with rapid transit services and improving the quality of bus shelters.



Blue: Existing rail
Red: These rail connections will take 5 to 15 years to implement, so we must start the implementation process now
Red dashed: Rail for 15 to 25 years away

4. Improve walking and cycling conditions. Slow down the traffic in residential streets and retail precincts to 30 or 40 km/h in order to make walking and cycling safe. Create pedestrian-orientated streets that provide excellent walking, cycling and public transport.

Ensure all walking school buses and key routes to PT have safe walking linkages including crossings.

Implement the region-wide network of cycle paths, in particular the walkway / cycleway over the Auckland Harbour Bridge. Install bike racks on all buses, introduce 2 way cycle lanes on all one way streets and encourage employers to provide facilities for cyclists and walkers.

5. Reduce freight on the roads by using rail and sea.

Complete the rail connection between the Port of Auckland, its inland port at Wiri and Onehunga Port to get freight off the road and make coastal shipping more viable.

6. Use Transportation Demand Management (TDM) techniques

to reduce the number of single occupancy vehicles on the road. For example, a regional car parking strategy to encourage Aucklanders to use alternatives to driving, incentives to use public transport, providing bike stations at town centres. Bring in a Congestion Charge for vehicles entering the CBD between 6am and 10am each weekday. All of the revenue raised from these charges should go to improving public transport services.



Light rail in Dublin - fast, quiet, with zero emissions and equal to 177 cars or 3 buses.

Many cities around the world are bringing their tram networks back with light rail, Auckland should start with Queen St to Dominion Rd.

7. Place a moratorium on motorways and major roading projects. It is well established that more motorways induce more traffic and encourage sprawl. Typically Auckland's local councils allocate 95 to 98% of their transport budgets to roading projects. The money saved by putting a halt to the traffic creating roading projects can be used to fund the action points above.



FAST is an umbrella group of organisations and individuals who support sustainable transport solutions to improve Auckland's economic, environmental and social well-being.

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¹ ARC's *Community Perceptions Report 2007*

² *Back on Track: Rethinking Transport Policy in Australia and NZ* by Philip Laird, Peter Newman, Mark Bachels and Jeffrey Kenworthy

³ Page 28, ARTA's *Sustainable Transport Plan 2006-16*