

Media release by All Aboard!

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Transport decision-makers unwilling to walk the talk on climate

The \$31 billion investment package for Auckland transport announced today by Hon Minister Wood and Mayor Goff shows that, despite declaring a climate emergency, central and local government decision-makers have no meaningful plan to cut transport emissions and are unwilling to shift investment away from roads to support low carbon transport options.

Road transport emissions make up around 43% of New Zealand's CO2 emissions (42.6% in 2018 accounting to Statistics NZ). As such, there is no realistic possibility of New Zealand meeting its commitment under the Paris Agreement to do its share to keep global warming below 1.5C unless we dramatically reduce road transport emissions by 2030.

Despite this, the Auckland Transport Alignment Project (**ATAP**) Agreement for 2021-31 announced today expects to see Auckland's transport emissions *increase by 6%* over the next 10 years. While per capita transport emissions are expected to decrease by 13% over the period, this is more than outweighed by the expected population increase.

The Minister and Mayor claimed in their joint announcement today that the focus of investment in the ATAP package is on encouraging modeshift through investment in public transport, walking and cycling. But, if that is their aim, it is not reflected in where the money is going, which is overwhelmingly on roads. A number of large scale roading projects in the plan dwarf expenditure on much-needed cycling and pedestrian infrastructure. For example, the planned Mill Road Corridor between Drury and Manukau has been allocated \$1,345 million, while the total 10 year budget for urban cycleways is a mere \$138 million.

Commenting on the announcement, climate advocate Paul Winton said "This is a missed opportunity to re-set transport planning for Auckland and to start investing meaningfully in the low carbon transport network the city needs for the future."

The plans are also out of step with the worldwide shift towards cycling and active transport, which reduces traffic congestion as well as having environmental and health benefits. "More and more people in Auckland want to cycle, but we need to reallocate road space to make it safe and pleasant to do so" says Paul Winton. "It is immensely frustrating that our transport decision-makers are unwilling to commit the relatively modest resources that are needed to realise the potential benefits from greater use of active transport."

As well as a general realignment of transport strategy and priorities to meet climate reduction targets, All Aboard! believes the Mill Road project should immediately be scrapped. This alone would enable an almost 10-fold increase in funding of cycleways.

Background information

The All Aboard! coalition is an alliance of climate and transport advocacy groups, including Generation Zero, Bike Auckland, and Lawyers for Climate Action NZ. All Aboard! is calling for decarbonisation of transport by 2030 because we see this as the best way for Tāmaki Makaurau to contribute to the global effort to limit warming to 1.5C. It also provides a unique opportunity to re-think our transport system with the potential for significant intergenerational benefits for health, quality of life, and social equity as well as environmental benefits.

Last year All Aboard! wrote an open letter to the Minister of Transport, the Chief Executive of the Ministry of Transport, the Mayor, Chief Executive and Councillors of Auckland Council, and the Boards of Directors and Chief Executives of Waka Kotahi and Auckland Transport calling for urgent transformation of the transport system. You can find our open letter here:

https://www.generationzero.org/decarbonise_transport_2030?mc_cid=58df924e64&mc_eid=8bb1bc451f

More recently, on 4 February 2021, we gave a presentation to the Planning Committee of Auckland Council to highlight the key messages of our campaign and the steps we say the Council needs to take.

All Aboard! is also calling on the Minister for Transport to scrap the Mill Road project, which is grossly incompatible with the transport and planning changes which are urgently needed to decarbonise transport and will increase transport emissions through encouraging urban sprawl and private vehicle use. The Ministry for the Environment issued this same warning and advised against proceeding with Mill Road.

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