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Infrastructure New Zealand is the peak industry body for the infrastructure sector and promotes best practice in national infrastructure development through research, advocacy and public and private sector collaboration. Infrastructure New Zealand members come from diverse sectors across New Zealand and include infrastructure service providers, investors and operators.

This submission represents the views of Infrastructure New Zealand as a collective whole, and may not necessarily represent the views of individual member organisations.

Infrastructure NZ feedback on the Auckland Regional Land Transport Plan 2018-2028

Infrastructure NZ commends Auckland Transport on the publication of the draft RLTP.

Challenges

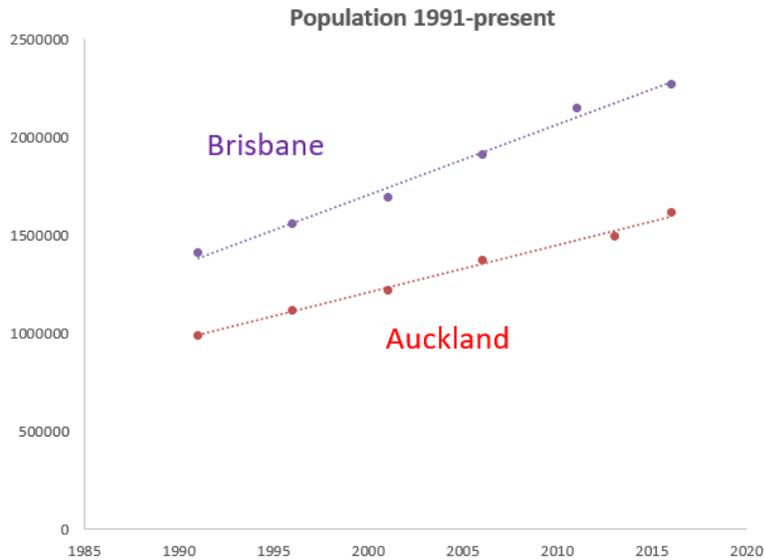
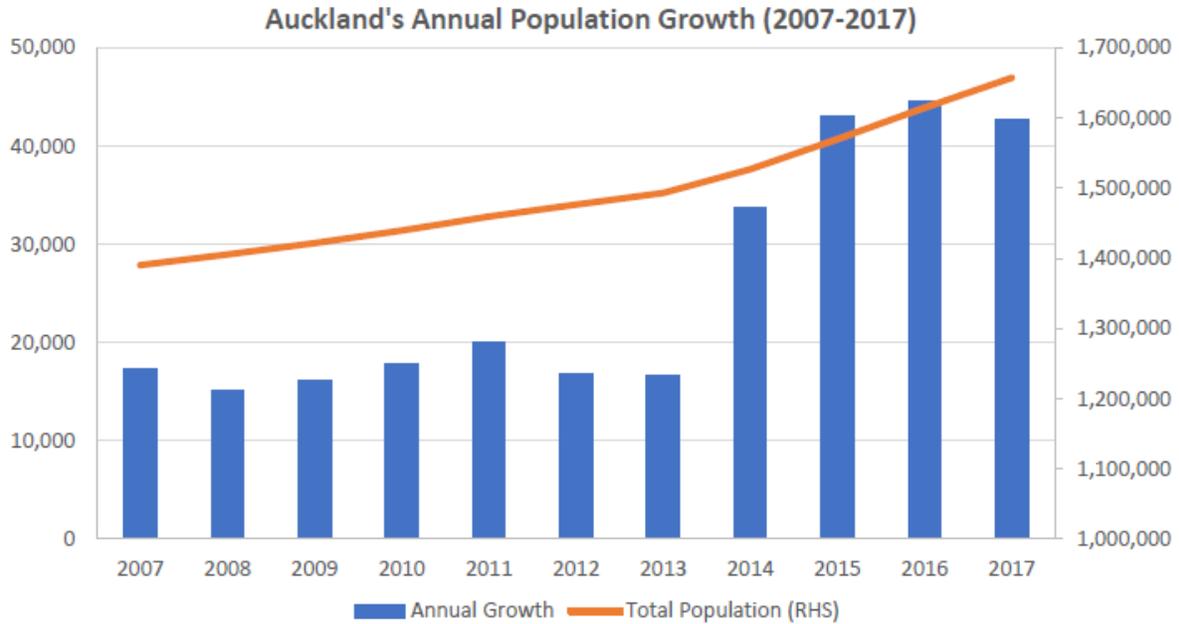
We think the Challenges section accurately reflects most of the relevant transport issues facing Auckland.

However, we are concerned that the draft RLTP misdiagnoses the cause of Auckland's transport pressures, attributing disproportionate responsibility to population growth when in fact misaligned land use planning is the predominant driver of transport issues.

Figure 1 shows recent population growth as illustrated in the draft RLTP alongside long term population growth in Auckland and Brisbane.

Recent growth can be seen to be high, but over the long term can also be seen to be not-inconsistent with other periods of strong growth and is, furthermore, less than that experienced in other growth cities, like Brisbane.

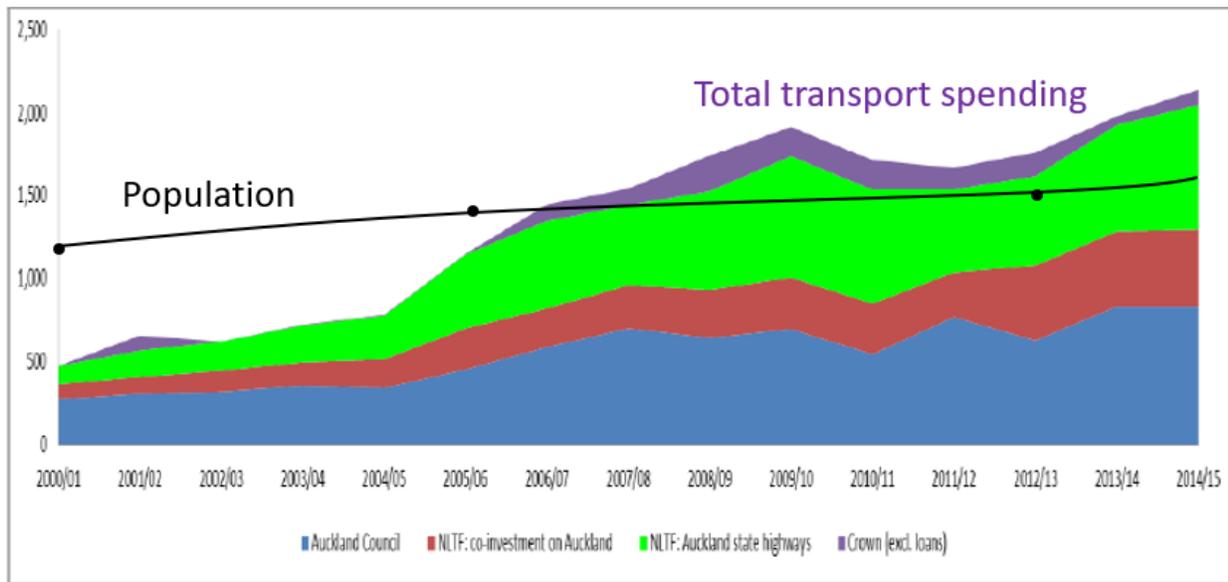
Figure 1: Population growth in Auckland



We agree that transport issues are exacerbated by fast growth, but the increase in investment Auckland has seen in recent years exceed by a wide margin population growth (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Historic transport spending in Auckland (\$m) and population (000 residents)¹

¹ ATAP, Revenue and Expenditure Report, 2016 and Statistics NZ.



ATAP projections of an increase in transport spending in Auckland from around \$2 billion today to an average of almost \$3 billion over the next decade suggest that comparatively gradual increases in population are not the cause of transport issues.

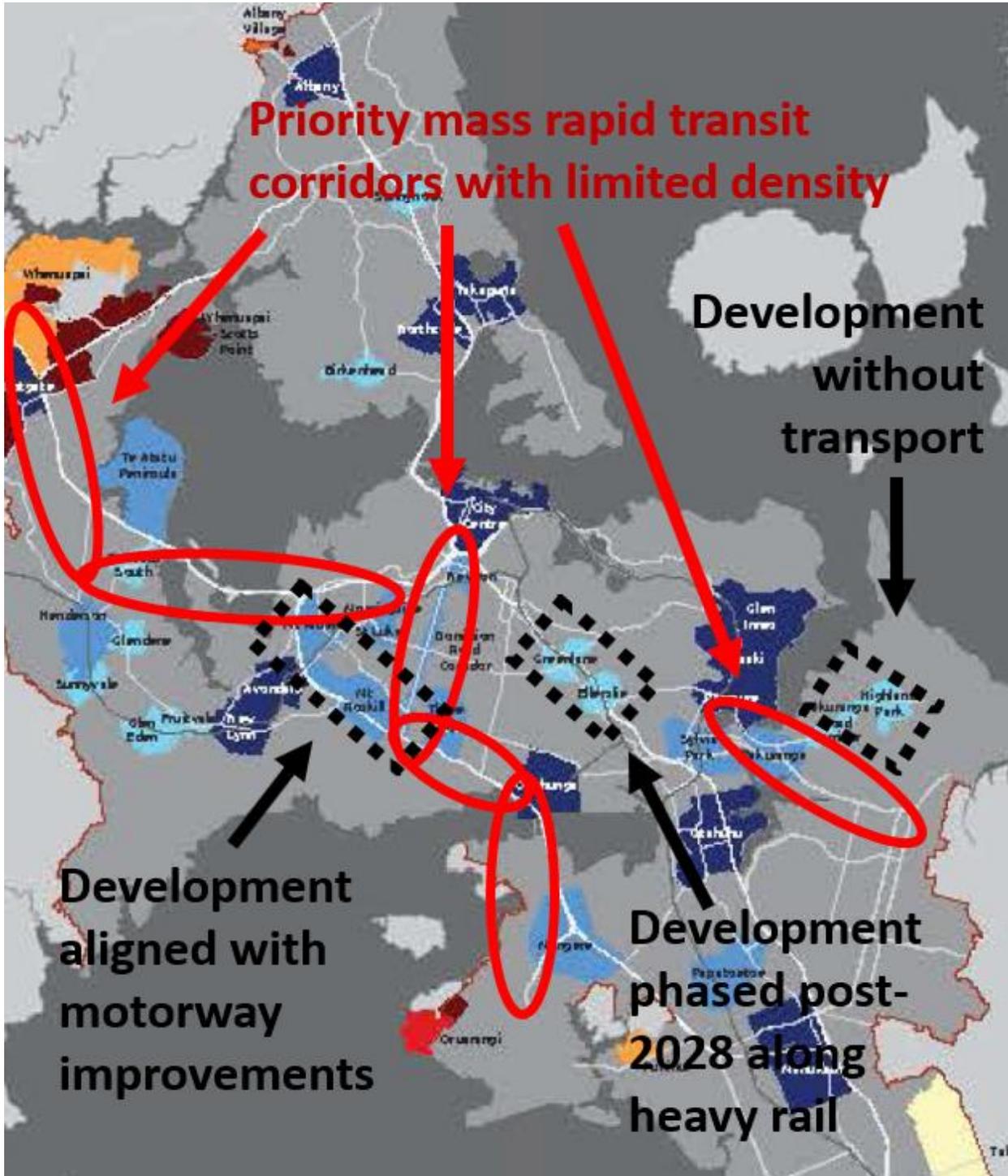
Rather, transport issues in Auckland are driven by misaligned land use and transport.

Specifically:

- Urban redevelopment/brownfield growth as provided for in the Unitary Plan has been permitted across the great majority of the city, spreading new residential growth in all directions despite transport investments being focused on select corridors.
- Urban redevelopment/brownfield growth as provided for in the Unitary Plan is not sequenced to align with new or improved accessibility, meaning growth is arising in areas which will not see improved access for a decade or more.
- Development restrictions in locations benefitting from large public transport investment are slowing development and increasing developer risks leading to underutilisation of capacity.
- Greenfield urban expansion is phased, but phased at each extremity of the city simultaneously, creating transport demand in three locations concurrently.
- Employment is concentrated in the centre and housing is dispersed around the region.

Examples of key misalignment are set out in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3: Planned Auckland development and transport



Three major impacts from misaligned land use and transport can be identified:

1. Congestion is worsening because housing is spread across the region independent of transport availability and is disjointed from employment. This is maintaining dependency on more flexible transport modes (private vehicles) even as investment shifts to high volume rail corridor services. More vehicles on a road network which is growing a much slower rate is materialising as congestion.
2. Project costs are increasing as brownfield redevelopment necessitates retrofitting of transport services in established communities. This is complex, which adds costs to projects, and slow, so solutions take longer to deliver benefits. In addition, much higher land prices in built-up areas reduce the impact of each dollar spent, significantly increasing the amount of capital investment Auckland requires.
3. Transport operating subsidies are increasing as development restrictions around priority rapid transit corridors prevent new housing in locations with improved access and high fixed-cost services.

We commend Auckland Transport for correctly attributing the increased cost of projects to the Auckland Council's growth policies (RLTP p. XXX), but much greater specificity is required.

Until the land use implications for transport are discussed publicly and transparently and efforts made to revise the Auckland Unitary Plan, higher costs and lower levels of service can be expected for transport.

The RLTP must identify misaligned land use as a leading challenge for transport policy.

Priorities

We are unclear whether the priorities identified within the RLTP are appropriate as there is no available empirical evidence to support or refute the performance of the investment programme.

The only evidence within the RLTP which examines the performance of transport policy is Figure XXXX (p. XX) which illustrates access to employment.

It, however, is based on now obsolete data.

The use of 2013 as a base year prevents an understanding of the effectiveness of the current programme. Projects like the Waterview Connection are included in the analysis, despite being long since complete and not featuring in the 2018 RLTP. Other projects, like the East West Link, feature in the modelling, even though they have been deferred or revised and may now not be delivered by 2028.

No other evidence has been presented which shows whether the draft 2018 RLTP delivers on political promises to ease congestion.

Our expectations of the evidence base provided in the final RLTP, based on commitments made politically to reduce congestion, make Auckland more liveable, increase the supply of housing and improve public transport, are:



- Strategic road network modelling which shows a decline in congestion in the morning, inter and evening peaks between 2018 and 2028.
- An increase in public transport patronage reflective of the level of investment made in rapid transit.
- Improved access to employment by both private vehicle and public transport by 2028.
- Land use modelling which demonstrates that housing consistent with Auckland's growth will be delivered over the next decade (up to 150,000 units).

We thank Auckland Council for this opportunity to submit